



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

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Anti Bullying Policy

Rationale

St Mary's Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying.

Aim

To prevent bullying from occurring and to build resilience in our students.

Definition of Bullying

- Bullying is an ongoing and intentional behaviour causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another.
- Elements of bullying include – wanting to hurt someone, acting on this desire, the action is hurtful, an imbalance of power, no reason for the action, is **persistent** and the bully may receive pleasure from hurting the victim.
- It can be planned and organised.
- Individuals or groups may be involved.

Bullying can take many forms. We consider the following behaviours to be some examples of bullying:

These behaviours need to occur repetitively.

Physical

- hitting, kicking, punching
- pushing, shoving, spitting
- making rude gestures
- taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else
- forcing others to hand over food, money or something which belongs to them

- making someone do something they don't want to

Verbal/Emotional

- name calling
- teasing
- threatening
- making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background, actions

Social

- excluding others from the game or group
- spreading stories about others
- spreading untrue stories about others
- using body language to cause discomfort

Cyber

Harassment via:

- Text message
- Social networks (e.g. Facebook)
- Instant Messaging
- Email
- Inappropriate usage of personal files and passwords

Implementation

At St. Mary's Primary School we will:

- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Teach our children the skills which will build their self-esteem and empower them to take the responsibility for themselves – and give them the opportunity to practise these skills.
- Implement the policy which clearly states what actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour.

Responsibilities of staff:

- be role models in word and action at all times
- ensure that our classroom management practices support respect for others
- be observant to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- deal with all reported and observed incidences of bullying as set out in this policy
- ensure that children are supervised at all times
- during yard duty make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by actively patrolling

- arrive at class on time and move appropriately between lessons including specialist lessons
- inform all parents involved
- report incidences of bullying to the Principal/ Deputy Principal
- incidents of bullying will be documented
- liaise with parents of all children concerned
- staff will not discriminate against children because of race, gender or disabilities.
- document incidents reports of bullying formally and keep in student's file

Responsibilities of children:

- to understand the meaning of bullying
- to 'tell' (eg. a parent, teacher, staff member) if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied – both at school and on the way to or from school
- to help someone who is being bullied(not to be a bystander)
- to not bully others

Responsibilities of parents:

- to understand the meaning of bullying
- to only speak to someone on staff (classroom teacher first and not other parents) if their child is being bullied, or they suspect that this is happening
- to watch for signs that their child may be being bullied e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising
- to encourage their child to 'tell' if they are bullied

Reporting Bullying

- Incidences of bullying can be reported to any teacher, Deputy Principal or the Principal by children and their parents. Any bullying incidences that are dealt with will be recorded and this record will be kept.

Procedures for reported incidence of bullying:

- Steps to be followed upon report of bullying:
- Incidents of bullying reported
- Incidents relayed to appropriate person
- Appropriate person interviews the alleged perpetrator, victim and any bystanders to establish facts using Restorative Practices.

Act of bullying verified:

- Appropriate person uses the Restorative Practices Approach so that the person who bullied is aware of the effect on victim

- Appropriate person ensures the perpetrator acts in a responsible and constructive way to remedy the situation (written or verbal apology also needs to be given)
- Teacher puts appropriate steps from Behaviour Management Policy in place (reflection sheet, withdrawal, detention, etc.)
- Teacher and student fill out a Reflection Sheet which is sent home for discussion and parent signature. Contact parents involved to make them aware of the issue and our procedures

Incidence of bullying:

- Appropriate person notifies parents and an interview time is made
- Incident is recorded
- Incident report is filed in the child's folder
- Ongoing monitoring of behaviour will occur. Feedback will be provided for all parties.

If further incidence of the bullying cycle occurs:

- Teacher, in collaboration with Principal, to meet with student and their parents
- Principal to make clear consequences of repeat occurrence
- Further action (internal/external suspension, termination of enrolment) is at the prerogative of the Principal.

Evaluation

This policy was developed in 2016 and was reviewed in 2020 in line with the School Improvement Plan.