



St Margaret Mary's RC Primary School

Anti – Bullying Policy

Our Mission:

We try to follow Jesus in everything we do.

We help everybody in our school family, and we try to let our light shine as the light of Jesus shines.

Everyone at St. Margaret Mary's is special. We feel happy and safe.
We are encouraged to value ourselves and each other in an atmosphere of trust, good humour, acceptance and enjoyment.

Saint Margaret Mary's school is where we come to learn through exciting and fun lessons. We try to always be welcoming and caring to all. We want to do our best, even if we find it difficult.

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
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| Date agreed by Governing Body | 30 th March 2023 (version 1) |
| Review Date | Annually |
| Chair of Governors | A Ager |

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Statement of intent

St Margaret Mary's believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, including learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school alongside our catholic mission and faith.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at St Margaret Mary's.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

1. Objectives of this Policy

- To ensure that everyone in the school community have an understanding of what bullying is and how the school will deal with incidences of bullying.
- To ensure staff understand their role in preventing and responding where a child is at risk. (Especially regarding child-on-child abuse).
- To develop a listening caring ethos at St Margaret Mary's where any form of bullying is not tolerated and dealt with in the appropriate and timely manner.
- To encourage discussion and not make premature assumptions and to foster a problem solving approach.
- The staff is made aware of the anti-bullying policy by the Senior Leadership Team and has access to where the policy is kept.
- Explore issues through the curriculum by PSHE, assemblies and Anti-bullying week.
- Support the bully and the victim in modifying behaviour.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.
- Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:
 - Pupils who are adopted.
 - Pupils suffering from a health problem.

- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:
 - Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
 - Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
 - Pupils with SEND.

3. What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as a physical, psychological or verbal attack against an individual or group of individuals by a person or group of persons, causing physical or psychological harm to the victim. It is usually conscious and wilful and commonly consists of repeated acts of aggression and/or manipulation. It can take a number of forms – both physical and non-physical, either in combination or in isolation. Any bullying, whether physical or non-physical, may result in lasting psychological damage to the individual.

3.1 Bullying generally falls into one or a combination of the following categories:

- **Physical Bullying** – Unprovoked assault on a person or group which can range from a ‘prod’ to grievous bodily harm.
- **Psychological** – Reduction of a person’s self-esteem or confidence through threatening behaviour, taunting or teasing about race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, appearance, or any other feature of their lives which can be used to wound or humiliate them.
- **Social- Ostracism**/rejection by peer group.
- **Verbal** – The use of language in a derogatory or offensive manner, such as swearing, racist or sexist abuse, sexual innuendo, spreading rumours, etc.
- **Cyber bullying** – Using mobile phones or the internet to deliberately upset someone. This includes peer-on-peer abuse (see below). Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users especially during remote learning in relation to COVID 19.
- **Homophobic/transphobic/biphobic** – Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexuals, or trans-gender people, or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-gender.
- **Child- on -Child abuse** - any abusive behaviour that involves sexual harassment/violence, cyberbullying, physical abuse, ‘upskirting’, ‘sexting’, coercion or initiation/hazing (see Safeguarding and Child Protection, Online Safety policies).

We believe it is important that:

- All children feel safe whilst learning to play and relate to others
- All children are treated fairly, with respect and no loss of dignity
- We listen carefully to what all children have to say
- We treat reports from all children seriously and take prompt, appropriate action

3.2 The nature of bullying

It is generally accepted that bullying behaviour takes the form of being deliberately hurtful to others, or behaving in a way that causes others to feel threatened or intimidated.

Bullying behaviour is often repeated over a period of time. Victims of this behaviour find it difficult to defend themselves or to share with others what is happening to them.

Bullying behaviour tends to be secretive or 'covered up' and can therefore be difficult to detect. It is clear that this form of behaviour is harmful to both 'victim' and 'bully' and prompt action is needed to offer real support to all children and families involved.

