



C5 - POLICY ON ANTI- BULLYING

Introduction

The shared values of the school community are summarised by three words; **Love, Respect, Flourish**. We are a community dedicated to achieving excellence for all, producing young people formed by Gospel values to become responsible, compassionate and caring members of society. In line with this, St Mary's Catholic School is committed to ensuring that our school is one where bullying is not tolerated, and such behaviour is dealt with effectively and consistently. This policy should be understood, agreed and adopted by all staff, pupils and parents within our school community.

Aim of the Policy

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that St Mary's is able to provide a caring and supportive Christian community for all its students; one in which they feel safe, secure and free from any threat of bullying.

St Mary's will aim to:

- Educate students regarding the impact of bullying and how to report incidents
- Prevent and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- Respond to bullying in an effective and consistent manner
- Provide clear guidelines and procedures for all staff, parents and students
- Ensure everyone in our school community is clear on their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure all complaints of bullying are acted upon in accordance with this policy and records kept of all incidents
- Provide appropriate support for those affected by, or involved with, bullying behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time and where a student feels intimidated and unable to defend themselves.

The Department for Education (DfE) states that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Isolated or one-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Consequences policy.

It is not bullying when:

- Pupils of the same age and strength have the occasional argument or conflict
- A member of staff offers constructive feedback and/or fair criticism regarding a pupil's behaviour or work performance.

Types of Bullying

There are many ways to bully and they can include (but is not limited to):

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft) or unwanted touching
- Verbal (name-calling, racist, homophobic or transphobic remarks) or targeted at faith, sex or disability
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups, giving dirty looks)
- Making people feel unhappy on purpose
- Cyber bullying (using text messaging, internet sites, social media, instant messaging).

Responsibilities of Students, Parents and Staff

Students

If you are being bullied in school:

- Talk to any member of staff that you trust, and take a friend if it helps.
- What you say will be passed on to an appropriate adult (usually your Head of Year). You will be taken seriously.
- Don't listen to the bully if they say that you will be in trouble if you talk to someone. You aren't doing anything wrong.
- If you need somewhere to be safe, there will be a place for you to go while the problem is being sorted out. The appropriate adult will organise this for you.

If you see someone being bullied at school:

- The best thing you can do to help is to talk to someone.
- Don't listen to the bully when they say that you will be in trouble if you talk to someone. You aren't doing anything wrong.

Parents

If your child is being bullied or is bullying in school:

- We can help.
- Contact the school and ask to speak to any member of staff, but the Head of Year is usually the best person to contact in the first instance.
- Talk over the problem with the teacher. Provide as much information/clarity on the situation as possible.
- Don't let your child talk you out of contacting school. The school is there to help.

Staff

If a student comes to you and says they are being bullied in school:

- Listen to what they have said.
- Take it seriously.
- Record what they have said, noting all important details such as date, time, location, names of students involved or witnesses, and record the incident.
- If the child appears to be in any immediate danger – then speak to the DSL or DDSL right away.
- Pass the information on to the student's Head of Year, without delay.
- Make it clear that they have made the right decision to tell you. They have done nothing wrong.
- Confidentiality is respected and the student's privacy protected, but you must not give any guarantees that you will not tell anyone.
- Offer the support of a safe area, if it is necessary.
- The Head of Year will then follow the protocol included in this policy document.

Reporting Procedures for Students

Who to tell?

You can choose to tell any of the following people:

- Parents
- Any staff member with whom you feel comfortable
- Headteacher
- Any of our Assistant Headteachers
- Form Tutor or Head of Year
- Learning Support Assistant
- Friends who will speak on your behalf

Alternatively, you can:

- Email info@stmarys.net
- Report a concern via the school website/Sharps system.

How to tell?

You can choose to do any of the following:

- Directly approach a teacher or member of staff at an appropriate time, e.g. at the end of a lesson
- Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted member of staff in the school
- Get a parent or friend to inform a member of staff on your behalf
- Send an email to info@stmarys.net
- Report it via the school website, through the Sharps system
- Witnesses can also inform a member of staff.

Reporting Procedures for Parents

Who to tell?

