



St Mary's Catholic College Wallasey

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy written November 2016

Due for Review October 2018

**Review October 2018 and bi-annually thereafter
(reviewed and accepted at Governors' meeting 16 October 2018)**

Anti-Bullying Policy

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The Anti-Bullying Policy aims to reflect the Catholic ethos of the school.

The policy is also in line with the school's behaviour policy, which promotes the responsibility of all adults in the school to deal with behaviour, including bullying, and to educate students to behave responsibly.

The anti-bullying policy also reflects the school's mission statement which states we are a "caring community" it is expected that teachers use a 'bullying preventative' style of teaching which has a number of different outcomes for students:

- treating pupils with respect
- NOT setting up victims
- Presenting good role models – using power and authority appropriately
- Explicitly stating that bullying is not acceptable
- Active process aimed at changing pupil attitudes.

The policy reflects the school's safeguarding policy. Under the Children's Act of 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a Child Protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Finally, the policy is in line with the school's Health and Safety Policy. The school is committed to providing a caring and safe community within which students can thrive.

For other links, please also refer to the 'Safer Working Practices' document, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1) combined within the Child Protection Policy.

POLICY AIMS

The policy reflects current guidance from the Department for Education.

The policy aims to reduce bullying by:

- Ensuring that those connected with the school understand what the term 'bullying' means and that bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Putting clear strategies in place for preventing and dealing with any behaviour deemed as bullying.
- Promoting a school ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable by everyone.
- Ensuring a safe and secure environment in which everyone is able to learn and work.
- Providing a transparent, easily understood system for responding to reported incidents of bullying.

The intention of this policy is that it will be used as a working document by the school community: staff, pupils and parents.

KEY STAFF

All staff will take responsibility for dealing with any incidents of bullying.

There is a clear line of responsibility and referral for dealing with incidents: The Form Tutor will be the member of staff initially responsible for dealing with incidents within their form who will discuss with Head of Year.

Should it be necessary, the Form Tutor will refer the matter to the Head of Year who will then take over the responsibility. Should the matter still not be resolved, it will be referred to the Assistant Headteacher, a member of the Senior Management Team attached to the relevant Year group, or department who will deal with the matter. Should the matter still not be resolved, this will then be referred to the Deputy Headteacher and finally the Headteacher.

In curriculum areas, the pattern should be replicated – classroom teacher, HOD, AHT and so on. HOY should be kept informed from HOD.

Occasionally, bullying is reported to staff and the structure above may not be suitable. Heads of Learning should be alerted to this and discuss the actions with appropriate Assistant Head Teachers.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms, and is often motivated by prejudice, for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It may be motivated by actual difference between students, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring safety is obviously our school's first responsibility; but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying and will be treated with equal seriousness.

THE DEFINING FEATURES OF BULLYING

Bullying:

- is a form of aggressive behaviour, which is usually hurtful and deliberate
- is invariably persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years
- is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.
- an underlying feature is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate.
- can be subtle
- is essentially a covert activity witnessed by children and not by adults

TYPES OF BULLYING

At SMCC, we take all kinds of bullying seriously. There are different forms of bullying, the most significant of which are listed below:

- Physical hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings
- Verbal name calling
teasing
repeated teasing
racist, sexual or homophobic remarks
threats
- Indirect ('Psychological') spreading nasty rumours
excluding someone from groups
moving away as a person approaches
leaving notes
failure to speak or acknowledge a person
the "look"
- Mobile phones text messages/cyber bullying
- Computers sending abusive, threatening or upsetting messages/ cyber bullying

The school considers **all forms of bullying to be equally unacceptable**. It is important not to under-estimate the long-term effects that 'psychological' (non-physical) forms of bullying can have. Those who have suffered from bullying often report that they recover from any physical injury or pain much more quickly than they get over the feelings of humiliation, anxiety or fear.

Unless checked, 'low key' bullying such as shoving or name-calling can escalate if the bully finds that the bullied pupils respond in a particular way. Bullying is recognised as being different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour: it is often ongoing, and is an abuse of power.

The school recognizes that bullying may not be merely confined to the way children treat each other: Occasionally children may bully adults, especially when children are in gangs, and when children seek to undermine or intimidate adults. Occasionally children may experience bullying behaviour from adults; this is often when adults abuse their power and authority.

