



Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement:

*'In St Margaret Mary's School
we welcome everyone into our community
in order to live, love and learn
together in the light and example of the life of Christ.'*

'In St Margaret Mary School we value the wellbeing of all Stakeholders.'

St Margaret Mary's Catholic Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

Introduction

This policy statement outlines the prevention and management of bullying within our school.

Rationale

St Margaret Mary's is a school where we welcome everyone to live, love and learn together in the light and example of the life of Christ.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Our Behaviour policy seeks to ensure that opportunities for bullying are eradicated. Behaviour books and rigorous monitoring of issues raised supports this. Leaders, staff and dinner ladies are informed of any issues raised by staff or pupils and behaviours and actions are monitored with great scrutiny. Teachers enable check in times throughout the day for any children feeling vulnerable or afraid that an incident may reoccur. This supports staff in diminishing behaviours reoccurring. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. Having an open forum and with pupils in schools and having discussions and circle times helps to eradicate repeat offences in school also.

This policy is a working document which has been shared with children, staff and governors and is also available to parents. The children of our school play a critical role in the implementation of this policy and their school council representatives review our practices on an annual basis. Amendments, following discussions with all stake holders, will be made.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim over a prolonged period of time.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

At our school we believe that Christ is the centre of our school community and central to how we live and learn together. Jesus taught us to love one another so we believe that everybody has the right to be treated with care, tolerance and respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn to choose different ways of behaving and are supported accordingly.

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It is the responsibility of staff, parents, children and our whole school community to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

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Procedures

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly

1. Class teacher to be notified of incident
2. In all cases of bullying, class teacher will pass on relevant information to senior manager or other appropriate member of staff. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting with the Head teacher to discuss the problem.
3. An attempt will be made to help the victim through follow up support via the class teacher and the leadership team. Also the bully (bullies) will receive additional support to enable them to change their behaviour/choices.

Outcomes.

- 1) The bully (bullies) will show and repentance and seek forgiveness.
- 2) In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- 3) In every instance possible, reconciliation will be sought.
- 4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place (for example through the behaviour book).

Prevention

Curriculum teaching, school council work, prayer time, assemblies focused on our weekly mission and a consistent vigilant presence by staff will support our measures to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring.

The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying. All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in school are challenged by a member of staff. All staff encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.

All types of bullying are discussed as part of the curriculum, and, as a school working towards becoming rights respecting - diversity, difference and respect are promoted and celebrated.

Changing and organising seating arrangements in class helps to prevent instances of bullying.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation of social skills groups.

Buddy benches are used during each playtime to help address issues that may arise in the playground. Helping children to enjoy their rights to relax and play, article 31 UNCR.

Further measures to promote positive choices and behaviour are play partners, faith friends and Wellbeing Warriors Designated playground friends in particular individual circumstances are used and an ongoing focus on positive relationships and behaviour throughout the school year linked to our Catholic ethos and school mission statement.

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Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and be warned that there must be no further incidents. The headteacher informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, eg. Loss of playtimes, missing the next trip and further sanctions such as internal exclusions if the bullying continues. The bullying pupil is made to realise that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour. Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidences and what action is being taken to support all parties.

Policy to be reviewed in July 2025