All members of school staff will listen to and take seriously any accusations of bullying and the incident will be recorded on the school proforma (Appendix B) and added to CPOMS (the school's software system for recording concerns about safeguarding, including bullying and cyberbullying). Where it is clear that a child or group have acted in a predetermined way to target an individual or individuals, the school will report it to the governing body.

It is important that all bullying behaviours are identified and dealt with to keep children safe.

3.3 Pupil's attitudes to bullying

The most important indication of bullying behaviour is whether a 'victim' themselves believes that they have been subject to bullying. At our schools, we strive to ensure that all systems enable all children to tell us if they feel they have a problem relating to bullying behaviour. We ensure all children know that what they say will always be listened to and taken seriously.

4. Signs and symptoms of bullying

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
- is unwilling to go to school (school-phobic) or regularly feels ill in the morning
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens to self-harm or runs away
- stops eating
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- 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 unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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.

5. Strategies in school to prevent bullying behaviour include:

- Have a listening and caring ethos
- Encourage discussion and don't make premature assumptions
- Adopt a problem solving approach
- Careful implementation of the Behaviour, Equality, SRE, Collective Worship & Curriculum policies.
- Explore issues through the curriculum by PSHE, assemblies and Anti-bullying week.
- Encouragement & development of good relationships between children and between staff and children.
- The use of collective worship and circle time to explore those relationships, areas of conflict, feelings, ideas and opinions.
- Actively encouraging children to seek support with any problems and giving them time and privacy to share any concerns.
- Working with children to help them grow in understanding of the consequences of their actions.
- Working with other agencies – e.g. other schools, Caritas Social Worker, Educational Psychologist, CAHMS, Children's Services.
- All staff who work with children to have appropriate training and a clear understanding of the school's approach to behaviour management, anti-bullying, equality, safeguarding.
- Support the bully and the victim in modifying behaviour
- Provide information through notice boards, posters and Child line.
- Provide support through playground buddies, friendship group and peer support.
- The anti-bullying policy works alongside the behaviour policy. This is discussed with the children in class so they are informed of the procedures
- Where cyberbullying is concerned, educating and engaging parents on the principles of online safety so they know the dangers of what unsupervised internet access can create.
- Encourage parents to check what their children are doing online and using parental controls on their computer so that they are comfortable that children are not wandering into dangerous territory.

6. What should parents/carers do if they think/feel/believe their child is being bullied?

Parents/carers should contact the school. The first point of contact is the child's class teacher. It is important that parents feel confident to talk to staff about their concerns. A senior leader will be actively involved in all such cases either through discussion with the children concerned or the class teacher and welcomes parents to share their concerns so that prompt action can be taken.

7. Good practice for staff when working with parents

- Recognise that it is normal for parents to experience anger or feel upset.
- Keep an open mind.
- Remain calm and understanding.
- Refrain from making instant decisions and explain clearly that it will take time to investigate incidents thoroughly before passing any judgement.
- Reassure the parent that any incidents will be followed up promptly.
- Make it clear that the school does care.
- Agree a timescale to speak to the parent after investigations have been made.

- Clearly explain school policy and procedure and ensure that it is followed.
- Use and follow the 'reporting bullying' forms (Appendices C & D)
- Feedback promptly to a senior leader and ask for next steps advice.
- Explain to parents that discussions will relate to their child only and actions taken to address the situation relating to their child. It is not appropriate to discuss other children or any actions or sanctions put in place except to reassure parents that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the well-being of their child in school.
- Investigating reported incidents of bullying
- Suspected or alleged bullying must never be ignored.
- Collect accounts from all related sources, listening carefully and avoiding assumptions.
- Talk to children individually rather than in groups.
- Encourage children to be honest and open in their accounts of events.
- Use and follow the 'Anti-Bullying Incident forms' (Appendices B & C)
- Check with other staff if other incidents have been observed or changes in children's behaviour been noted.