For further information on cyber bullying as listed above, please refer to SMCC's Safeguarding and eSafety Policy, 2018.

STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

At SMCC, we continue to develop a range of strategies to prevent bullying.

Below are some recommended strategies which the school currently undertakes and is developing:

- a. Supervision**
Students supervised by staff at lunch and break. This includes Senior Members of Staff, Heads of Year, P&A Coaches and TA's.
- b. Corridors**
Staff should be present on corridors at lesson change over.
- c. Shorter lunch times** help reduce the opportunity for bullying situations to arise. At present (2018), lunchtimes are split Yr 7, 8 and Sixth Form on first lunch, Yr 9, 10, 11 on second lunch.
- d. One-way system** helps reduce opportunity for conflict on corridors e.g. students pushing each other, deliberately walking into each other, overcrowding etc.
- f. Boy/girl seating plan in class**
Teaching staff should have seating plans for their classes and are expected to follow this policy in all lessons
- g. Materials**
Teachers are expected to ensure that there are enough materials for all students to use.
- h. Punctuality to lessons**
Staff are expected to arrive on time to lessons and be waiting on corridors to greet students. Most staff have their own classrooms, which enables this to happen.

i. Behaviour policy

Staff are expected to follow the school's behaviour policy and use it as a working document.

j. Immediate action

Members of staff to whom bullying incidents are reported should ensure that any incidents are either dealt with immediately by him /herself or passed on to the Head of Learning.

k. Classroom management

Teachers are expected avoid the use of sarcasm and threats as a means of classroom management.

l. Consistent sanctions

Teachers are expected to use sanctions in a consistent fashion, according to the school's behaviour policy.

m. Individual recognition

The school's ethos values effort and achievement relative to individuals, not only high achievement. This is illustrated in the school's annual Awards Evening, as well as termly achievement assemblies and in the SMC newsletter.

n. Awareness and familiarity with policy

All stakeholders including staff, students, parents and governors should be aware of the policy, its purpose as a working document, and how to deal with bullying should it arise.

o. Buddy System

Yr 7 students identified as vulnerable at induction are introduced to a Sixth Form buddy or older student to assist in the transition from primary school.

p. Assertiveness Training/self esteem work/ restorative justice for bullied pupils.

This will often be undertaken by pastoral staff after referral from HOY.

q. Chaplain Support

This is offered to some vulnerable students as an extra form of emotional support.

TACKLING BULLYING THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

EXISTING CURRICULUM

- Many subject areas could be used to promote anti-bullying values and co-operative behaviour. For example,
- making direct reference to the behaviour of a group as illustrated by an incident in history, current affairs or fictional account.
- DVDs, plays, poetry and fiction used as a basis for discussion
- Art work, creative writing, role-play, and drama
- Most subjects allow for group tasks, experiments or team building
- Drama can be used in assemblies for promoting anti-bullying behaviour
- PSHE
 - ✓ Students explore different forms of bullying and its effects.
 - ✓ Students consider the role played by all in the bullying process by considering responsibilities of the whole community in preventing and tackling bullying.
 - ✓ Students are made aware of where to go for help if they are a victim or witness of bullying, as well as developing an understanding of the need for rules and rights.
 - ✓ Students explore what can be done to stamp out bullying, encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own behavior and to challenge the concept of bullying.
 - ✓ This is taught throughout the Key Stages, exploring text and cyber bullying and how to tackle it.
 - ✓ Lessons involve scenarios, drama, discussion, and reflection.

TEACHING STYLES THAT HELP REDUCE BULLYING

School staff should consider the possible influence of their own behaviour towards students.

Bullying preventative teaching:

- Treating pupils with respect.
- NOT setting up victims. E.g. sitting a child near a student who you aware could intimidate him /her.
- Presenting good role models – using power and authority appropriately.
- Explicitly stating that bullying is NOT acceptable.

REPORTING BULLYING

Pupils often report bullying. They rarely keep it to themselves, no matter how worried they may feel about being found out they have told someone, or how insignificant they may feel it is, or how much they may be perceived by others as being weak.

It is only when staff are told about the bullying that the school can take action to stop it, and support the victim.

The school has a clear reporting system.

Pupils at SMCC usually either:

- a) **Tell a trusted adult in school or**
- b) **Tell their Form Tutor.**

Pupils should tell an adult as soon as it happens. They are encouraged to do so and the culture and ethos at SMC leads students to understand that this is something which will not be tolerated.

