St Mary's Catholic College
Wallasey

Anti Bullying policy

2026-2028

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Contents

Policy aims	**Page 4**
Objectives	**Page 4**
What is Bullying?	**Page 4**
The defining features of bullying	**Page 4**
Different types of bullying	**Page 4**
Creating an anti-bullying culture at St Mary's	**Page 5**
Prevention	**Page 6**
Preventing child-on-child abuse	**Page 6**
Strategies/Responding to Incidents when they occur	**Page 8**
Cyberbullying	**Page 10**
Staff principles	**Page 10**
Consequences	**Page 10**
Monitoring and evaluation	**Page 11**
Specialist organisations to support the anti-bullying policy	**Page 12**
Child Friendly - Anti Bullying policy	**Page 13**

Policy aims:

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Objectives:

- To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear where students are encouraged to report bullying.
- To reduce and eradicate wherever possible, instances in which students are subject to any form of bullying.
- To establish a means of dealing with bullying and or providing support to students who have been bullied.
- To provide support for students who are accused of bullying
- To ensure that all students and staff are aware of the anti-bullying policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with the college.
- To respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported.

What is Bullying?

The defining features of bullying

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 a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) 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.

Different types of bullying:

Electronic / Cyber-bullying – bullying by text message, bullying on the internet (in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and through instant messaging services) and on hate websites.

Physical - hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings.

Verbal - Persistent name calling, insulting, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down.

Indirect (known as emotional/psychological) - spreading rumours, excluding somebody from social groups, sending malicious messages

Racist - Racism means you are subjected to abuse and harassment because of your race, colour or beliefs. (e.g. insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence)

Sexual - sexually insulting language/gestures, name calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact.

Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic– insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.

The use of AI - artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. St Mary's Catholic College recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deep fakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. St Mary's Catholic College will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with the provisions of this policy.

Creating an anti-bullying culture at SMCC:



Our behaviour for learning policy supports the aims and objectives of this policy

College wide systems are used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy through the taught curriculum and Inspire programme in line with RSHE guidance.
- develop Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) schemes of work and healthy lifestyle days to highlight bullying related issues and how to deal with them.
- develop self-esteem through, for example:
    - displays of work
    - verbal praise and other rewards
    - encouraging students to stand up for themselves and not to allow others to make their lives unhappy
    - students being given responsibilities within college
    - students being encouraged to express their opinions and ideas
    - Positive behaviour policy

Further actions that we take to support the promotion of anti bullying:

- College assemblies/academic review to be used to reinforce bullying will not be tolerated.
- posters on the college notice boards/form rooms/classrooms/to be used to remind students that bullying is not acceptable.
- A summary of this policy is in all student planners.
- Provide written guidance to our students to explain what they should do if they are being bullied or if they see another student being bullied.
- Develop an Anti-bullying ambassador scheme

Students must realise that they must not stand by and let bullying happen. If they witness bullying taking place and take no action, they become part of the problem and as such are condoning it.

Prevention:

- The college will clearly communicate a whole-college commitment to addressing bullying through the Inspire Curriculum, Year group assemblies and the Anti-Bullying initiatives run by the anti bullying ambassadors.
- All reported instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of pastoral staff and reported on CPOMS. CPOMS will then be used to identify trends in cases and used to prevent further incidents of bullying.

- All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the Relationship Sex Education (RSE) and health education curriculum, in line with the Secondary School RSE and Health Education Policy.
- Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- All members of the college will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- A safe place, supervised by a teacher, will be available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone (Student Support). The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and follow these up with the Head of Learning.
- All staff will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- The college will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- The college will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Preventing child-on-child abuse:

The college has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. All staff have received training and guidance on all aspects of KCSIE 2026. Through this training staff are made aware of the types of child on child abuse and how they should report cases through CPOMS.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, 10 such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

The college's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines our stance on addressing child-on-child sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

To prevent child on child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the college educates pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE / RSE lessons in Inspire time and through student voice. The college will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE / RSE lessons,

Such content will be specific to age and stage of development, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Respectful behaviour
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who are more likely to be abused than other children. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

Staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils are more likely to be targeted by other children. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils.

