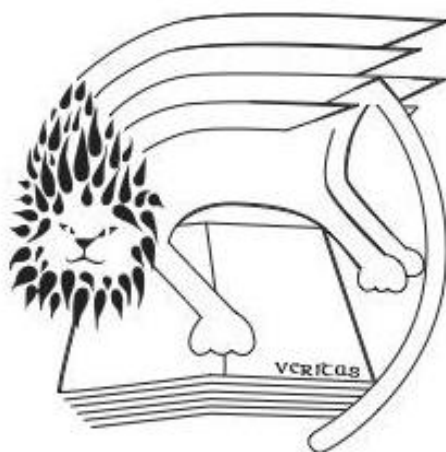


# St. Mark's Catholic School



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Effective Date:	Review Date:	Prepared by:	Designated SLT:	Governor's Committee:
Feb 2020	Feb 2023	LOC	LOC	Pastoral

## **Our Mission:**

*St Mark's is a Catholic community inspired by Gospel values where relationships are rooted in love. At the heart of our mission is a commitment to live out our faith and a dedication to embrace excellence in all that we do. We believe in education that instils possibilities, transforms lives and enables all to fulfil their potential.*

## **Principles**

The focus of this policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of bullying. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. A clear anti-bullying ethos will be maintained based on gospel values of love, justice, peace and reconciliation.

All staff have to be aware of bullying and follow the procedures in this policy. Bullying is peer on peer abuse and as such, is part of the safeguarding policy at the school.

## **Definitions**

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

The four main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft).
- Verbal (name calling, racist, homophobic remarks).
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).
- Online abuse (using social media platforms and images)

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, lack of concentration or truanting from school.

## **Relational conflict versus bullying**

Bullying is not an isolated fight or argument, a friend being nasty or an argument with a friend. Throughout the years of secondary education, students have the opportunity to meet and mix with many students and this may result, for some students, in relational conflict, i.e. times when students do not get on socially which can result in occasional behaviours such as name calling, pushing, taking property or ignoring someone deliberately. Bullying is something that can happen in all schools but it is very different from relational conflict and it is less common.

## **Anti-bullying Strategies**

### **School ethos**

- Bullying goes against the fundamental Catholic ethos of the school.
- Staff model anti-bullying practice at all times.
- Special assemblies are dedicated to anti-bullying.

## **Prevention – Anti-bullying Co-ordinator**

- The school has a designated Anti-bullying Co-ordinator (this sits within the overall post of Well-being Co-ordinator).
- This role involves co-ordinating the anti-bullying strategies with the Director of Pastoral Care, the Assistant Headteacher (with responsibility for student personal development) and the PPL team.
- The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator will appoint Anti-bullying Mentors ('Peer Mentors' from Year 9 to support Year 7 students. The Peer Mentors will receive appropriate training to enable them to recognise bullying, to offer reassurance and to pass on information to teaching staff when necessary.
- The Anti-bullying Co-ordinator is responsible for raising awareness and developing resources for whole school use. This is a fundamental part of the role, as is responding to local and national initiatives.
- They are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the school's Anti-Bullying policy and producing an action plan for future development.

## **Prevention – Curriculum, PSHCE and form time**

- The school's fundamental values and ethos are taught through all lessons in the curriculum.
- Bullying themes are taught in such subjects as History, English, RE and Drama.
- Anti-bullying education, including teaching about empathy, is built into PSHCE lessons.
- The systems for reporting bullying is made clear to students by PPLs and tutors in form time and assemblies.

## **Reporting**

The school is seeking to deal with bullying in the following ways:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the member of staff will deal with the incident immediately.
- This will involve giving reassurance to the student experiencing bullying and recording information about the incident.
- Any student who experiences bullying, or any bystanders, must be able to report incidents in a safe and discreet manner. They must be reassured that reporting an incident will not make things worse. Where requested, the anonymity of a witness will be protected if possible.
- The member of staff concerned will pass information to the PPL of the relevant year group.
- Any bullying incident will be logged onto SIMS (only by the PPL or SLT). This will be done once it has been established that bullying is actually happening.

## **Intervention with students who experience bullying**

- Students who have experienced bullying will be offered reassurance and continued support from their PPL and tutor. Long term monitoring will be maintained.
- They will also be offered a range of other support systems including access to the school counsellor (subject to the waiting list), specialist telephone help-lines and web addresses that deal with bullying, in order to help them with their self-esteem and confidence.
- A discreet record sheet will be stapled into their diary should they need to record any further incidents.
- Parents will be contacted, and reassured that the school is taking appropriate action.

## **Interventions with students who display bullying behaviour:**

Pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour will need to recognise their transgression and accept the need for change. Parents will need to support the child in their attempts to correct their behaviour. Members of staff will take a number of steps.

1. The PPL or an SLT member will meet with the student/s and obtain a verbal account of the incident.
2. A student will be asked to produce their own written account (pink incident form), but will have access to a scribe if necessary.
3. Parents will be contacted if a bullying allegation is believed to be true.
4. A meeting will take place with the student, parents and PPL/SLT members.
5. The student will take part in an anti-bullying programme.
6. Long term monitoring of the situation will be maintained by the relevant PPL.

Some of the following disciplinary steps may be taken depending on the severity of the situation:

- Official warning
- Detentions
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Police involvement.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Records of bullying incidents are maintained. The Director of Pastoral Care will report to the Governors' Pastoral Committee and jointly evaluate the impact of anti-bullying strategies.

Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- St Mark's Behaviour Policy
- St Mark's Safeguarding policy
- The Equalities Act 2010