1. The **Form Tutor** or **P&A Coach** is usually the main point of contact at first. If pupils decide to tell another adult in school, the concern will be shared as soon as possible with the Form Tutor/P&A Coach/HOY. One of these named adults will discuss the problem with the child.
2. If it is decided the issue is of a bullying nature, the pupil will be asked to complete a statement where s/he will write down the details of the bullying incident.
3. The incident will be referred immediately to the pupil's **Head of Year**.
4. The Head of Learning will then investigate the concern, and if necessary, take appropriate action. This may include sanctions as listed on SMCC's Behaviour Policy and E Safety Policies, depending on the nature of the behaviour. It may include parental contact, detentions, Emmaus Centre or exclusion. The decision on the sanctions will be made by the HOY/AHT/DHT, and parents of the perpetrator informed.
5. The Head of Year will contact the parents of both parties and put in place measures to support the victim and solve the problem with the perpetrator. This may involve input from the **pastoral staff**.
4. Should the bullying continue, the Head of Year will refer the matter to the relevant **Assistant Head Teacher**.
5. If the bullying still persists, it will then be referred to the **Deputy Head Teacher**, and ultimately the **Head Teacher**.

PARENTS REPORTING BULLYING

Parents may contact school, often in some distress, to report that their child has been bullied. Their concerns must be taken seriously. Reception is the first contact for parents telephoning school. Therefore all staff should be familiar with the policy. Parents contacting the school will be referred to the Head of Year for the relevant Year group.

Good practice includes:

- ✓ Recognising that the parent may be angry or upset.
- ✓ Keeping an open mind – bullying may be difficult to detect, so lack of staff awareness does not mean bullying has not occurred.
- ✓ Remaining calm and understanding.
- ✓ Making clear that the school does care and that something will be done, explaining the school policy and making sure that procedures are followed.

When a case is referred to a Head of Learning, the member of staff should:

- ✓ Ask for details and record the information.
- ✓ Make a further appointment to explain actions and find out if it has stopped.
- ✓ Follow up with staff to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.
- ✓ Ensure that school policy has been implemented.

Many of the same points apply when the school has to tell parents that their child has been involved in bullying. Parents are more likely to respond positively to a calm approach, which follows the agreed guidelines of an anti-bullying policy with which they are familiar.

BULLYING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL PREMISES

As per Department of Education Guidance 2017, SMCC will look into the incidents of bullying outside of the school in accordance with this policy. This can include travel to and from school whilst in school uniform, sanctions may follow, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

RECORDING BULLYING

All records relating to bullying incidents will be stored electronically and in the Head of Year pupil file. Sanctions for incidents will be recorded in SIMs.

The Level 3 Behaviour Form includes a category of 'bullying' to be filled in by relevant middle or senior manager.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

The fundamental aim of the policy is to work towards the prevention of bullying, rather than reacting to incidents of bullying with a list of sanctions. Although bullying needs to be stopped, punishment is rarely the most effective method of responding to pupils who bully others.

Therefore it is important that the school considers a range of responses to bullying and considers each incident individually.

Parents should be involved in the process of responding to bullying incidents. Early communication is recommended in order to deal with the problem as soon as possible. Communication should be as positive as possible, with an emphasis on the bullying behaviour, not the pupil.

INVOLVING PARENTS

Involving parents is often a key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Though not always apparent, parental approval is important to children of all ages. The majority of parents support anti-bullying measures and are keen to participate. Consultation is important, helping create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged, and bullying considered unacceptable.

Useful approaches include:

- ✓ Regular consultation and communication (policy available on website).
- ✓ Parent-friendly anti-bullying policy
- ✓ Advising parents about possible consequences of bringing valuable items to school (through parental handbooks).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The policy will be updated in October 2019 and will involve all pupils, staff and parents. After the launch the policy will then be monitored by key staff i.e. Heads of Year and Assistant Headteachers who have over all responsibility for Year groups.

