



St. Mary's College

Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Written: March 2017
Reviewed: September 2023

St Mary's College Preparatory School – The Prep
Anti-Bullying Policy
(This policy includes EYFS Reception, KS1 and KS2)

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of The Prep and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

Our Mission is to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 0-18; to provide individual challenge towards holistic and balanced development, service and achievement for life and beyond; and to try to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

The Prep is committed to providing equality in school, free from bullying, racism and discrimination in any form. The Prep strives to create a safe and happy environment for children to enjoy and achieve through learning. Everyone is encouraged to treat each other with kindness and respect.

Some children may, however, suffer from being bullied at some time during their school life. No-one deserves to be bullied and the problem should not be ignored. Such damaging behaviour is never acceptable.

The Equality Act 2010

Under this act The Prep will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The following site offers advice to staff, governors, parents and pupils:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

What counts as bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

(For the purposes of this policy please read 'bullying' as including cyber-bullying.)

1. Aims and objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

2. The role of Governors

The governing body supports the Headmaster in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governors require the Headmaster to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headmaster, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

3. The role of the Headmaster

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headmaster reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headmaster keeps a central log of bullying in order to observe patterns across the school.

The Headmaster ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headmaster draws the attention of children to this

fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headmaster may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong and why a pupil is being punished.

The Headmaster ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

New staff will be provided with access to the Anti Bullying Policy as part of the Induction Procedure. Particular note will be made of the signs that a child being bullied may display. Staff will also attend Anti-Bullying workshops and assemblies.

The Headmaster sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Headmaster can use his/her discretion as to what the level of sanction will be for incidents of bullying. This may range from discussions with parents to expulsion in the most serious cases.

The Headmaster will give guidance on the use of technology/devices in the classroom and beyond for all users, including staff, pupils and visitors and reference permissions/restrictions.

The headmaster will ensure all staff have the opportunity to engage in Professional Development linked to anti-bullying.

4. The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headmaster. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time then, after consultation with the Headmaster, the teacher informs the child's parents.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Headmaster and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headmaster may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.

In very serious cases, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Local Authority's Children's Services Department. However, it is the policy of The Prep to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely or safeguarding issues dictate a referral to Children's Services. A bullying

incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care.

All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc. within the formal curriculum to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Star of the Week Assembly time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Teachers will also ensure they are up to date with online safety procedures and ensure they make their pupils aware of these as is appropriate.

5. The role of parents

Parents and who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headmaster. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed on the school website.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

6. The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. This also refers to pupils who find themselves as bystanders of bullying.

7. Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headmaster, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's behaviour logbook, which can be found in the Headmaster's office, where incidents of bullying are recorded and by discussion with the Headmaster.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Safeguarding and ICT policies.