



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

APPROVED BY: SENIOR LEADERSHIP

DATE APPROVED: NOVEMBER 2024

DATE REVIEWED:

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: NOVEMBER 2026



Rationale

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing an environment of consistency, which promotes a feeling of security, care, love and respect for all, in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. As a school, we take bullying and its impact seriously; bullying of any form is not tolerated, whether carried out by a child or an adult.

Adults at St Mary's establish open, positive and supportive relationships where children feel safe, secure, listened to, and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues. Staff, at all levels, will work together to develop a culture of mutual respect and responsibility amongst children and young people and other adults around them. We will further seek to prevent and tackle bullying, through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practices. All members of staff ensure that bullying is not prevalent in the school community by implementing purposeful preventative strategies involving staff, parents, children and the wider school community: we have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practised across our school when dealing with bullying and to ensure consistency across all year groups with a wider purpose to enable children to thrive in a positive and safe learning environment.

Purpose

Our strategy sets out the rights of all stakeholders in relation to bullying. It contains definitions of bullying and signs and signals for staff, children and other stakeholders to be vigilant of the signs that may indicate that a person has been, or is being bullied. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combat bullying. The strategy will be subject to regular review to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance. It reflects current practice within school. The implementation of the strategy, is supported by the school's Behaviour Policy, in which both are the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders.

This strategy is in-line with and supported by our Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles

What is our anti-bullying strategy based on?

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we take a 'whole school approach', where the whole school community, including: pupils, teachers, support staff, parents and the board of governors, are involved in confronting the issue of bullying.

Our strategy is based upon the 'Anti-Bullying Alliance's' ten key principles, which focus on enabling our children to come to school to learn, discover, explore and pray, without any fear of bullying. The principles are:

1. **Listens** – All pupils, parents and carers are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
2. **Includes us all** - All pupils, including those with SEN/Disability, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life.
3. **Respects** – All school staff are role models to others within the school in how they treat others.
4. **Challenges** – All forms of discriminatory language – including disablist language – are challenged and taken seriousl .
5. **Celebrates difference** – Difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
6. **Understands** – All school staff, pupils, parents and carers understand what bullying is and what it isn't.

7. **Believes** – All pupils, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
8. **Reports bullying** – All pupils within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying.
9. **Takes action** – We respond quickly and appropriately to incidents of bullying. All pupils, participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying.
10. **Has clear policies** – Our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles and is embedded within other school policies. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, pupils, parents and carers.

What do we hope to achieve from this anti-bullying strategy?

We hope that this strategy, along with our behaviour policy and high-expectations of our pupils, will prevent any cases of bullying occurring in school. In the event that there is any negative, bullying behaviours displayed in school, this strategy will support staff and children by providing appropriate strategies to eradicate any of these behaviours.

What aim strive for the upmost:

- Communication: to ensure that everyone is aware of what bullying behaviour is, the impact of bullying on people's lives, and what is being done to prevent it.
- Commitment: to promote the values, principles and approaches that will help eliminate bullying behaviour within our schools and learning communities.
- Consistency: to develop consistent approaches to addressing the issue of bullying across all Perth & Kinross Council schools and learning communities.
- Clarity: to ensure that everyone knows who to go to for help and support and what will happen when they do.
- Co-operation: to recognise that it is everyone's responsibility to tackle bullying behaviour. By working together, we can make our schools and communities better places to live and work.
- Capacity: to increase the capability of our schools and learning communities in their use of positive approaches through information, training and support to reduce and prevent bullying behaviour.

What do our pupils say?

The children at our school have a good understanding of our 'whole school approach' to confronting the issue of bullying and are involved in the most effective approaches to tackling bullying in school. When asked their opinion and understanding of bullying in our school, they said:

'Bullying is when you are constantly being mean/rude to people.'

'You should always tell a teacher or trusted adult if you see or are being bullied'

'Physical bullying can be anything from slapping, kicking, pushing, punching.'

'People can be mentally bullied by people saying unkind things to them.'

'I feel safe at school because we know the teachers will keep us safe.'

'Cyber bullying is when you are being mean online and hurting other people's feelings'

'We don't say unkind things to other people because this would really hurt someone's feelings.'

'Bullying is when you're doing something unkind to someone else, for a long period of time, more than once.'

'I don't see bullying here because our school is a safe environment'

What is bullying behaviour?

All members of the St Mary's community carefully considered what bullying behaviour is. Bullying behaviour can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. It can be verbal, physical, and emotional or involve online conduct, which is unwanted and uninvited. The behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, can cause physical or emotional harm, may be repeated over time or be a one-off incident.

Bullying is a combination of behaviours and the impact they have. It can be a range of behaviours including:

- Physical: this may include hitting, kicking, pushing, or taking or damaging someone else's property.
- Verbal: this may include spreading rumours, name calling, teasing or talking about people.
- Emotional: this may include excluding someone from the group, embarrassing someone or making them feel bad for being different.
- Cyber: cyberbullying does not take place face to face but occurs when technology is used to send messages, texts or images which hurt, humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Cyberbullying often involves the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example, name calling, spreading rumours or leaving people out, but it takes place online on social networking sites, in chatrooms, during gaming or instant messaging platforms. The impact of cyberbullying is as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour.