Key staff will monitor the effectiveness of the policy and will consider:

- ✓ The views of parents and pupils
- ✓ The process for reporting bullying
- ✓ The number of pupils reporting bullying and types of incidents
- ✓ The system of storing records via SIMS and HOY records

- ✓ The range of actions taken when dealing with bullying
- ✓ Preventative measures

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated by the Senior Management Team. After a whole year, the possible effects might include:

- ✓ Staff more vigilant and responsive to bullying
- ✓ Fewer pupils report being bullied or that they bully others
- ✓ More pupils say they would not join in bullying someone else
- ✓ More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied.

REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed regularly and governors will be made aware of any revisions/changes. Any changes will be made as a result of monitoring and evaluation. Consultation with pupils, parents and governors will also help the school to make any necessary modifications.

APPENDICES

1. Factors which influence children in becoming bullies or victims
2. Signs and Symptoms
3. Effects and consequences of bullying
4. Working with bystanders
5. Assertiveness Training
6. Reporting bullying flowchart
7. DfE Guidance 2017

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE CHILDREN IN BECOMING BULLIES OR VICTIMS

Children who Bully

Homes

- Little status gained – little verbal interaction
physical/verbal aggression features
- Parent models bullying behaviour – few rewards/praise
- Limited interest in the child
- Negative sanctions

Individual

- Low self-esteem
- Low academic attainments
- Charisma/dominance
- Few positive skills

School

- No rules/boundaries
- Intervention
- No policy re unacceptability
- Models of teachers bullying – covert support
- Opportunities to bully
- Geography of the school
- Lack of supervision
- Poor communication with parents

Children who are Victims

Home

- Possibly overprotective- not allowing independence – non assertive role models
- Lack awareness about growing up
- Lack of “street cred” – poor appearance

Individual

- Minor disabilities – clumsiness – physical features – lack of assertion – sensitivity, few friends – quiet – problems making retaining friendships
- Low self-esteem – few attributes

School

- No acknowledgement – no security
- No policy – weak pastoral system
- No communication with parents

SECTION TWO

Signs and Symptoms

There is no foolproof way of knowing whether a child or young person is being bullied. Bullying is a covert and even secretive activity. Reducing bullying therefore involves effective communication between members of staff and parents as part of a school culture where talking about bullying and asserting one's right to feel safe are viewed as particularly important.

The following are some useful indicators, which can lead to a more detailed discussion of what is happening to a young person.

- Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, bite marks
- Belongings repeatedly going missing
- Refuses to say why he/she is unhappy
- Distressed at the thought of going to school
- Refuses to go to school
- Reports aches and pains
- Frightened of walking to school alone
- Changes route to school
- Has started taking longer to get home from school
- Seems withdrawn/unhappy or in a world of his/her own
- Cries at bedtime
- Returns home with torn clothes or damaged schoolwork
- Returns home hungry (lunch/snack money stolen)
- Asks for more money than usual or steals money (to pay off bully)
- Loses interest in schoolwork or finds it harder to concentrate
- Refuses to go out to play or stops going to cubs/brownies in the evenings or at weekends

SECTION THREE

Effects and Consequences of Bullying

Bullying is frequently an aggressive and abusive activity, which is potentially very harmful and dangerous. There is often a need to impress upon members of the school community the serious consequences of letting bullying continue without taking any action.

These effects can be seen at any or all of the following levels:

Individual level –Safety and happiness of pupils

- lives are made miserable – injury
- loss of self confidence – low self esteem increasingly
- isolated as others “move away”
- poor self esteem – self blame
- truancy
- poor concentration affects learning and levels of achievement
- subject options choice to avoid other children
- later adult disturbance/depression, death

Classroom level

- dynamics of the class group can maintain or prevent bullying
- bystanders learn that bullying works – they learn “putdowns” and ways of exerting power “ripple effects”
- disruptions and unease within the classroom

Systems level

- 20% of those being bullied take time off because of it
- bullying results in a reputation for being an ineffective, uncaring school
- a school that parents would not opt to send their children to
- provides a poor model of behaviour that affects the ethos of the school

SECTION FOUR

Working with Bystanders

Bullying is an activity which almost always takes place within a social context. The role of the onlookers or bystanders is often crucial to initiating and maintaining the bullying behaviour. Helping potential witnesses of bullying to be clear about their roles and responsibilities in bullying situations is therefore very important if the harmful effects of bullying are to be significantly reduced. Pupils mainly respond to bullying behaviour in one of four ways.

They can:

- Actively encourage the bullying behaviour
- Passively support the bullying behaviour
- Passively reject the bullying behaviour
- Actively challenge the bullying behaviour

It is important for staff and students to consider what kinds of behaviour might fall into each of these categories.

These can best be achieved by getting students to look at real or imaginary scenarios and follow the instructions given below as part of a classroom activity.

The majority of pupils are likely to know that bullying is happening even though they may not be actively involved. They may disapprove of what is going on, but be unsure of who is responsible for doing something about it. Bystanders may fail to act because they are afraid, uncomfortable or not aware of what to do.

It is essential that staff motivate students to use peer pressure so that an active, assertive, but not aggressive stand can be made.

Students can be encouraged to be ACTIVE bystanders by:

- not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group
- not smiling/laughing when someone is being bullied
- telling a member of staff
- telling the bullying pupil to stop
- showing the bullying pupil they disapprove
- It is particularly important to emphasise how being passive about bullying behaviour can not only collude with it, but often encourages it.

SECTION 5

Assertiveness Training for Bullied Pupils (usually through Pastoral staff or Youth Worker and referred via AHT/HOY)

Aims to provide a safe, supportive environment for bullied pupils

- to talk about their experiences
- to learn and practice effective responsive behaviour

Assertive behaviour

- to stand up for one's rights without violating the rights of others
- to give clear, direct and honest messages
- the techniques employ a standard formula and provide a clearly defined structure to use in any situation where pressure is exerted
- the script provides a sense of security with a neutral stance that de-escalates the situation
- the pupils feel more control and power

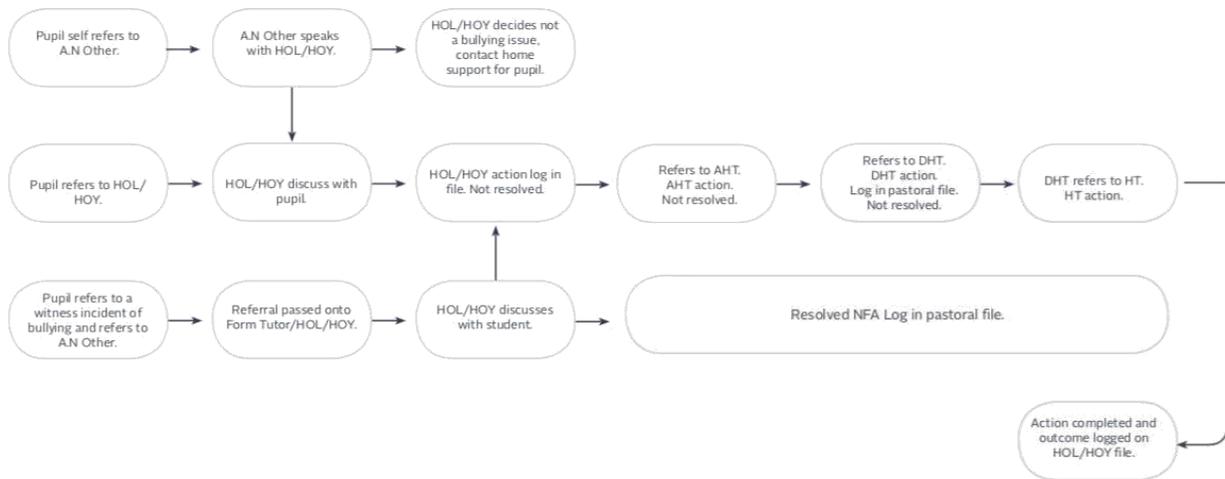
Children are taught how to:-

- make assertive statements
- resist manipulation and threats
- respond to name calling
- leave a bullying situation
- safely escape from physical restraint
- enlist support from bystanders
- boost their own self esteem
- remain calm in stressful situations

REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN - PROCEDURES

In order to create a culture which is inclusive and safe learning environment for pupils and staff. We have a zero tolerance approach to bullying and have an anti-bullying policy. If you suspect that there has been an incident of bullying please use the flow chart below and action immediately.



NFA = No further action.

16. GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

SMCC	St Mary's Catholic College
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
HT	Headteacher
DHT	Deputy Headteacher
AHT	Assistant Headteacher
HOY	Head of Year
PAC	P&A Coach
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
TA	Teaching Assistant
NFA	No Further Action
SIMS	Electronic record keeping system (School Information Management System)
Emmaus Centre	Internal Exclusion Centre