

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

“All children are a gift from God. They are all special and should be allowed to develop and grow in a nurturing environment secure in the knowledge that they are cherished.”

At St Mary's, we endeavor to create an environment where everyone; children and adults know that they are valued. Our school ensures that all of our pupils can learn in an environment where they feel safe, happy and secure, and can form happy and supportive friendships. Every person has the right to be treated with respect and has the responsibility to treat others in the same way. Children and adults are given the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive action will be taken.

This policy also links into some of our other school policies that include: Behaviour, Child Protection, Safeguarding, Equality, Inclusion, E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff and children feel safe, happy and secure. We aim as a school:

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour.
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- To inform pupil and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps maintain a bullying-free environment.

This policy has been written by Miss Mowbray with the help from our Anti-Bullying Focus Group. Governors and senior leadership team have read and agreed to our school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a conscious and willful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people that hurts someone else. It is an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying, which is designed to cause harm. If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target and the whole school community and its culture of safety and wellbeing in school. Bully can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

The NSPCC quote that 'bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes calling, hilling, pushing, spreading rumors, threatening or undermining someone.' Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes somebody feel intimidated or offended. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

The Nature of Bullying

Bullying is considered to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often
- Often different for individuals who are being bullied to defend themselves against the perpetrator.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking, belongings
- Verbal: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Emotional: spreading unkind stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumors
- Cyber: text messages, social media, email

People may bully others because of varying perceived differences:

- Sexism, racism, religion or belief, academic ability, gender identify, homophobia, disability, perceived characteristic or because of an associate.

Signs that someone is being bullied

It is important that we recognize and looking for changes in a child or adult to identify if they are being bullied. It is crucial that we understand that not everyone who is being bullied will exhibit these warning signs.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illnesses
- Changes in eating habits, suddenly skipping meals or binge eating
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in school work, or not wanting to come to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self- destructive behaviour such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

Our Approach

Our approach to bullying, dealing with incidents and supporting pupils. We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, it will minimize the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity. Bullying is always unacceptable and always serious. We are committed to creating a safe environment where children can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help.

Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as pastoral care, circle time, role-play, class performances, sharing assemblies and Anti-bullying Week our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Encouraging children to take responsibility by becoming a member of the school council, applying to be a mini Vinnie or becoming a play leader promotes children's self-confidence. In having this approach we believe this helps to reduce a code of secrecy where children feel too scared to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences.

Our Pastoral Care topics and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum will ensure that each year group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other, appreciating differences and to developing individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions. Incidences of bullying brought to the attention of the class teacher are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils and any staff concerned. Any relevant observations are recorded in the teacher's records and the Head teacher is kept informed.