Some online behaviour is illegal. If an individual sends, posts or forwards indecent, racist, sectarian, threatening or inflammatory comments or photographs, they may be committing an offence and may be subject to prosecution.

- Prejudice-based bullying: bullying behaviour can be prejudice driven and may be based on differences such as:

- Race
- Religion
- Nationality
- Culture
- Gender
- Sexual Identity
- Disability
- Additional Support Needs
- Young Carers
- Care Circumstances
- Appearance
- Health/Medical Conditions
- Economic Factors

Appendix 1 provides more detail on prejudice-based bullying behaviour.

It is important to acknowledge that not every incident is a bullying incident. Each incident should be carefully considered and handled appropriately.

Prevention

Our aim is to create a culture and community where bullying, in any form, is completely unacceptable. We can achieve this by ensuring that positive relationships are built between all members of our school community and that these relationships are underpinned by preventative strategies.

Effective preventative strategies must involve all members of a community in building a culture where everyone feels safe, secure and nurtured. Adults should be aware of their responsibility to be role models for children and young people and should support others in the wider community to do the same. It is essential that we recognise that everyone matters and should be valued for who they are; it

is acceptable to be different. Learning opportunities are proactive in developing approaches to celebrate diversity, change attitudes and behaviour by promoting an ethos and culture of inclusion. Understanding the impact of bullying behaviours on our health and wellbeing and on our learning and development will help us take action to prevent and manage incidents.

Our school will therefore take steps to ensure that:

1. Regular staff training takes place to raise awareness and ensure that staff develop the skills to recognise, respond and take action appropriately to bullying behaviour. This includes cyberbullying, which is often the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example name calling and spreading rumours, but takes place online.
2. Teachers will plan opportunities through the curriculum to support young people to develop effective relationships, build resilience and skills for life. This will include developing self-awareness and awareness of others, responsibility taking and problem solving.
3. Schools and learning communities will take action to ensure all children and young people are fully aware of the anti-bullying strategy and of their own school policy.
4. There will be clear and effective communication about acceptable standards of behaviour for all, which reinforce our values and aims in relation to anti-bullying.
6. Children and young people should know who to speak to, be confident they will be listened to and taken seriously, and know that appropriate action will be taken.

Responding to bullying

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and therefore, nobody deserves to be a victim of bullying. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. If bullying, or cyber-bullying does occur, all pupils should feel empowered to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. It is our collective responsibility as members of our school community to report bullying in order to protect the rights of others. We ensure that all parents, staff and pupils have full access to this policy to refer to.

We monitor and review all bullying incidents to determine any patterns or trends that may require further action. On a regular basis we give pupils the opportunity to feedback on how safe and happy they feel at school, we do this through pupil questionnaires and School Council meetings. All staff are required to complete a bullying and prejudice-based incident reporting and monitoring form when dealing with incidents of bullying. This should be completed as soon as possible and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

How is a bullying incident dealt with?

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern. Then:

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| The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate. |
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| The Executive Headteacher/ designated safeguarding lead or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved |
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| The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns. |
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| The school will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate. |
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Sanctions (as identified within the school behaviour policy) and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.

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).

In the case of severe bullying or an individual is repeatedly involved in bullying incidents, this may result in a fixed term suspension.

Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated

Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

Appendix 1 - Prejudice-Based Bullying

Bullying behaviour related to race, religion, culture or nationality

Physical differences and different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds can be seen in the eyes of some to be evidence of one section of society being inferior/superior to another. A child or young person may be made to feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status. This can adversely affect the lives of those from minority ethnic, gypsy traveller, refugee and those of non-Scottish backgrounds; as well as those from different cultural and religious communities.

Bullying behaviour related to sexual identity

Bullying behaviour related to sexual orientation is also classified as homophobic bullying. Children or young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or transgender (LGBT), or are perceived to be, face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying behaviour least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The child or young person may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

Bullying behaviour related to gender

Children and young people of both sexes can be affected by this type of bullying behaviour. It is based on the acceptability (or otherwise) of certain male and female behaviours and applies to those that do not conform. Personality traits, social activities and academic choices can influence this type of bullying behaviour. The child and young person can often be pressurised to 'fit in' with the crowd.

Bullying behaviour related to disabilities or Additional Support Needs

Whether in mainstream or specialised schools, children and young people with disabilities or ASN do not always have the levels of social confidence and robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying behaviour. The behaviour can take any of the forms previously described, but can also include more manipulative behaviour, ie taking advantage of their emotional, behavioural or physical difficulties.

Bullying behaviour related to young carers or care circumstances

Children or young people can be more vulnerable to experiencing bullying behaviour by the fact that they provide care and assistance to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers often take on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Children or young people in care are equally as vulnerable to bullying behaviour due to their unique circumstances such as adoption, living away from birth parents or having social work involvement.

Bullying behaviour related to appearance or health/medical conditions

Children or young people with visible health or medical conditions, such as eczema or facial disfigurement, may be more likely than their peers to become subject to bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can also result in bullying. Obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited and used as a reason to exhibit bullying behaviour.

Appendix 2 - Useful links and supporting organisations

Bullying

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-codeof-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrtc.org/educational

LGBT

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide for Schools:
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-CoalitionSchools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters