

# Anti-Bullying Policy

St Mary's RC High School



**Approved by:**

Head teacher

**Date: 03/01/2023**

**Written by:**

Assistant Head teacher - pastoral

**Next review due by:**

06/01/2024

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1. We strive to create a culture based on our core values of Respect, Honesty and Kindness. Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school that sets high standards for our students, it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind. As bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form and where and from they can access help and support should they experience any form of bullying. Bullying is in the news and is a form of real anxiety for parents, it is important that we inform parents fully about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that parents are able to distinguish between what is bullying and what is not.

## 2. A definition of bullying

- 2.1. There is no legal definition of bullying, however our interpretation of bullying is:  
**Repetitive intentional hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.**
- 2.2. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber- bullying via text messages or on social media and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
- 2.3. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. (See ref: Preventing Bullying 2017, DFE).
- 2.4. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Schools have wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 to give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.
- 2.5. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. The Head teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or other agencies in their local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.
- 2.6. Bullying can be (but is not limited to):
  - physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
  - teasing

- making threats
  - verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
  - indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- 2.7. We appreciate that cases of bullying can be very complex with a range of roles involved, the terminology used can be seen in the appendix alongside a brief description of these roles.
- 2.8. At St Mary's we understand that sometimes there is relational conflict between students. This is not defined as bullying where there is a balance of power. However, where there is unkindness between students the pastoral team will endeavour to support students and re-emphasise our core values.

### **3. How we set the right ethos of being a 'telling' school**

- 3.1 A 'telling' school is one where students do inform staff when bullying is taking place.
- 3.2 If students who feel they are being bullied are to tell us about bullying, we must work together to create an atmosphere of trust. Students who are classed as targets must know that their concerns will be taken seriously and recognise that investigations take time.
- 3.3 We must also make it as easy as possible to report bullying. They must understand that these may result in a number of different outcomes .
- 3.4 If this is to happen, then everyone on the site has a responsibility to ensure that we live by our core values and that we all set a good atmosphere round school. We want to make it clear that this responsibility includes:
- promoting an open and honest ethos that ensures that all members of the school community
  - know and agree with our stance on bullying
  - ensuring that all staff exhibit positive behaviours, demonstrate our Core Values and become
  - positive role models to students
  - treating other people with respect at all times;
  - doing nothing that could be construed as bullying;
  - doing nothing that could be construed as supporting bullying. This includes relaying distressing messages, relaying threats, laughing at bullying, watching a fight;
  - reporting to the proper person any bullying we witness or any behaviour which we feel could escalate into bullying.
  - engaging students in reviewing and developing our anti-bullying practices
  - analyse available data to ascertain how the school environment and the journeys to and from school can be improved.

### **4. How to deal with bullying and who to tell**

- 4.1. Each year in the autumn term we will remind all our students to take the following action if they feel they are being bullied. These messages will also be reinforced throughout the year;

- if you feel able to, then let the perpetrator know that they do not like what is happening to them and ask them to stop;
- if the bullying doesn't stop, tell someone in school who will initiate action to sort out the problem. This will often be their form tutor, any teacher or any member of staff.

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- 4.2. If bullying behaviour is witnessed by our students, as part of taking on the role as defender, we ask that they too report their concerns using the above protocols. However, we emphasise that students must not use physicality or verbal abuse to try and resolve a matter.
- 4.3. If parents or carers have concerns regarding bullying behaviour we ask that this is reported to their child's Head of Year. This will be logged and the matter will be investigated.

### **5. What any adult – teacher, support staff, parent – who has been told about bullying should do**

- 5.1. Go to, phone or email the Head of Year of the student concerned.
- 5.2. If a parent does not know who the appropriate Head of Year is they should contact school and the Receptionist will advise them.

### **6. Who should investigate**

- 6.1. In the first instance we would expect the student's form tutor to discuss any issues with their tutees and suggest possible solutions. If this is ineffective or the form tutor believes he/she needs help in resolving an issue he/she will email their Head of Year. An investigation into a complaint of bullying will be carried out in most cases by one of the student's Head of Year, but on occasions by a form tutor or one of the pastoral Assistant Headteachers.

### **7. The need for gathering evidence**

- 7.1. If we are to deal with incidents fairly, we must gather as much evidence as possible in order to establish what really happened.

### **8. How we deal with incidents that cross the inside/outside school boundaries**

- 8.1. Where incidents that happen outside school are clearly having a detrimental effect on the life of student in school, we will investigate these where appropriate and, in conjunction with the parents and the local police, take appropriate action.

### **9. What sanctions we use**

- 9.1. At our school, sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEN or disabilities that pupils may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed. We expect all students to be proactive and seek

help from members of staff if they witness another student being hurt or they are concerned about others.

- 9.2. The following is the normal hierarchy of sanctions. A serious case of bullying, however, might result in immediate suspension:
- A behaviour detention (logged on SIMS as bullying), plus restorative conversation to educate the perpetrator on the impact of their actions.
  - Restorative conversation between all students involved and an apology from the perpetrators, when consented to by the target
  - A phone call/email to discuss the matter with the perpetrator's parent/guardian, further removal of free time, seating plan changes within class, further education on the matter
  - Reflection time plus perpetrators' parents invited in for a formal face-to-face meeting
  - Timetable change for the perpetrator, plus a meeting with the AHT
  - Internal exclusion - Behaviour Recovery
  - External exclusion - Suspension
  - Permanent Exclusion

