

# St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School

## Anti-Bullying Policy



Reviewed: October 2022

Next Reviewed: October 2023

Leaders: Mrs Evans and Mrs Gaskell

At St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School we acknowledge Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

We have a duty of care to protect pupils from bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring and friendly school environment for all the children in order to protect them from those who wish to deliberately harm them. Our Child Protection Policy outlines our understanding of peer-on-peer abuse and how we will respond.

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of bullying and all incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

As a Rights Respecting School we wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

### **Aims & Objectives**

- This policy outlines what St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community

St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos

- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

### **Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
  - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
  - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
  - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
  - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
  - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

### **Our School Community:**

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.

- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

### **Responding to bullying**

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately;
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied;
- Any concerns will be fully investigated by the Senior Leadership Team who are also Designated Safeguarding Officers;
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools.
- Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- If the concern is deemed to be classes as bullying following investigation then a full record will be kept;

### **Responding to Cyber-Bullying**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.

Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

- Looking at use of the school systems;
- Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the DfE school Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance 2018.
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
  - Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.

This may include:

- advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
- providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
- helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

### **Supporting pupils**

St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School acknowledges that both the victims and perpetrators of bullying will require intervention and support. All forms of intervention and support will be discussed by Senior Leaders and may involve provision planning. Any provision to be planned or referrals to outside agencies will be coordinated by the Inclusion Manager. St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School offer a significant range of pastoral interventions and approaches for all pupils who require additional support.

### **Supporting adults**

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

All adults in school are expected to adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct. Any forms of bullying against adults should be reported to the Senior Leadership Team. Adults are also made aware of the School Improvement Liverpool Whistleblowing Policy for any concerns that are felt to require escalation.

## **Preventing Bullying**

St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School has a strong inclusive ethos and an emotional self-regulation approach is encouraged throughout school. Pupils are also taught social cognition skills to develop their understanding of social awareness and how they respond to the feelings of others.

The school also prevents bullying through;

- Creating an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Delivering a strong PSHE curriculum and holding focus weeks on well-being and anti-bullying.
- Being a Rights Respecting School.
- Being an attachment and trauma friendly school.
- Being 'School of Sanctuary' for pupils new to the country.
- Recognising that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognising the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Ensuring staff adhere to the Code of Conduct and the guidance of Keeping Children Safe in Education, part 1.
- Providing regular Time To Talk sessions for pupils with our Mental Health First Aider.
- Encouraging to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Delivering Stonewall training to all staff in tackling homophobic and biphobic bullying
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

## **Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice**

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.

- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes

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