8. Action for the school

- Staff to record all incidents on the 'Anti-Bullying incident forms'. (Appendices B&C)
- Meet with the victim.
- Encourage to talk about incidents, thoughts, wishes and feelings.
- Acknowledge their feelings and offer support.
- Arrange a suitable programme of support.
- Inform parents.
- Meet with the child/ren alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour.
- Encourage children to talk about reported or unreported incidents.
- Listen carefully to their perception of the incidents.
- Try to explore any possible motivation for the behaviour.
- If bullying behaviour has taken place, explain that it is totally unacceptable and encourage the child to acknowledge that the behaviour is wrong and needs to stop.
- Arrange a programme of support with the child, designed to explore reasons for the behaviour and to ensure that there is no reoccurrence.
- Mediation will be used between victim & perpetrator (s) where appropriate to support the right choices being made and good friendships rather than retaliation. However, in serious cases this may not be suitable.
- The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will decide at what point it is appropriate to make contact with parents depending on the nature of the incident. Children will be offered the opportunity of having their parents involved to support the process throughout.
- Should any incidents of bullying behaviour be deemed of a particularly serious nature the Headteacher will inform the parents immediately of the possibility of exclusion.
- The Headteacher may take the decision to exclude a child immediately for serious bullying behaviour. Parents will have the right to appeal to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.

9. Outcomes

- The school will investigate the incident (The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately)
- The child displaying bullying behaviour will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences such as (a) an apology letter or (b) a written contract may be required.
- The school will aim to sort out differences and encourage the pupils to reconcile.
- In serious cases, parents will be informed in writing and suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place and it will be considered that the incident/incidents are closed. The school strongly believes that all children can be bullied or a bully and as such all parties once an issue has been addressed should be allowed to move on from the issue at hand.

10. Links to other policies

Behaviour

Suspension and Exclusions

E Safety

Safeguarding

Anti-Bullying Incident Form A (to be completed with the victim of bullying)

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--|---------------|
| Name of pupil: | | Year group: | | | |
| Date of reported incident: | | Time of reported incident: | | | |
| Staff carrying out the interview: | | | | | |
| Any others present? | | | | | |
| Category for CPOMS: | | | | | |
| Physical <input type="checkbox"/> | | Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> | | Cyberbullying <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | Indirect <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Racist <input type="checkbox"/> | | Sexism <input type="checkbox"/> | | Homophobic <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | Appearance <input type="checkbox"/> | | Ability <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | | Social Background <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| What has happened? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Has it happened before? If so, how many times? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Who was involved? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Where did it happen? | | | | | |
| Playground | Classroom | Toilet | Cloakroom | Corridor | Out of school |
| Other – please specify | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Were there any witnesses? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| How did you feel when it happened? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| What if anything, have you done about it already? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| How are you feeling now? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

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|---|
| What would you like me to do to help you? |
| Comments from parent/carer |

Action to be taken by school

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|--------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Follow up action checklist: Victim

| | |
|--|--------|
| Has the pupil had the chance to say what happened? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil had an opportunity to talk to the person doing the bullying about how they feel? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil been given support to make sure they feel safe and gain confidence? | Yes/No |
| Has a date been set to review the situation to make sure it has been resolved? | Yes/No |
| Has the school put things in place to stop it happening again? | Yes/No |
| Have the pupil's parents/carers been involved? | Yes/No |
| Will the pupil be offered extra support if they need it? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil been informed of the outcomes and actions taken? | Yes/No |
| Is the pupil ready to forgive, forget and move on? | |
| If no bullying has taken place or there is insufficient evidence, is there clear actions to re-assure and meet the needs of those concerned? | Yes/No |
| Has it been recorded on CPOMs | Yes/No |

Signed:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| | Pupil |
| | Parent/carer |
| | Staff member |

Review Date 2: (suggested 1 week)

Date:

Time:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resolved | Unresolved |
| Further intervention needed | Further monitoring needed |

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signed:

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | Pupil |
| | Parent/carers |
| | Staff member |

Review Date 2: (suggested 4 weeks)

Date:

Time:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resolved | Unresolved |
| Further intervention needed | Further monitoring needed |

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signed:

