

# ST MARGARET'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

March 2025

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## 1. Statement of Intent

At St Margaret's we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. We recognise that any bullying, whether physical or non-physical, may result in lasting psychological damage to the individual. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

## 2. Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported if bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

## 3. St Margaret's Commitment to Tackling Bullying in All Forms

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at St Margaret's CE Primary school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Timely and well planned responses to bullying can have a positive effect on lessening the negative impact of bullying on those who experience it.

## 4. Identifying Bullying

### 4.1 Bullying:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include at least one of the following:

- An Imbalance of Power: Children who bully use their power - such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity - to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

#### **4.3 Bullying is not:**

- a one-off fight or argument
- a friend sometimes being nasty
- an argument with a friend

#### **4.4 Bullying can be:**

- Psychological – Reduction of a person’s self-esteem or confidence through threatening behaviour, taunting or teasing about race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, appearance, or any other feature of their lives which can be used to wound or humiliate them.
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of unprovoked violence
- Racist taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexualised behaviour, physical or non-physical, where sexuality or gender is used as a weapon against another. It is any behaviour which degrades someone, singles someone out using sexual language, gestures or violence, and victimising someone for their appearance. Sexual bullying is also pressure to act promiscuously and to act in a way that makes others uncomfortable.
- Child-on-Child abuse. Any sign of physical, sexual, emotional & financial abuse, and coercive control between children and within children’s relationships, friendships and wider peer associations.
- Sexual harassment - unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which violates a person’s dignity, makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and creates a hostile or offensive environment.
- Homophobic - Any hostile or offensive action against a child because they are LGBTQIA+ or because they are perceived to be.
- Verbal - The use of language in a derogatory or offensive manner, such as swearing, racist or sexist abuse, sexual innuendo, spreading rumours, etc.
- Cyber - Using mobile phones or the internet to deliberately upset, degrade or control someone.
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

### **5. Child-on-Child Abuse**

Child-on-Child abuse is defined as any sign of physical, sexual, emotional & financial abuse, and coercive control between children and within children’s relationships, friendships and wider peer associations. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children, both inside and outside school or online. All staff should adopt the attitude of ‘it could happen here’.

## **5.1 Defining and Working to Prevent Child-on-Child Abuse**

Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include, but not be limited to bullying (including cyber bullying); physical abuse; sexual violence/sexual harassment; 'up-skirting'; 'sexting' or initiation/hazing type violence and rituals; sexist slurs, flicking bra straps; unwelcome looks and comments, and comments that perpetuate gender stereotypes. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. St Margaret's uses a variety of preventative measures to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

## **5.2 Expected Staff Action**

All staff must understand that it is essential that inappropriate behaviours between children, that are abusive in nature, are challenged. Not challenging it at the time and downplaying certain behaviours can lead to a culture that normalises abuse and prevents children from reporting it. Stopping harm and ensuring immediate safety is the school's priority.

Staff are expected to challenge victim blaming and sexual harassment in the moment. Challenging the behaviour should be immediate and focus on the behaviour and not the person.

The focus should be on the perpetrator's behaviour and not the target. Staff should ensure they explain what the problem with the behaviour is and support and show empathy towards the target.

Staff can use conversation starters to support them to challenge inappropriate behaviours:

'You may not have seen it this way but.....'

'What do you think that word means?'

'In our school, we.....'

'This could be seen as inappropriate touching/language.....'

'I'm really uncomfortable with you saying things like that/behaving that way because.....'

## **6. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying and Abuse**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child...

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stuttering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work

- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Pupil voice has made it clear that children sometimes feel a sense of shame around bullying and this makes them less likely to report it.

## **7. Preventing, Responding to and Recording Bullying**

### **7.1 Preventing**

Some of the following activities support prevention:

- National Anti-bullying week
  - Assemblies
  - Drama
  - Songs promoting good values and strong principles
  - Literature – use of many picture books are suitable
  - Nurture groups
  - Teaching children to be safe online and when using other communication technology
  - Teaching children how to report any bullying – safe routes to report such as a worry box or speaking to adults
  - Lessons on understanding/valuing differences
  - Lessons on resilience and coping skills
  - Lessons on friendships and good relationships
  - Embedding the work and values in the curriculum
1. Report bullying incidents to teachers or other members of staff
  2. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem

3. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated. A balance of sanctions and work to ensure that the perpetrators understand why their behaviour is unacceptable and help them apologise and build respectful relationships with their targets is undertaken as appropriate.

## **7.2 Responding**

If a child reports they are being bullied we will...

- Listen attentively and take it seriously
- Monitor the situation and follow up
- Record the incident/history and alert other staff so that we can collate any reports
- Help the child who bullies to change their behaviour
- Try to repair the friendship where possible
- Challenge any prejudice among those involved and the wider group
- Report to and engage parents to support our work to deal with the situation

## **7.3 Recording and monitoring**

- Instances are recorded in the Anti-bullying log for situations where there is clear evidence of forms of bullying having taken place; where there is clear evidence that peer-on-peer abuse has occurred, this will be recorded in the Peer-on-Peer abuse log. Entries are made in the Discriminatory Behaviours log where there is evidence of prejudice or discrimination. All logs are monitored to identify patterns and repeat perpetrators and repeat targets. Where necessary, we liaise with external agencies including social services and the police.
- Any absence from school due to bullying will be taken seriously
- The data will help us notice any patterns of discrimination towards any group of pupils and work to prevent this

## **8. Staff Training**

All staff, teaching and non-teaching will receive training to understand and address bullying in all its forms.

Our school will further our goals under the Equality Act 2010 by respecting and valuing every member of our school community.

### **This policy interacts with our policies on**

- Data protection Staff Acceptable Use Agreement
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Equality – inclusion, disability, special needs, race
- PSHE

