

St. Margaret's C.E.



St. Margaret's C of E. Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

Updated September 2022
Approved by: Senior Leadership Team

Review: September 2023

Introduction

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere: our school motto is 'A Place to BECOME – A learning community sharing God's Faith, Hope and Love'. We aim to provide a place to BECOME for each and every child, where individuals can flourish and people are treated with kindness and respect; the Christian values of Faith, Hope and Love are a golden thread which run through all aspects of the school's work – it is our belief that where children feel important and that they belong to our Christian community, bullying is far less likely to exist.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school, whether it is in the school, online or in off-site activities. If bullying or harassment does occur, all students should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying or harassment is happening is expected to tell the staff.

All members of the school, staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying. Information will be shared on the school website, through regular events and/or workshops for families.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Students, staff and parents and anyone associated with the school should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when such behaviour is reported.

This policy underpins the consistent application of our anti-bullying procedures and practice across the school. It has been devised in line with the statutory regulations set out in the Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2020.

This policy should be understood, used and applied alongside the school policies for teaching, learning and curriculum, also for:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- E Safety and acceptable user guidance
- Staff conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Specific Guidance
- Equality and diversity
- PSHE Policy, including sex and relationship education
- Promoting Fundamental British Values

The school has a number of additional procedures available to ensure any instances of children being unkind to one another are dealt with smoothly and quickly. Until December 2020, school bought into the 'Place 2 Be' service, which as well as providing 1:1 counselling for 12 children at any one time, provided a drop-in service 'Time 2 Talk' - allowing children time and space to talk

about anything that is on their mind. Children accessed this service by signing a slip and placing these in the boxes located in school. From Easter 2021, school will provide both the drop in service as well as counselling for up to 12 children with our own in-house counsellor. In addition to this, school has a pastoral support worker (Mrs Greenwood) who provides both individual and group support to children and their families as needed.

There are 'worry boxes' in each class which are monitored regularly; school engages in a number of annual events – for example, Children's Mental Health Week, Anti-Bullying Week – to promote awareness. Furthermore, both the planned programme of worship and the wider curriculum highlights children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development: offering opportunities for children to reflect on carefully chosen stories, including stories from the Bible and other sacred texts to promote love amongst one another. Likewise, the weekly *Kindness Cup* initiative – children nominate each other in secret for acts of kindness - emphasizes the importance of being kind towards others. Each week everyone who has been nominated has their name read out in the awards assembly, with the winner taking home the trophy for a week and having their acts of kindness shared with the school as inspiration for others.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual, peers or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally – it could be prejudice-based, discriminatory and/or take place online. An act, or acts, of bullying can take place at any time in or outside school premises or hours. This policy will apply at any point whilst a child is registered as a pupil at our school. All staff are trained to be vigilant about all forms of bullying and/or child-on-child abuse. Whole staff safeguarding training (covering child-on-child abuse) is provided by the Local Authority on a three-year cycle and refresher training is provided by the designated staff inbetween/as appropriate.

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 sexualised language;
- **Homophobic** – around the issue of sexuality;
- **Ability** – because of, or focussing on learning and/or physical disabilities;
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance, etc
- **Cyber** – all areas of internet use, such as e-mail/internet chat misuse, mobile threats by text messaging, including sexting and calls, misuse of associated technology (social media application, camera and video facilities, MSN, etc.)

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Those who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and the school will take necessary steps to assist this change in behaviour including disciplinary action, should the need arise.

Whilst we all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying, a proactive approach to identify and act upon potential signs of bullying will assist in dealing with issues prior to them being formally raised. The signs and behaviours (below) could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Other signs may also manifest themselves not mentioned here.

- Is frightened of walking to or from school;
- Doesn't want to go to school by public/school transport;
- Insists on being driven to school;
- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community;
- 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 unexpectedly 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/ harassing 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;

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

In the termly Safeguarding report governors are presented with information about the working of this policy. In addition, where appropriate the Chair will liaise with the school on individual cases.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students. The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discussing strategies and reviewing them on a regular basis;
- Determine the strategies and procedures and ensure a regular review is undertaken;
- Discuss development of the strategies with the School Leadership Team;
- Ensure appropriate training is available;
- Ensure that a system for recording bullying incidents is in place;
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students on a regular basis in a clear manner;
- Ensure that sanctions imposed for bullying reflect the serious nature of the incident; and
- Report annually to the School Council.

