

St Mark's Catholic Primary School

In a caring Christian community, we love, learn, laugh and achieve

Anti - Bullying Policy Statement

Every child has the right to be educated in a safe, caring and happy environment, without any form of intimidation or bullying.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of every member of St Mark's school.

TACKLING BULLYING

Tackling bullying in school matters because:

- Bullying makes the victim (pupil/adult) unhappy
- Victims who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their work at school
- Some pupils/adults avoid being bullied by not going to school
- Victims who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour are likely to copy this anti-social behaviour
- Schools who do take action against bullying build a reputation as an effective, caring school

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is not always easy to define. At St. Mark's we define Bullying as persistent use of the following over time:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim, a victim who is often weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- An outcome which is usually painful and distressing for the victim

Bullying can be:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and any other forms of violence, threats (ie, if you don't give me your dinner money, you'll be sorry)
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Emotional: excluding (ie, sending to Coventry), tormenting (ie, hiding books, threatening gestures) ridicule, humiliation.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or abusive comments
- Use of cyber bullying

NSPCC - Signs your child may be being bullied

It can be hard for adults, including parents, to know whether or not a child is being bullied. A child might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might think that they deserve to be bullied, or that it's their fault.

You can't always see the signs of bullying. And no one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied. But you should look out for:

- belongings getting "lost" or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY

1 ensure a safe, happy environment, conducive to learning

2 teach the children to respect each other and value their similarities and differences

3 provide an opportunity for the children to express their worries and concerns and know that they will be acted upon.

ROLE OF ALL STAFF

At St Mark's we are all committed to:

- Take the problem seriously
- Investigate the incident
- Interview bullies and victims separately
- Interview all witnesses
- Decide on appropriate action (see below)
- Hold a follow up meeting with victim's family and report progress
- Inform all members of staff about the incident and action taken
- Keep a written report of incident, interviews and action taken.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN: will be decided upon by the members of staff involved.

Appropriate action could be:

- Obtain an apology from bully/ies to victim
- Inform bully/ies parents
- Insist on the return of items "borrowed" or stolen
- Insist bullies compensate victim
- Hold lesson/class discussion/assemblies about bullying
- Address issues through circle time, class and school council time
- Provide a safe haven during school hours for victim
- Learning Mentor to provide support and work with children involved
- Encourage bully to change his/her behaviour

ROLE OF PUPILS

- It is important all pupils feel confident to approach a member of staff and not to suffer in silence if they feel they are being bullied.
- Any child who witnesses an act of bullying should tell a member of staff. Anyone given such information will be assured that their identity is kept confidential
- All children should treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves
- Play fighting is unacceptable

ROLE OF PARENTS

If your child is a bully:

- Remain calm
- Listen to your child
- Try to find out why your child is bullying, talk to us at school
- If it is serious, don't hesitate to get help
- Set realistic, firm guidelines and rules and help your child control his or her behaviour
- Ensure the child apologises, whether in writing or in person

If your child is a victim

- Tell the victim that there is nothing wrong with him or her, they are not the only victim
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse and may be contrary to your child's nature
- Advise your child to tell a teacher immediately
- You **must** also inform a member of staff immediately (this can be kept confidential)
- If the matter is not resolved, inform the school again. Be persistent and insistent.

CONCLUSION

Bullying is harmful to individuals, groups, and ultimately the whole school community. Working together we can all guard against this anti-social behaviour, and ensure all members of our school community feel safe and valued by all within it