The college's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between pupils of the opposite sex.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to Integrated Front Door (IFD)

Strategies/Responding to Incidents when they occur:

- Students who have been bullied should report this to their Form Tutor, P&A Coach, Head of Year or any other member of staff.
- Students who see others being bullied should report this to their Form Tutor, P&A Coach and /or Head of Year or any other member of staff.
- Members of staff who receive reports that a student has been bullied should report this to the appropriate Head of Year.
- All incidents will be reported to the Head of Year, who will investigate the incident. Appropriate action will be taken and will be dependent on the outcome of the investigation. A log of the outcome will be recorded on CPOMS.
- When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:
    - The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
    - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
    - If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to First Aid for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
    - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
    - A witness is used for serious incidents if available
    - If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
    - Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
    - All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
- Reports of bullying will be logged by the member of staff and recorded on CPOMS.

The response to all incidents will follow an escalated response and the outcome will depend on the severity of the incident. All cases will be logged on CPOMS and reported to senior leaders if the outcome is of a child protection nature or would result in the behaviour policy being applied.

Students who are bullied will be:

- listened to and taken seriously and the incident will be discussed only with the necessary people.
- assured that it was right to report the incident(s).
- reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied.
- involved in the process of deciding what action is to take place to help and stop the bully.
- able to discuss strategies to deal with emotions and feelings and to understand and cope with bullying.
- discouraged from hitting back or retaliating in any way.
- offered the chance to talk with other staff that can support – e.g. Student Support staff, Chaplain
- engaged in follow up meetings to ensure the any action taken is working
- staff will always try to ensure student safety.

Students who have bullied others:

- will have their behaviour challenged
- will be treated fairly
- given the opportunity to change behaviour and encouraged and supported in doing so.
- will be told that consequences may be imposed

Cyberbullying:

The college has an Online Safety Policy in place, which outlines the college's zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The college views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying including deepfakes and extremist content.

The college will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the college has the right to examine personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

Staff principles:

The college will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Consequences:

If the college is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The college will inform the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. detentions or service-based activities, and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the college will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

The Head of Year informally monitors the pupils involved over the next half-term.

Where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the college will act in line with the exclusion section set out in our Behaviour Policy and take into consideration the DFE - Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement September 2026.

Our responsibilities
Everyone within college is expected to:

- act in a respectful way towards one another and supports our core values
- adhere to and promote the objectives of this policy

students are expected to:

- report all incidents of bullying
- report suspected incidents of bullying
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in college

Parent/Carers can help by:

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- encouraging their child to be a positive member of the college community
- discussing with college any concerns that their child may be experiencing or involved in some other way

Monitoring and evaluation

The policy will be updated again in September 2028 and will take account of the views of students, staff and parents. The policy will then be monitored by key staff i.e. Heads of Year and key staff who have overall responsibility for Year groups.

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

- Regular consultation and communication (policy available on website).
- The views of parents and students (stakeholder voice)
- The process for reporting bullying
- The number of students reporting bullying and types of incidents; the system of storing records via CPOMS
- The numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- From the comments received from the college Council
- Students' perception of bullying in college through questionnaires/discussions etc.
- The number of days absent which are thought to arise as a consequence of bullying. This will be monitored through daily attendance monitoring and attendance aim.

- Number of complaints/compliments that we receive from Parents/Carers and feedback from questionnaires.
- Comments made by visitors and other people connected with the college.

Specialist organisations to support the anti-bullying policy:

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) (www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Kidscape (www.kidscape.org.uk): Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and Parent/Carers about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for college staff, and assertiveness training for young people. Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyber-bullying: ChildNet International (childnet.com): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

Bullying UK (bullying.co.uk) is part of The Family Lives Charity. Helpline and advice for anybody experiencing bullying.