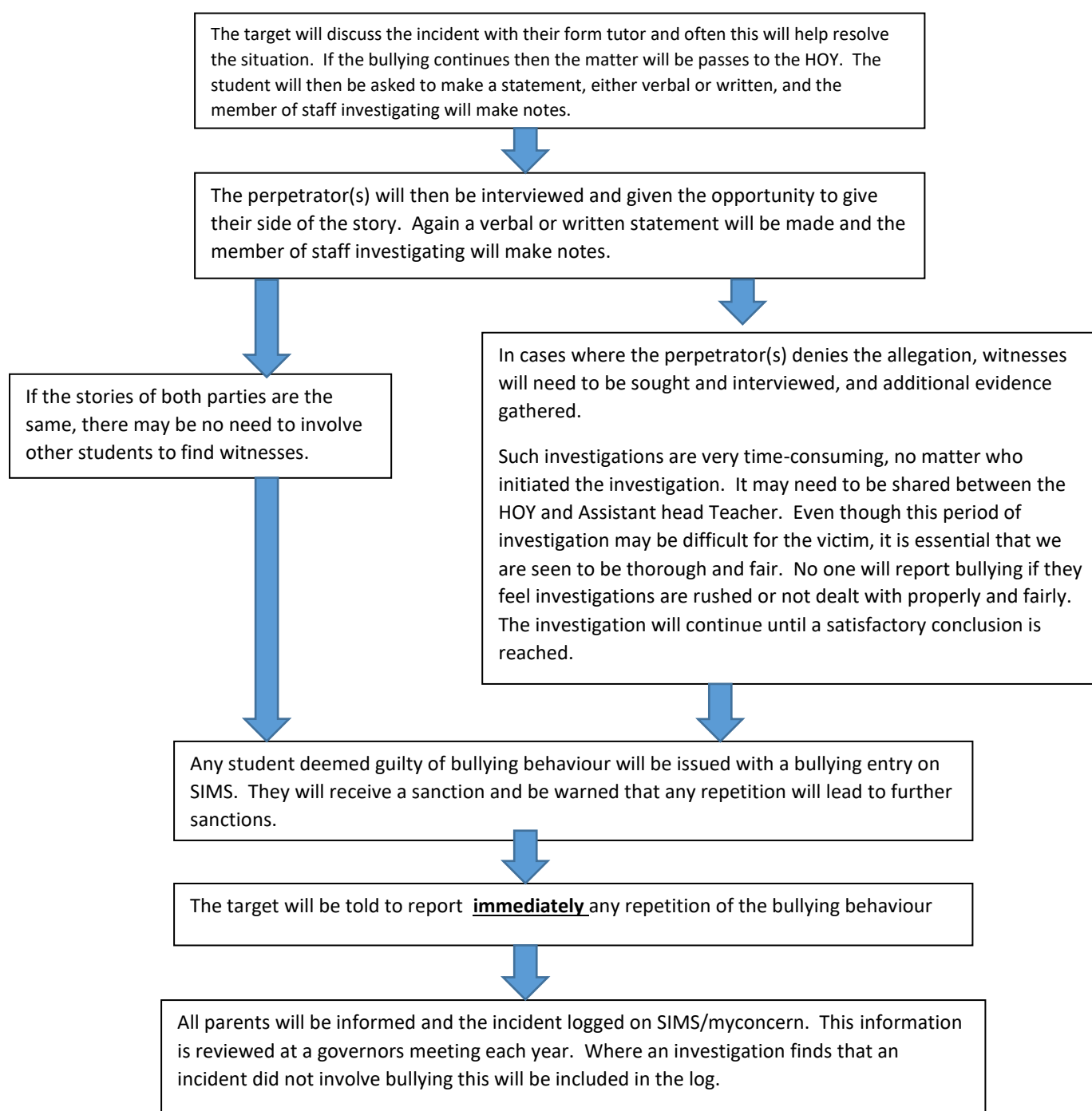
## **10. Engaging with parents and carers**

- 10.1. We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the student being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved. Some parents may need specific support to help deal with their child's behaviour. Where our school identifies that this is the case, we will initially provide support ourselves or signpost the parents to appropriate channels of help.
- 10.2. We will:
- make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers.
  - ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
  - ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
  - ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
  - work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
  - ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- 10.3. Particularly during a lengthy investigation, or when there is a repetition of bullying, a target's parents may feel very anxious. It is very important that the investigator and the parents keep in contact but parents must understand that form tutors, Heads of Year and Senior Staff do have other demands on their time. We will always endeavour to ring parents on the same day that the incident occurred; and if this is not possible, within a timely manner and as soon as practicable.

## 11. How we monitor the situation

- 11.1. Pastoral staff will try to check at regular intervals on the welfare of a student who has been bullied, but we also rely on Students reporting any repetition. Whilst the sanctions outlined above will be used as appropriate, both students and parents must understand that we cannot take action if we are not made aware of incidents.

### The Process Flowchart



**Support:** During an investigation, it is likely that the alleged target will feel vulnerable, particularly at breaks, lunchtimes and the end of school. They will be offered protection at such times, in the form of a room/office in school to which they might go with or without friends, and alternative arrangements for buying and eating lunch. They will also be offered regular slots with their pastoral team to check in on their well-being.

**Teaching:** The PSHE and RSE programme also aim to educate students on a range of matters around bullying behaviours. Bullying is also covered in the assembly programme.

### **Supporting Organisations and Guidance**

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Beat Bullying: [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014:
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)

### **Cyberbullying**

- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### **LGBT**

- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Pace: [www.pacehealth.org.uk](http://www.pacehealth.org.uk)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)

### **SEND**

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice0-to-25>

### Racism and Hate

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srtrc.org/educational](http://www.srtrc.org/educational)

### Appendix 1

#### Roles of involved in bullying incidents