You can choose to contact any of the following people:

- Any staff member with whom you feel comfortable
- Headteacher
- Any of our Assistant Headteachers
- Your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year
- Your child's Learning Support Assistant

Alternatively, you can:

- Email info@stmarys.net
- Report a concern via the school website/Sharps system.

How to tell?

You can choose to do any of the following:

- Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted member of staff in the school
- Send an email to info@stmarys.net
- Reporting via the school website, through the Sharps system.

SCHOOL PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

Stage 1 Allegation of bullying reported	<u>Date Completed</u>
Form Tutor/Head of Year interviews both parties and witnesses	
• Perpetrator's actions noted on their school record and parents contacted	
• Perpetrator to be issued with an appropriate consequence (to always be agreed with Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral to ensure consistency)	
• Victim offered and advised of internal support	
• Restorative justice can be offered to both parties	
• 'Recording Bullying Behaviour' form completed	
• Bullying Log opened	

Stage 2 Allegation of continued bullying (same or different victim)	<u>Date Completed</u>
Head of Year interviews both parties and witnesses, and SLT informed	
• Perpetrator's actions noted on their school record and parents invited into school to meet with Head of Year	
• Perpetrator to be issued with an appropriate consequence (to always be agreed with Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral to ensure consistency)	
• Victim offered and advised of internal/external support	
• Restorative justice can be offered to both parties	
• Chaplain to offer support to both parties	
• Separate designated areas	
• 'Recording Bullying Behaviour' form completed	
• Bullying log in place and regularly reviewed/updated by HOY	

Stage 3 Allegation of further bullying (same or different victim)	<u>Date Completed</u>
Head of Year/SLT Link interviews both parties and witnesses	
• Perpetrator's actions noted on their school record and parents invited into school to meet Head of Year and SLT Link	
• Perpetrator to be issued with an appropriate consequence and possible removal from lessons/class (to always be agreed with Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral to ensure consistency)	
• Victim offered and advised of internal/external support	
• Restorative justice can be offered to both parties	
• Chaplain to offer support to both parties	
• Separate designated areas	
• 'Recording Bullying Behaviour' form completed	
• Bullying log in place and regularly reviewed/updated by SLT Link	

Stage 4 Allegation of further bullying (same or different victim)	<u>Date Completed</u>
SLT Link and a Governor interviews both parties and witnesses	
• Perpetrator's actions noted on their school record and parents invited into school to meet with SLT Link/Governor	
• Perpetrator to be issued with an appropriate consequence and possible permanent exclusion (to be agreed with Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral)	
• Victim offered and advised of internal/external support	
• Restorative justice can be offered to both parties	
• Separate designated areas	
• Removal from communal areas at lunch and break	
• Change of classes	
• 'Recording Bullying Behaviour' form completed	
• Bullying log in place, reviewed and updated regularly by SLT Link	

Stage 5 Allegation of further bullying (same or different victim)	<u>Date Completed</u>
Headteacher and Chair of Governors interviews both parties and witnesses	
• Perpetrator's actions noted on their school record and parents invited into school to meet with Headteacher and Chair of Governors	
• Perpetrator to be issued with an appropriate consequence, possible permanent exclusion (to be agreed by the Headteacher and Governors)	
• Victim offered and advised of internal/external support	
• Restorative justice offered to both parties	
• Separate designated areas	
• Isolation at lunch and break times	
• 'Recording Bullying Behaviour' form completed	
• Bullying log in place and reviewed and updated by the Headteacher	
• External agency involvement, if relevant	
• Police invited in to speak to perpetrator, if appropriate	

NB: This chart shows the school's usual response to bullying; but very severe bullying at any stage could result in quicker escalation through the steps.

Conclusion

St Mary's Catholic School is unequivocal in its opposition to intimidating behaviour of any kind and will adopt a positive, whole school approach to confront such behaviour when it occurs. The School values of Love, Respect Flourish permeate in how we treat each other. We hope that the consistent application of this policy, when needed, will help to foster good relationships within our Christian community shaped by Gospel values, ensuring that all of our students feel safe and secure.

School Education Committee Reviewed: November 2025

Next Review Date: September 2026