



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

At St Mark's CE Primary School, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. We believe that all children and young people should feel safe, be healthy and able to achieve, have the opportunity to make positive contributions and enjoy a sense of economic well-being. Bullying behaviour undermines the ability to thrive and achieve, to enjoy life and feel safe. We take bullying very seriously.

This policy document is to help ensure that children in our school feel safe and secure. It provides a co-ordinating framework for developing understanding and skills as part of a whole school approach and a framework for responding to incidents.

The anti-bullying policy will be consistently applied for the benefit of all pupils so that all may enjoy and achieve, participate and feel safe.

The mission statement of St Mark's School is reflected in the policy.

'We encourage each child to achieve their full potential and develop a love of life and learning, within our caring Christian community.'

The aims of St Mark's School underpin this Anti-Bullying Policy:

- To create a safe, happy and caring community where all individuals feel valued and special.
- To offer a relevant and balanced curriculum, which will provide every child with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to reach their full potential.
- To develop lively and enquiring minds by encouraging natural curiosity and imagination, promoting a love of life and learning.
- To maintain high standards of behaviour encouraging children to take responsibility for their own actions.
- To establish an effective partnership between home, school, church and the community.
- To promote the growth of Christian values (love, peace, trust, forgiveness, equality, generosity and responsibility) so the children learn to show tolerance, self-discipline, compassion and respect for themselves and others.

### **Statement of Values**

The statement of values reflects the ethos, aims and mission statement of St Mark's School and makes clear that:

Pupils will be in a safe, caring environment

- All types of bullying behaviour are unacceptable and will be challenged
- Reports of bullying behaviour will be taken seriously, acted upon and recorded

- Pupils will be listened to, will know that it is 'OK to tell', who to tell and how to tell
- There will be a clear and swift response to any report of bullying behaviour
- Parents/carers will be informed of incidents as appropriate, listened to, and kept apprised of how their concerns are being dealt with

These values are evident in the School Prospectus, displayed in the school hall and regularly shared with parents through newsletters and Induction Meetings.

Bullying is something that takes place in all groups and all levels of society.

Incidents that go on undetected can have a serious effect on a child's personal and social development and health and well-being. Some children are more vulnerable to bullying, such as children with learning difficulties and children who are "different".

It is a statutory requirement for all schools to have an Anti-Bullying Policy. Ofsted include how schools respond to bullying issues as part of their inspections. (January 2012).

This policy has been reviewed following consultation with pupils, parents, staff and governors. This policy will link with other school and curriculum policies such as Race Equality, Child Protection, Behaviour, Inclusion, ICT, E-safety, Special Educational Needs, RE, Collective Worship, PSHE, Disability Equality Scheme and School Improvement Plans and programmes.

### **Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

The DfE definition of bullying behaviour is:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

'Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Sexist or sexual bullying'

The Children and Young Peoples Directorate (CYPD) definition of bullying is:

'Using repetition to target an individual or group to intentionally harm their target either physically or emotionally, resulting in making them feel out of place, unsafe or bad about themselves'.

At St Mark's School we have agreed to adopt the Lancashire Policy definition of bullying behaviour which is within the Children and Young Peoples Directorate (CYPD).

**Pupils' Definition of Bullying**

- Bullying is constant - 'all the time', 'every day'.
- Bullying can be verbal or physical.
- Bullying is perpetrated by the same person or group of people.

**Verbal**

- Name calling
- Threatening/intimidation
- Excluding by ignoring/refusing
- Blaming unfairly
- Spreading rumours/lies/secrets
- Nasty teasing, 'skitting' about child, family, etc.
- Hurting feelings
- Written versions of any of the above, eg notes, texts, e-mails, computer messaging

**Physical**

- Hurting in any way, eg kicking, hitting
- Using objects to hurt, eg throwing stones
- Excluding physically, 'ganging up'
- Stealing belongings
- Damaging belongings

(Pupil School Council)

Bullying usually falls into 2 categories:

- Emotionally harmful behaviour, such as taunting, spreading hurtful rumours and excluding people from groups, or cyberbullying and
- Physically harmful behaviour such as kicking, hitting, pushing or other forms of physically abusive behaviour

The behaviour constitutes bullying if:

- It is repetitive, wilful or persistent
- It is intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or a group
- There is an imbalance of power leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless

**Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. (DfE Guidance Cyberbullying p6 paragraph 1.1.1)

### **Homophobic bullying**

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people. The use of homophobic language will

- Not be tolerated
- Be challenged
- Be dealt with by staff

### **Responding to Bullying Behaviour**

At St Mark's School, any allegation of bullying behaviour will be dealt with as thoroughly and quickly as possible. We will be sensitive and discrete in the handling of disclosures and try to reassure and protect the pupil. We will:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Listen carefully to all accounts
- Adopt a problem solving approach
- Follow up repeatedly
- Never make premature assumptions

### **Investigating an Allegation of Bullying**

Where safeguarding is not an issue, the following procedure will apply:

- The teacher/staff member will agree the level and seriousness of the alleged bullying behaviour
- The pupil or pupils will be spoken to by the teacher/staff member in order to establish whether the allegations are true or false
- The teacher/staff member will decide whether additional adults need to be informed, ie Headteacher, parents
- The pupil who has been bullied will be spoken to by the teacher/staff member and will be asked (if possible) to write down their account with dates, times and places and names if possible. The pupil will be asked what they would like to happen next.
- The teacher/staff member will decide if the pupil is in any immediate danger. Measures will be taken to support the pupil if necessary until the situation is resolved.
- If allegations are found to be true, contact will be made with the parents of those pupils involved.
- An incident log form including the date and time parents were contacted will be completed.

### **Responding to Incidents of Bullying Behaviour**

- The first responsibility of the school is to ensure the safety of pupil or pupils who are being bullied. The pupil or pupils will be taken to a place of safety apart from the pupil or pupils involved.
- The class teacher or Headteacher will speak to the pupils involved.

- A written account will be made by all parties involved including witnesses.
- Pupils will be informed that the evidence will be kept on file.
- A form will be completed along with the LA Serious Incident Log if necessary.
- The class teacher or Headteacher will inform the parents, advising them as to how their actions might help the situation.
- The class teacher or Headteacher will decide an appropriate response in the short term and the need for longer term situations if required.
- Pupils will receive a clear explanation as to the actions taken by the school and they will be given as much reassurance as possible to allay any anxieties.

### **Responding to an Extremely Serious Violent Incident**

Assess safety of self and others and if necessary follow first-aid procedures and call an ambulance and/or police if required.

- See above - Responding to Incident of Bullying Behaviour.
- The LA Serious Incident Log will be completed by the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will decide whether the police or other agencies need to be involved.
- The Headteacher will contact parents/carers.
- Arrangements will be made for the safety of the pupil or pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour for the rest of the day (if staying in school), the journey home and the return to school.

### **Follow Up Action**

If the police are to deal with the incident, the school must not investigate.

The Headteacher will decide:

- If it is necessary to inform all staff and increase vigilance in the short term.
- If further investigations are necessary.
- If groups of pupils are spoken to.
- If all pupils are spoken to in assemblies.
- If governors need to be kept informed.
- On the level of sanctions/disciplinary procedures.

### **Further Action**

The Headteacher will:

- Ask the pupil or pupils who have carried out the bullying behaviour and their parents/carers what support they would like.
- Assess whether the situation requires the support of outside agencies.
- Decide if it is necessary to implement follow up work using other agency support.
- Agree on the support that will be given to the pupil(s).

Refer to Flowchart 1 for the procedure to follow for pupil disclosure of bullying to an adult other than a teacher in school.

Refer to Flowchart 2 for the procedure to follow for pupil disclosure of bullying to a teacher in school.

Refer to Flowchart 3 for the procedure for the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team to follow for pupil disclosure of bullying.

### **Responding to Bullying Behaviour Not on the School Site**

This Anti-Bullying Policy includes the conduct of pupils when they are not on the school site and when they are not under the control of a member of staff. Behaviour off-site will be subject to the same provisions and sanctions as behaviour within the school.

### **Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour**

All teachers have a 'legal duty of care towards pupils'. The essence of that duty is to take reasonable steps to protect the welfare, health and safety of pupils and to act with reasonable skill and care.

### **Pupil Reporting Systems**

At St Mark's School, we have more than one way to report bullying incidents. Pupils are always encouraged to tell an adult in school first, but additional methods include:

- Concern boxes emptied daily and acted upon
- An 'open door' policy
- An 'OK to tell' policy

The purpose of an effective reporting system is to ensure that pupils who feel bullied, or know of others being bullied, will come forward. Pupils will be reassured that they can have trust in:

- The adults they report to
  - The system the school uses
- and that:
- The bullying will be stopped
  - The outcomes will be proportionate

We will encourage pupils to feel that if the bullying re-emerges, they would still be able to come forward and report with confidence and that the school would still take them seriously.

### **Parent/Carer Reporting Systems**

Parents/carers should report any concerns to the staff of the school. The member of staff will inform the Headteacher and the concern will be recorded by a member of staff.

## **Intervention Strategies**

### **Supporting Those Harmed by Bullying**

There are many ways pupils involved in bullying incidents can be supported by the school. At St Mark's School we use:

- Circle Time
- SEAL activities
- Curriculum opportunities
- SENCO
- School staff
- Individual/group Behaviour Plans

A variety of external agencies may be contacted for help and support. These may include Lancashire Inclusion and Disability Support Service, Educational Psychologist Service, Schools Safeguarding Office. Continual bullying with violence happening both in and out of school may well require the intervention of the police. In this case we will contact the local community police officer for advice.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions will be considered on an individual case-by-case basis and will include:

- Sanctions appropriate with the Behaviour Policy (see Behaviour Policy)
- Writing to and meeting with parents
- Removal of privileges
- Exclusion (as a last resort).

### **Supporting Parents**

- Prompt response to parental concerns
- Support from staff members in school
- Signposting parents to other appropriate school's organisations through Parent Partnership Advisor (Mrs Janet Lyness)

### **Preventative Measures**

St Mark's School employs a range of measures to actively prevent bullying behaviour:

- Providing a safe and secure environment in and outside the school
- A strong positive school ethos
- Good relationships between pupil/pupil, pupils/staff, staff/staff, parents/staff
- All individuals in the school feel valued
- Anti-Bullying Policy is known and understood by all
- Operating an 'open door' and 'ok to tell' policy
- Pupils know who and how they can tell
- Offering a buddy system with older and younger pupils
- Supervision routines at lunchtimes, breaktimes, before and after school
- The creation of supervised 'quiet' areas at breaktimes and lunchtimes

- Lunchtime Policy shared with all staff/pupils/governors/parents
- The range and effectiveness of pupil reporting systems
- The use of assemblies to raise awareness
- Curricular approaches to anti-bullying particularly focusing on increased personal and social skills
- PSHE Policy and Scheme of Work
- The use of Circle Time
- School Council involvement and contribution to school development
- Extra-curricular and after-school activities
- Welfare training and termly meetings
- Appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) for all adults
- Whole school awareness-raising events
- Involvement in Anti-Bullying Week
- Priority on School Development Plan

Pupils have confidence that in telling about bullying behaviour, something will be done.

### **Whole School Approaches**

- The school will promote the policy to all the school community such as parents through newsletters and Induction Meetings and to pupils through assemblies etc.
- Staff will model good practice showing respect, empathy and genuineness.
- The school will display posters and charts in the school showing help line numbers and support that is available for individual pupils.
- Staff will receive training related to awareness, teaching and learning and response to incidents.

### **Monitoring the Anti-Bullying Policy**

The policy will be maintained by the Headteacher. As part of the monitoring process, data and views and opinions of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be analysed. The number and types of bullying incidents will be established and recorded and reporting procedures checked. Outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation process will form part of the School Self-Evaluation and be reported in the relevant parts of the Self-Evaluation (ROSE).

The Headteacher's Termly Reports to the full Governing Body members includes a brief report on the number, nature and outcomes of bullying and racist incidents at the school.

### **Evaluating the Anti-Bullying Policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the effectiveness of the policy shared with staff, pupils, parents and governors.

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed in September 2025.