Diana Award (https://diana-award.org.uk/) For resources to share regarding anti bullying. The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign runs across four key programmes. It also works with youth boards, working to change the attitude surrounding bullying both across the UK and beyond. All of the programmes have a strong peer mentoring focus, with trainers giving young people the skills and confidence to become Ambassadors to tackle bullying in their schools long after the training has finished. Their anti-bullying work is recognised as world-class thanks to this sustainable approach.



St Mary's

Catholic College

Child-Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy: Feeling Safe and Happy at college

Last updated: September 2026

Contents

Feeling safe and happy at college
What is bullying?
Types of bullying
What should I do if I am being bullied?
What should I do if I see someone else being bullied?
Who can I talk to?
How can I help stop bullying from happening?

Feeling safe and happy at college

At St Mary's Catholic College, we want to make sure that you feel looked after, safe and happy when you are in and out of college. We know that if we work together we will succeed together.

Sometimes we don't know if something bad is happening, so you need to tell us.

This policy looks at bullying, and what you can do when you feel you are being bullied, or when you notice someone else being bullied.

We can help you by:

- Helping you to know what bullying is.
- Teaching you what to do if you feel like you are being bullied, or if someone else is being bullied.
- Telling you names of adults that you can speak to.

What is bullying?

A bully is someone who hurts another person more than once, by using behaviour which is meant to scare, hurt or upset that person.

It is important to remember that single problems and falling out with friends are not bullying.

Bullying is behaviour which is repeated on purpose and is meant to upset someone.

Types of bullying
Bullying can be different things, and isn't just hitting or kicking another person.

- Emotional bullying is hurting someone's feelings, leaving them out or bossing them about.
- Physical bullying is punching, kicking, spitting, hitting or pushing someone.
- Verbal bullying is teasing someone, calling them names or using hand signs. People can also use verbal bullying to be racist or homophobic.
- Racist means bullying someone because of their skin colour, race or what they believe in.
- Homophobic means bullying someone because of their gender or sexuality; calling someone gay or lesbian would be homophobic.
- Sexist means bullying someone because of their sex (whether they are a boy or a girl).
- Cyber bullying involves sending horrible messages over the internet or by text message.
- Bullying can be done through another person, by one person asking another person to say nasty things.

What should I do if I am being bullied?

If you are being bullied, the first thing you should do is tell the bully to stop.

You can also:

- Make eye contact and tell the bully to leave you alone.
- Ignore the bully and walk away.
- Tell an adult, such as your parent, carer or teacher.

You should try not to:

- Do what the bully says.
- Let what the bully says or does upset you.
- Get angry or hit them.

- Always remember that if you are being bullied, it is not your fault and you are never alone.

- You shouldn't be scared to talk to someone if you are being bullied. If you talk to an adult, we can make the bullying stop.

- You should speak to your Form Tutor, Head of Year or any member of staff in college to let them know this is happening.

What should I do if I see someone else being bullied?

If you see someone else being bullied, it is important that you help that person.

- You should never walk away and ignore the bullying if you see someone else being bullied, because the bully will keep on upsetting that person. At St Mary's we are a family, we all work hard to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and respectfully.

- If you can, and it is safe, tell the bully to stop, but never get angry or hit them.

- Adults can stop the bullying and make that person feel happy again.

- You should never feel scared to tell someone about bullying. You should speak to your Form Tutor, Head of Year or any member of staff in college to let them know this is happening.

Who can I talk to?

It is important that you tell someone as soon as you are being bullied, or you notice someone else being bullied.

Speaking to someone like your mum, dad, carer or teacher will mean that we can make sure the bullying stops and doesn't happen again.

You can speak to any member of staff in confidence and they will support you and ensure that everything is dealt with.

You can also speak to an Anti-Bullying ambassador

How can I help stop bullying from happening?

We can all help stop bullying at our college by:

- Making sure we keep to the rules in this guide.
- Helping others when they are in need.
- Being kind, friendly, respectful and safe to others.
- Thinking about people's feelings before we say or do something.
- Taking part in PSHE / RSHE sessions and anti-bullying week.