St Mary's CE Primary School
"Nurturing Success"
Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction
At St Mary's, we are committed to nurturing every child (and every adult) as a unique individual to be the best that they can be, within a safe, friendly and welcoming community rooted in Christian values. Our vision is to provide an education of the highest quality through a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which focuses on the development of the whole person. We want children to develop as happy, confident and articulate individuals who will love learning throughout their lives.

Our anti-bullying policy is shaped by our vision which seeks to promote and celebrate all that is good and unique in every individual within our community. As it says in Philippians 4:
Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Our school Christian values of friendship, respect, trust, hope, wisdom and perseverance are at the heart of our positive and nurturing approach and underpin our relationships with others and our practice.
As a Church of England School, the belief that each person is created in God's image is accepted and the uniqueness of the individual celebrated. We welcome diversity and celebrate difference and we treat each other with dignity and respect. This policy is supportive of these beliefs and everything we do is underpinned by our belief that everyone should be able to flourish in our caring school. At St Mary's Church of England Primary, we ensure that those who are at greatest risk of harm are given the highest priority. (Flourishing for All: Anti-Bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools, September 2024). Bullying, either verbal, physical or via social media will not be tolerated.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy links to other key school policies including our Behaviour Policy, Strategic Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy, Equality Policy and Staff and Governor Code of Conduct.

Definition of bullying
We adhere to the Department for Education's definition of bullying. The Department for Education defines bullying as 'behaviour that is:

- Repeated
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation'

(Gov.uk Bullying: A definition)

Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group.

The nature of bullying can be:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing or inappropriate/unwanted physical contact)
- Verbal (e.g. discriminatory language, name calling, ridicule, comments)
- Technology/Cyber (e.g. messaging, social media, email)
- Emotional/indirect/segregation (e.g. excluding someone, spreading rumours)
- Visual/written (e.g. graffiti, gestures, wearing racist insignia)
- Damage to personal property
- Theft or extortion
- Persistent bullying

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic)
- Special educational needs (SEN) or disability
- Culture or class
- Gender identity (gender questioning and transphobic)
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Appearance or health conditions
- Religion or belief
- Related to home or other personal circumstances
- Related to another vulnerable group of people

As a school, we recognise that particular groups are at a higher risk of being bullied and require special attention. As outlined in 'Flourishing for All: Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools, September 2024', the expectation to address any bullying behaviour, especially that which occurs on the basis of a protected characteristic) is threaded throughout Section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and is therefore essential to our school's safeguarding policies and procedures. Bullying towards pupils who have SEN or a disability, towards those who are (or perceived to be) LGB/GQ, racial discrimination and sexualised bullying as part of sexual harassment are all specifically outlined within KCSiE and are therefore given particular priority at St Mary's.

Reporting bullying

Children are reminded on a regular basis that they have the right to feel safe and happy in school. They are encouraged and reminded to tell an adult about any incidents which make them feel worried or unhappy or if they feel they are being bullied. Children understand that they can report incidents of bullying in a range of different ways. This could include speaking to an adult, writing and posting a note for the feelings boxes based in every classroom or writing a note to a member of staff.

Reporting – roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff have a duty to challenge bullying (being particularly mindful of homophobic, biphobic, gender questioning and transphobic language and bullying) and report bullying, be vigilant to signs of bullying and play an active role in the school's efforts to prevent bullying. All members of the Senior Leadership Team act as anti-bullying leads and one teacher leads the school's Anti-Bullying Ambassador Committee.

Senior staff

The Headteacher and members of the senior leadership team have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers also have a responsibility to look out for signs of bullying (e.g. distress, feigning illness, lack of concentration). Parents and carers should support their child to report the bullying. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact their child's class teacher in the first instance who will involve the Headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are reminded that they should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for signs of bullying among their peers. Pupils should never be bystanders, reinforcers or assistants to the perpetrators of bullying- they should offer support for the target of the bullying and encourage them to report it. In this way, pupils are encouraged to be 'upstanders' *(someone who recognises when something is wrong and acts to make it right. When an upstander sees or hears about someone experiencing bullying behaviour, they speak up and do their best to help, protect and support the person.)*

Responding to bullying

When bullying has taken place, the following actions will be taken:

