



Our motto is: 'Let your light shine... as you grow', (inspired by Matthew 5: 15-16)

Our vision is: 'We nurture our pupils to be the best they can be in every way - in an inclusive and supportive environment, rooted in Christian teachings.'

ST MARY'S C.E. (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING and PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE POLICY

January 2026

BULLYING: OUR SCHOOL'S VALUES AND BELIEFS

At St. Mary's School we aim to create a caring environment in which our children feel safe and secure and in which they can appreciate the importance of developing good relationships with others. Every action and decision is made with a clear focus on the pupils ensuring that the whole person is developed. Issues are dealt with in an open, caring environment in order to ensure the best outcome for pupils.

Within the framework of our Christian values, children are encouraged to develop respect, compassion, trust, truthfulness, friendship and perseverance and as an inclusive school we prioritise an understanding of the difficulties that some children have relating to their particular needs. This is done through a restorative based system, which gives pupils the opportunity to show remorse, understand the impact of their actions and to feel forgiveness.

In line with this statement:

- All bullying and/or peer on peer abuse, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.
- Pupils who experience bullying and/or peer on peer abuse will be supported.
- We recognise the effects that bullying and/or peer on peer abuse can have on pupils' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

OUR INTENTIONS IN PRODUCING THIS POLICY ARE

- To express our belief that all pupils should be included fully in the life of the school.
- To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations.
- To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy.
- To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which pupils are subject to any form of bullying and/or peer on peer abuse.
- To respond effectively to all instances of bullying and/or peer on peer abuse that are reported to us.
- To establish a means of dealing with bullying and/or peer on peer abuse and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied or abused.
- To provide support for pupils who are accused of bullying and/or peer on peer abuse, who may be experiencing problems of their own.
- To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with the school.

OUR DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying and/or peer on peer abuse involves dominance of one person by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful

- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another’s belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones/social networking sites.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying
- Sexual bullying
- The use of homophobic language
- Bullying of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities.

OUR DEFINITION OF PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Peer-on-peer abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical and sexual abuse
- sexual harassment and violence
- emotional harm
- on and offline bullying
- teenage relationship abuse

It can include grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation.

CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN SCHOOL

Our school’s Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils develop respect, compassion, trust, truthfulness, friendship and perseverance. As a school we aim to embed our behaviour ethos into the environment and all adults and children within our school community. We have 3 key words that all staff and children refer to - **safe, respect and effort**.

We also draw on the school’s Curriculum and PSHCE materials (Physical, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) and promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching, and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practised. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying and/or peer on peer abuse is not accepted by anyone within the school community.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and/or peer on peer abuse and our anti-bullying and peer on peer abuse policy
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying/abuse ethos
- Teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others

Talk Time, Collective Worship, role- plays, stories and other cross curricular links are used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying and/or peer on peer abuse, and to create an anti-bullying/abuse climate in school. Bullying and/or peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the

information we give to pupils and parents when they join our school. We will publish our anti-bullying and peer on peer abuse policy on the school web-site.

Posters designed by the children are displayed around the school telling pupils our anti-bullying/abuse message. We also display other information such as Childline and other sources of confidential help around the school. During pupil perception questionnaires we ask pupils whether they feel safe.

We will provide regular training/reminders for teachers and non-teaching staff on spotting the signs of bullying and abuse and how to respond to it.

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS WHEN THEY OCCUR

Pupils who have been bullied and/or abused or witness bullying and/or abuse should report this to:

- Their identified adult in school
- Any member of staff
- A school friend or peer
- Their class member who sits on the School Council or Worship Council
- Their parents/carers

Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to:

- A member of the senior management team where they will be logged and dealt with further where needed.
- Initial conversations or observations should always be recorded on our reporting system Safeguard. Follow up actions, conversations and communications should also be recorded on own online platform.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the class teacher or member of the SLT. Work with children who have been bullied and/or abused could involve some or all of the following:

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and/or abused and this is not their fault.
- We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that bullying and/or abuse can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will involve their friends / older pupils in peer support / the buddy system/ mediation and restorative conversations.
- We will provide support to pupils who are bullied and/or abused.

We may then adopt strategies from the following list as appropriate:

- We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying and/or abuse separately.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying and/or abuse.
- We will reinforce the message that bullying and/or abuse is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying and/or abuse to stop.
- We will seek a commitment to this end.
- We will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied and/or abused.

- We will adopt a joint problem-solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.
- We will consider consequences under our school's Behaviour Policy.
- We will advise pupils responsible for bullying and/or abuse that we will be checking to ensure that bullying and/or abuse stops.
- We will ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- When bullying and/or abuse occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.
- We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them.
- We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying and/or abuse has not started again.
- We will also work with pupils who have been involved in bullying and/or abuse others to ascertain the sort of support that they themselves need.

There is a tendency, often quite a natural one, to want to investigate an incident and "get to the bottom of it." Sometimes this will be entirely appropriate. There will be other occasions where an extended investigation is actually unhelpful and where a problem-solving approach will be the most effective response. Our policy will be to use our discretion to respond flexibly and in an appropriate way to each incident

Parents can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying and peer on peer abuse policy and procedures.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying and/or abuse or if they are unhappy in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying/abuse culture outside of school.

Children instigating or participating in any form of bullying will be dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy.

BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying and/or abuse that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying and/or abuse can occur outside the school gates, on journeys to and from school and online and behaviour in these instances is covered within our Behaviour Policy. Bullying and/or abuse may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying and/or abuse off the school premises we will:

- Follow Safeguarding protocols if needed
- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are bullying.
- Talk to the police.

The DfE says that, "exceptionally, failure to take disciplinary steps to combat harmful behaviour outside the school might breach the school's common duty of care." Legal Services advise that schools can take disciplinary action against pupils for incidents that occur outside of school.

OWNERSHIP OF THIS POLICY

The policy applies to all staff and to all pupils, whether temporarily or permanently on the school roll.

The Headteacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.

Governors will be given regular information on bullying and/or abuse within school.