The Deputy Headteacher will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the appropriate member of staff over all incidents involving students in their class;
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are reported to the responsible senior member of staff;
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution;
- Know the policy and procedures;
- Be observant and ask students what is happening to them;
- Deal with incidents according to the policy; and
- Never let any incidences of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.
- Be a liaison for the school's counselling service. Responding to any concerns and analysing the data from the pupil drop-in sessions.

All members of staff will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both

- those being bullied and the bullies;
- Maintain the School's record of incidents of bullying;
- Keep the Headteacher and designated teacher informed of incidents;
- Arrange relevant staff training;
- Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems;
- Promote a culture of anti-bullying/harassment;
- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice; and
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported – following the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as required.

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The school will raise the awareness by teaching pupils about staying safe and the anti-social nature of bullying through the curriculum: in PSHE and across other subjects as appropriate. The PSHE coordinator is responsible for initiating and developing an anti-bullying programme as part of the curriculum – liaising with other colleagues as appropriate.

Worship is carefully planned to address children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Each child in school has their own learning journal where they reflect on the weekly theme – many of which are values focussed and are around treating each other with respect. Please refer to the collective worship planner for further details.

Anti-bullying Procedures:

Parents

If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the school. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying/ harassment. The designated safeguarding lead for St Margaret's is Mrs Rachel Whittle and her contact number is 0161 770 5900

Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves may make matters worse. Parents should encourage their child to talk to an appropriate member of staff in the first instance.

Students

If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent, a member of staff, or use an anti-bullying system (worry box in class/Time 2 Talk drop in) and be prepared to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them

Students who witness bullying or an incident which they feel may be bullying or

harassment must tell an adult, parent, Pastoral Lead or other member of staff.

Staff

If bullying is reported to a member of staff they will record the details as presented to them and pass these on to the appropriate staff member. No promise of confidentiality can be given.

Following a reported incident staff will investigate using the following strategies, with the support of other members of staff, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate:

- Reflection – What has happened? Could it have been different?
- Resolution – How can we try to ensure this doesn't happen again?
- Reconciliation – How we put things right between those involved?

All incidents of bullying/ harassment must be recorded by staff in a bullying system or book that the Headteacher must organise. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted or involved.

Time out/ Reflect and Repair time may be used if deemed appropriate. The level of time out will be determined by the success of the 3Rs process and at the discretion of the member of staff involved. Care must be promoted for the victim and the bully, not just one. Sanctions may be applied where bullying is identified.

Persistent Bullying

If a student continues to inform that they are being bullied, they should be provided with a log book to record this. For younger children, or those with a special educational need and/or disability, they will be supported with this approach

Staff will determine what next steps to take having regard to the strategies and sanctions applied.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice;
 - Reassuring the student;
 - Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff;
 - Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence;
 - Referral to a counsellor/Time 2 Talk session/Pastoral Lead;

- Support and advice offered to parents as appropriate;
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns
- Include other agencies where appropriate (e.g. where there are safeguarding concerns.)

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened;
- Discovering why the student became involved;
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change;
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the student;
- Involving other agencies, including Police and Children’s Services, to support a change in behaviour;
- Referral to a counsellor (if necessary);
- Attend a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the effected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence.

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

Sanctions

Students who have bullied will be punished dealt with appropriately according to their behaviour, in accordance with the School’s Behaviour policy; exclusion may be an appropriate sanction depending on the circumstances.

Complaints

If a parent or carer is dissatisfied with the response made by the school following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may make a complaint in accordance with the school’s Complaints Policy.

Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the school’s Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, the effectiveness and any complaints related to this policy will be shared in the termly ‘Ethos, Safeguarding and Behaviour’ committee.