1. If bullying is suspected or recorded, this will be investigated immediately by school staff and a member of the senior leadership team will be made aware. Staff will speak to all children directly involved.
2. Staff will record the bullying on CPOMS and also the incident will be recorded centrally in the school's incident log.
3. Support will be offered to the target of the bullying as appropriate (e.g. from the child's class teacher, the school's pastoral support TAs or ELSAs or peer support or through the use of restorative practice), making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in decision making, as appropriate.
4. The DSL/DDSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
5. The senior leadership team will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
6. Staff will proactively respond to the child who has carried out the bullying who may require support from the child's class teacher, the school's pastoral support TAs or ELSAs or peer support or through the use of restorative practice.
7. Sanctions will be implemented as appropriate and in line with the school's behaviour policy.
8. Staff will involve parents and carers, keeping them informed of the concerns and actions taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
9. Staff will assess whether any other authorities (such as police or local authority) need to be involved, particularly when actions take place outside of school.
10. Designated school staff will monitor the incident records, analysing the results/considering action required.
11. The Headteacher will produce termly reports for governors to provide a summary of recorded incidents.

Responding to Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.
- This may include: looking at use of the school systems; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Working with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include: supporting reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content; Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the DfE https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation document 2022 to ensure that actions are used proportionately and lawfully); Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene this policy
- Ensuring that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for this cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Informing the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Providing information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include: advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply; providing advice on

blocking or removing people from contact lists; helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Bullying outside of school

Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during school holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' well-being beyond the school day. In these circumstances, the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated, offer support to the children involved, implement sanctions as appropriate and in line with the school's behaviour policy and advise parents and carers about ways to seek further support and guidance.

Derogatory language

Derogatory, discriminatory or offensive language is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored and follow-up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for pupils and staff found using any such language.

Prejudice based incidents

A prejudice based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the Headteacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

School strategies to prevent and tackle bullying

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- Our school vision is at the heart of everything we do and ensures that all members of the school community are revered and respected as members of a community where all are known and loved by God
- We ensure that all pupils understand our anti-bullying policy and know how to report bullying
- The PSHE programme of study includes opportunities for pupils to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying. It also includes opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves, value others and appreciate and respect difference.
- Collective Worship explores the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other things which play a part in challenging bullying.
- Through a variety of planned activities and time across the curriculum, pupils are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.
- The school has an Anti-bullying committee consisting of a lead teacher and children in Years 4-6 who act as anti-bullying ambassadors. These children and this member of staff play a vital role in promoting and supporting anti-bullying within school.
- Other pupil-led committees such as the school council, the values ambassadors, global citizenship ambassadors, worship committee and the online safety committee are dedicated to making the school a kind, respectful place, encouraging other children to live out our school values.
- Circle Time and Class Council meetings provide regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to target specific interventions for example Circle of Friends groups and ELSA Support.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils the school.
- Where appropriate, peer support is provided to identified pupils through a 'buddy' system.

- Restorative Practice is used to provide support to targets of bullying and those who show bullying behaviour.
- Pupils are regularly involved in developing school-wide anti-bullying practice through consultation with groups e.g. through Class/School Council Meetings. Anti-Bullying Week is an important part of the school calendar and is planned by the Anti-Bullying pupil ambassadors and members of the School Council. The school also participates in additional events such as Safer Internet Day.
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations to tackle bullying where appropriate

Training
The headteacher and members of the senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring that all school staff receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.

Monitoring the policy
The headteacher and members of the senior leadership team are responsible for monitoring the policy on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher is responsible for monitoring and analysing the recorded data on bullying. Any trends are noted and reported.

Evaluating and reviewing
The headteacher is responsible for reporting to the governing body (and the local authority where applicable) on how the policy is being enforced and upheld via the termly report. The governors are in turn responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy via the termly report and by in-school monitoring such as learning walks and focussed groups with pupils. If further improvements are required, the school policies and anti-bullying strategies should be reviewed.

Date for Review
This policy will be reviewed annually.

Useful Resources
Flourishing for All: Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools, September 2024
Gov.uk Bullying at school
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.childline.org.uk
www.anti-bullying alliance.org.uk
www.need2know.co.uk
www.bullying.co.uk

https://diana-award.org.uk/our-programmes-and-initiatives/anti-bullying