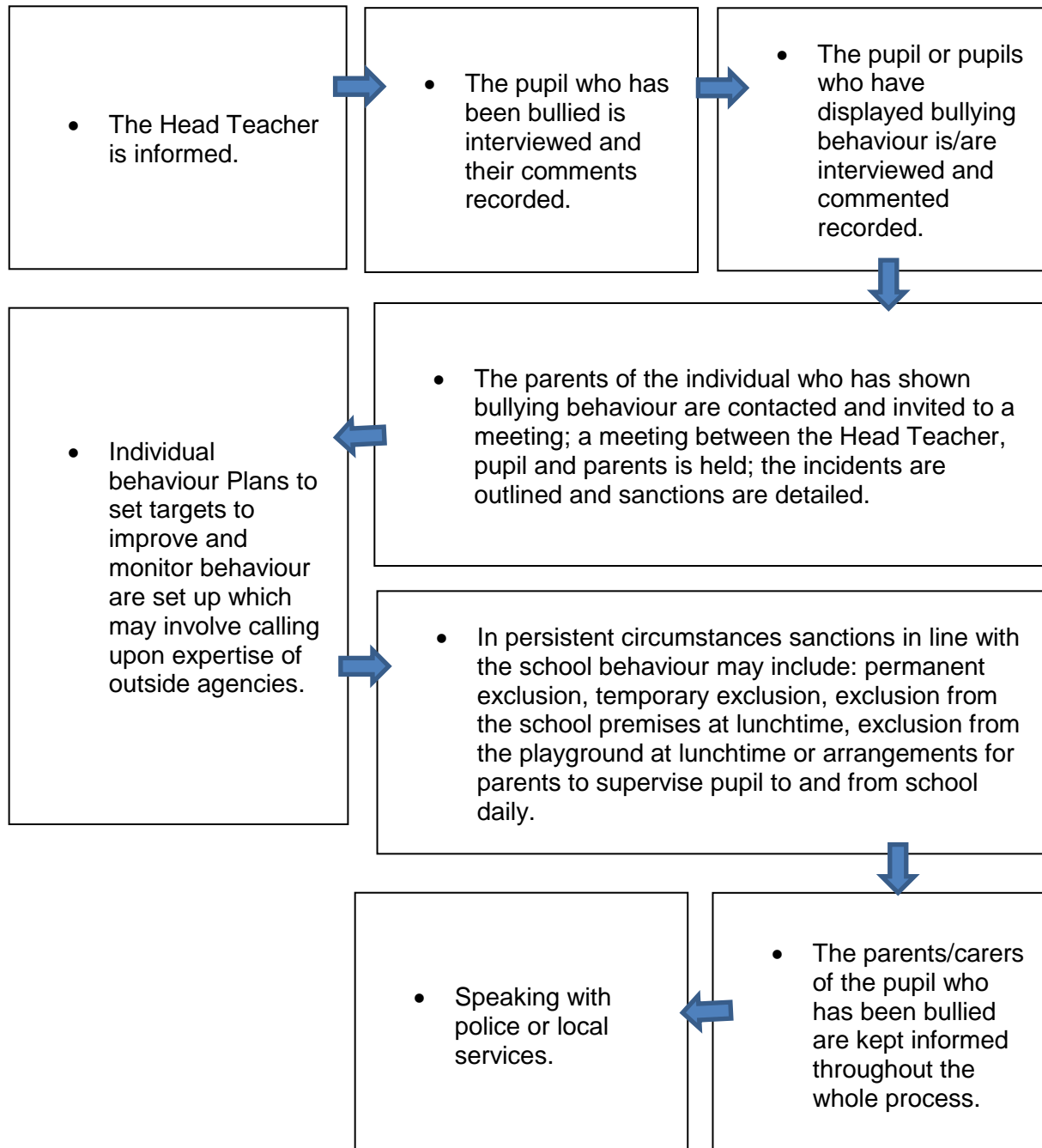
Bullying from staff, parents or pupil/pupils is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

We have two aims when reacting to incidents of bullying:

1. To make the person who has been bullied feel safe.
2. To encourage better behaviour from the person who has displayed bullying behaviours, colluders and bystanders.

In order to achieve this we use a range of strategies appropriate to the nature, severity and

history of the bullying. If the bullying is a recently established behaviour by an individual or a group which involves regular name-calling, intimidation or social exclusion (but not gross physical violence) a problem solving approach is adopted. The underlying intention is to change the dynamics of the situation, to raise the awareness of the participants about bullying, and to support the peer group in taking responsibility for bullying. It is a seven-step approach. If the bullying involves an individual or group, who have been involved in bullying on a previous occasion and the school has previously implemented the above problem solving approach, then the following procedure will be followed:



Supporting Pupils

Immediately offer the pupil an opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher or member of staff of their choice. Keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how we will respond to corners. Reassure the pupil.

Supporting Adults

Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated lead and/or senior member of staff.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of the school site then the school will ensure that the concern is investigated and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools behaviour policy.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/ national organisation to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who has bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and establishing the concern.
- Clarifying the schools official procedures from complaints or concerns.
- If online, requesting content be removed and reporting account/ content to service provided.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action.

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be continued to be reviewed yearly by the Anti-Bullying Focus Group, senior leadership team and governors to make certain that our policy is in line with our school's other policies and relevant to the children in our school.