



**St Mary's Catholic Academy and
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy**



Our Mission

'Many hearts, one accord - in God's love, we grow and learn together to build the kingdom of God'.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Headteacher/Principal: Sarah Rathbone

Policy Date: November 2024

Policy Review Due Date: November 2027

Rationale

As reflected in our Mission statement, everyone at St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academies has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to benefit socially and academically. We recognise that bullying of any description prevents this being able to happen whilst affecting equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and the purpose of this policy contains guidelines to safeguard the well-being of every child in our school. This policy outlines our daily policy, practice and procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying within our school. It should be read in conjunction with the following school-based policies:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Relationships Policy
- School Council Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND
- Home/School Agreement
- Inclusion Policy
- Exclusion Policy

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of

Physical Bullying – deliberately hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting taking or breaking someone's things, violence or hurting others

Verbal Bullying - name-calling, teasing, intimidation or threats of violence

Cyber Bullying – posting / sending hurtful texts and messages, making on-line threats,

Social Bullying – lying, spreading rumours, leaving someone out, ridicule

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and isolated incidents of conflict.

Strategies to Ensure the Safeguarding of Children

At St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace we strive to maintain vigilance for signs of bullying and investigate any allegations relating to bullying. Through the promotion of the Gospel values of peace, love and respect for one-another, we embrace opportunities both within and beyond the curriculum to reinforce the ethos of the school.

We acknowledge and value the involvement of our pupils in identifying and reporting bullying in school. Year 6 House Captains and Playground Leaders are appointed as mentors for younger pupils and serve to maintain regular communication during break-times. The School Council liaises with Senior Management and report back regularly on behaviour in the playground, both Foundation Stage and Key stages 1 and 2.

On a yearly basis School Council members write and deliver an anti-bullying assembly at the beginning of anti-bullying week.

All pupils are aware that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a pupil mentor or member of staff. The use of 'Circle Time', RSE and PSHE is also used to provide opportunities for children to highlight worries and anxieties, and consider how to preserve the well-being of others within our school community. Children can also use the SHARP system to confidentially report any concerns that they have and to help keep the school a safe, friendly and fun place to be. Details on how to access the SHARP system can be found on the school website, in the children's diaries and posters around the school.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. If an incident of bullying is reported the person who the incident is reported to will make a record of this. This will be then passed on to a member of SMT for a full investigation who will complete an incident of bullying report. Outcomes will be reported on the same sheets. A record will be kept of incidents in the bullying file kept in the Principal's office. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate coordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Principal or Head of School. If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the Principal or Head of School to be recorded and reported as a Racial Incident, this report is then passed on to the Local Authority.

Harassment of pupils with a disability will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the school's Relationship Policy.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a buddy system, or peer counselling can also be beneficial. All victims of bullying will be given the opportunity to see the Learning Mentor.

This policy was agreed by staff on: November 2024

This policy was approved by School Committee on: November 2024

This policy will be reviewed by the School Committee on: November 2027

Signed _____ Chair of School Committee