St Mary's C of E Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

2025

Review Date: March 2026

Statement of Intent:

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to blossom and grow in order to fulfil their potential in all aspects of learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. This Anti-Bulling Policy works alongside our Behaviour Policy. We expect our pupils to act safely and respectfully, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying, and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

First and foremost, our aim is to prevent bullying by educating our children. We encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

Strategies for preventing bullying:

At St Mary's CE Primary, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:
- Promoting our behaviour expectations and school culture of being *Ready*, *Respectful and Safe* on a daily basis (with a specific focus on looking at them in greater depth at the beginning of each half term). See Behaviour Policy.
- Robust PSHE/R(S)HE curriculum (following the Jigsaw Approach) for all year groups.
- Weekly assemblies based around the school's values.
- Active school council with representatives from each year group.
- All staff model expected behaviour.
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November).
- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February).
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying.
- Themed days to promote equality and tackle prejudice.
- Well-being Peer Mediators – peer-mediating scheme.
- End of term/end of academic year celebration events.
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.
- Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs etc.
- Inclusive toys and books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences.
- ELSA support/counselling for identified students.
- Specific interventions for identified individuals or groups.
- Parent events and training.
- Regular staff training and development for all staff.

What is bullying and how does it differ to relational conflict?

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we define bullying as:

"Bullying is the <u>repetitive</u>, <u>intentional hurting</u> of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an <u>imbalance of power</u>. It can happen face to face or online." (Anti-Bullying Alliance)

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- <u>Physical</u> – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- <u>Verbal</u> – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately, ensuring the safety and welfare of all children involved.

At St Mary's C of E Primary School, we will always consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age, stage of development and any special educational needs of the pupils involved.

Relational conflict:
We also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

Where does bullying take place?
At St Mary's CE Primary School, we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

Roles and Responsibilities
All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

The Head Teacher and **Senior Leadership Team** have overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school.
They are responsible for:

- Policy development and review (ensuring that pupils, staff, governors, and parents/carers have opportunities to contribute).
- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness.
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents.
- Liaising with staff, Local Committee (LC), Academy Trust, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.
- Reporting to the Local Committee/Academy Trust (the Headteacher will give a termly update on any incidents reported or investigated).
- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and her Deputies (DDSLs) in our school are: Mrs Alison Evans, Miss Emma Hampshire and Mrs Gayle Lawrence. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all; however all staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.

How to report bullying concerns:
At St Mary's CE Primary School, we want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved, including the victim, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems will be reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

- **Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses**
Children at all ages are taught about bullying, how to recognise bullying and where they can seek help if they are worried that they or others may be being bullied.

We encourage pupils to report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, a Teaching Assistant, the Head Teacher, or a member of the admin team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's behaviour/safeguarding recording systems (Arbor and /or CPOMS) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted (for example, the class teacher, SLT and the Head Teacher). The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed to be a safeguarding concern.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Our school has a 'Worry Box' or 'Things that I would like my teacher to know Box' in each classroom where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern etc. These worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year and pupils are reminded of them regularly.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

- **Parents/carers**
We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the victim of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone call/via email/) to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's behaviour/safeguarding recording systems (Arbor and/or CPOMS) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted (SLT/Headteacher/DSL). The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed to be a safeguarding concern.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

Our school remains committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of outcomes/progress of investigations, and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

- **School staff**

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the victim of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or directly to the Head teacher/Assistant Headteacher. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's behaviour/safeguarding recording systems (Arbor and /or CPOMS) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed to be a safeguarding concern.

- **Visitors**

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to (the member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit e.g. supply teacher, governor, external agency etc.).

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/the Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's behaviour/safeguarding recording systems (Arbor and /or CPOMS) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed to be a safeguarding concern.

How our school will respond to reports of bullying

At St Mary's CE Primary School, all reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relational conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and affected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on the school's behaviour and safeguarding recording systems (Arbor/CPOMS). These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's preventative and or/reactive work. Information from these records is discussed regularly at staff meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date and are alert to any ongoing concerns (for example, in our weekly staff pastoral meetings).

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some of our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses.
- Talk to the parents (of the victim and/or the alleged perpetrator).
- Implement reasonable, proportionate and appropriate consequences in accordance with our school's behaviour policy to reinforce the message that bullying is unacceptable.

- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate.
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises.
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.
- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the victim and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the victim, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.).
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – a DSL may then refer to the Surrey C-SPA.

Monitoring

- The Head Teacher will monitor all behaviour/bullying reports and will ensure appropriate actions are being taken and issues have been resolved.
- The Head Teacher/Assistant Head will monitor patterns and trends in reported incidents. They will then follow 'How our school will respond to reports of bullying' as required.
- The Head Teacher will report all incidents of bullying to the Local Committee on a termly basis.
- The Good Shepherd Trust have access to the school's Arbor and CPOMs records and monitor these regularly.
- The Head Teacher/Assistant Head will ensure regular training and updates are provided to staff and ensure that policy procedures are being followed.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2024) and has also been written with reference to the DfE's 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies' (2017), The Key for Leaders and the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Breaches / Complaints

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head Teacher, Local Committee and Academy Trust.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website, and on request from the school office.

Links with other policies

You may find it helpful to read this Anti-Bullying policy alongside the other following school policies:

Policy	How it may link
Behaviour Policy	Includes details about the rewards and sanctions for pupils
Safeguarding Policy	Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding
Online Safety/E-Safety/Acceptable Use Policies	Includes information about children's online behaviour and details about online bullying/cyberbullying
Equalities Policy	Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics
RSHE/PSHE Policy	Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying
Complaints Policy	Includes information about how to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the school's response

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.