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | pupil |
| | Parent/carers |
| | Staff member |

Appendix B

Anti-Bullying Incident Form A2 (to be completed with the person accused of bullying - perpetrator)

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Name of pupil: | | Year group: | | | |
| Date of reported incident: | | Time of reported incident: | | | |
| Staff carrying out the interview: | | | | | |
| Any others present? | | | | | |
| Category for CPOMS: | | | | | |
| Physical | Verbal | Cyberbullying | Indirect | | |
| Racist <input type="checkbox"/> | Sexism <input type="checkbox"/> | Homophobic <input type="checkbox"/> | Appearance <input type="checkbox"/> | Ability <input type="checkbox"/> | Social Background <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What has happened? | | | | | |
| Has it happened before? If so, how many times? | | | | | |
| Who was involved? | | | | | |
| Where did it happen? | | | | | |
| Playground | Classroom | Toilet | Cloakroom | Corridor | Out of school |
| Other – please specify | | | | | |
| Were there any witnesses? | | | | | |
| How did you feel when it happened? | | | | | |
| What if anything have you done about it already? | | | | | |
| How are you feeling now? | | | | | |

| |
|---|
| What would you like me to do to help you? |
| Comments from parent/carer |

Action to be taken by school:

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|--------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Follow up action checklist: Perpetrator

| | |
|--|--------|
| Has the pupil had the chance to explain the reasons for their behaviour? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil been told that what they have done is wrong and that we may have to put some supportive measures in place? | Yes/No |
| Does the pupil know how the victim is feeling? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil had some time to reflect? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil had a chance to say sorry? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil been supported through a restorative approach to consider how they can change their behaviour? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil identified someone they trust to talk to about how they are feeling? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil been encouraged to develop their talents and skills? | Yes/No |
| Has the pupil had an opportunity to prove that they are a good citizen of our school community? | Yes/No |
| Have parents/carers been involved | Yes/No |
| Is the pupil ready to forgive, forget and move on? | Yes/No |
| Has it been recorded on CPOMs | Yes/No |

Signed:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| | Pupil |
| | Parent/carer |
| | Staff member |

Review Date 2: (suggested 1 week) Date: Time:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resolved | Unresolved |
| Further intervention needed | Further monitoring needed |

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signed:

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| | Pupil |
| | Parent/carer |
| | Staff member |

Review Date 2: (suggested 4 weeks) Date: Time:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resolved | Unresolved |
| Further intervention needed | Further monitoring needed |

| Action | Time frame | Lead person | Next steps |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signed:

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| | Pupil |
| | Parent/carer |
| | Staff member |

Appendix C Sample Letter to parents/carers following a bullying incident

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child was recently the subject of bullying behaviour. I am writing to seek your views on how well the school dealt with the problem. We will use this information confidentially within the school to inform our review of policy and practice. The individual details will not have any wider use unless we ask for, and you give your consent.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| How easy was it for your child/you to report the bullying (circle one) (1: not easy) (5: very easy) | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Comment if we could improve: | | | | |
| How satisfied are you with what we did to make your child feel safe? (circle one) (1: not easy) (5: very easy) | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Comment if we could improve: | | | | |
| How satisfied are you with the support your child has had since the bullying incident from the school? (circle one) (1: not easy) (5: very easy) | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Comment if we could improve: | | | | |
| Overall, how satisfied are you with the way in which our school deals with bullying incidents? (circle one) (1: not satisfied) (5: very satisfied) | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Comment if we could improve: | | | | |

Thank you for your help in completing this. We will use information to think about what we do to tackle bullying and make our school one where pupils and parents feel confident that we will address any issues, nomatter how difficult. We want pupils and parents to feel confident that we do not tolerate bullying behaviour and confident that our systems support children as they continue to learn and grow.

Appendix D Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools; July 2017: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

- **Cyberbullying**
- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

- **LGBT**
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

- **SEND**
- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- <https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/keeping-children-with-send-from-getting-lost-in-digital-space/>

- **Racism and Hate**
- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational