

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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. 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.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying:

- goes on for a while, or happens regularly
- is deliberate – the bully wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the child being bullied
- involves someone (or several children) who are stronger in some way than the child being bullied – the bully has more power, they're older, stronger, there are more of them or they have some 'hold' over the child being bullied

These three things have to happen together for something to be called 'bullying'.

Bullying is not:

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

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as:- email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

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.

Signs and Symptoms

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 (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- 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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to teachers or other members of staff
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by teachers or other members of staff
3. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- 1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- 2) In serious cases, internal or external exclusion may be considered
- 3) If possible, the children will be reconciled
- 4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use every opportunity to promote in school harmonious living within our school community and beyond.