



## ST MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, NEWRY

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Revised June 2019**

#### **Rationale:**

As a Rights Respecting School, respect for self, others and property are core values within St Mary's and reflect a range of articles within the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child. Bullying in any form is caused by a lack of proper respect for another person's dignity and rights. It can take the form of psychological pressure, verbal, non-verbal or physical aggression or seeking control over others in unacceptable ways. In St Mary's, we aim to provide a safe and secure learning environment for everyone in the school community. *This policy has been revised to reflect Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum and DENI Circular 2015/22 (Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance)*

#### **Definition:**

*'Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others'*

*Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum*

#### **Aims:**

Through the establishment of a caring framework as a Rights Respecting School we aim to:

- Encourage all pupils to exercise self-discipline, self-respect, respect for others, the environment and local community and personal responsibility in line with Article 29 of UNCRC *'Education must encourage the child's respect for human rights as well as respect for others'*.
- Provide a systematic, consistent and appropriate response to behaviour management in school;
- Ensure pupils recognise the need to have rules in school and to fulfil their responsibility as outlined in the School Charter;
- Foster mutual respect, understanding, sensitivity, open mindedness and generosity towards others so as to enrich both personal and community life;
- Support the health and safety of the pupils;
- Foster a learning culture that celebrates and reward positive behaviour, achievement and success;
- Create a stimulating learning environments which encourages and rewards personal endeavour and achievement;
- Ensure pupils behave appropriately at all times in school and when representing the school on trips and during other activities;
- Encourage pupils to respect authority, treating all persons in authority with courtesy and respect;
- Support the personal development of all pupils by recognising and rewarding high standards of behaviour and effort.

## **Supportive and Caring Ethos in School:**

The Curriculum and Pastoral Care provisions in St Mary's High School aim to help and support all pupils, preparing them to cope with the demands of school and adult life thus enabling them to achieve their full potential. These provisions include measures to help meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all learners within an inclusive learning environment. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of all young people and through our mission statement and ethos every member of our school community is treated with respect. The Pastoral Programme and Counselling Service create a supportive environment for pupils where they feel valued and supported.

The Personal Development Programme allows pupils to explore key issues within their personal development including self concepts, esteem, Health and well-being, relationships and personal safety.

The following structures and procedures are established in St Mary's:

- Staff promote and reward positive and respectful behaviour;
- A Rights Respecting learning environment where all pupils feel accepted and valued;
- Staff lead by example in promoting respect for each other, forming positive relationships and developing resilience;
- All staff receive Child Protection Training in line with SELB guidelines and are familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and are kept informed of new pastoral procedures;
- Emotional health and well-being is an integral part of the school curriculum and the Personal Development Programme;
- Faith development is an integral part of all RE Programmes of Study and the School Chaplain is available for advice and counselling;
- The school uses a range of external agencies for support and guidance;
- Lunchtime supervision is provided by non-teaching members of staff who have completed Child Protection training and are fully vetted;
- Staff treat all cases of poor behaviour seriously and investigate each incident impartially;
- Any sanctions imposed are fair and appropriate;
- Any pupil identified as demonstrating serious behavioural tendencies will be supported and offered counselling;
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be shared with all parents and will be published on the School Website;
- A Counselling Service is provided one day per week.

## **Types of Bullying:**

- Persistent name calling or mocking;
- Physical violence;
- Demands for money or possessions;
- Being pressurised to do something you do not want to do;
- Threatening behaviour;
- Deliberately leaving someone out or excluding them;

- Teasing or tormenting a person about their social background, race, personal appearance, school performance, possessions, disabilities, sexual orientation;
- Being sent unpleasant notes, emails, internet message, texts or made the subject of graffiti.

### **Cyber Bullying:**

Developments in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have made instances of cyber bullying more widespread. Some examples of cyber bullying include:

- Text messages that are threatening or upsetting;
- Still images and video clips captured on and circulated by mobile phones to cause embarrassment to the pupil, who may not even know that they have been photographed or videoed in line with e safety policy;
- Threatening emails, often using a fictitious name or someone else's name;
- Anonymous calls or abusive messages to another mobile phone – sometimes the person who is being bullied has her phone stolen and it is used to harass others, who then think the owner of the phone is responsible;
- Instant Messaging (IM) conveying threats or insults in real-time conversations;
- Defamatory messages broadcast on websites, blogs, twitter, personal or social networking sites (Eg. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram);
- Menacing or upsetting responses in chat rooms;
- Setting up fake profiles on a social network to make fun of others.

As with many conventional forms of bullying, many children do not tell anyone they are being bullied by another person via the internet or mobile phone. It is imperative that the pupil informs a parent/guardian or member of staff if they are being bullied through technologies such as mobile phones or the internet. It is the Policy in St Mary's for staff not to look through a pupil's mobile phone or read information or look at photos on a pupil's social networking site. If a parent/guardian discovers that their daughter is being bullied via the internet or mobile phone, the school advises that they should seek advice from the PSNI. If the bullying has an impact on the behaviours or relationships between pupils in school, staff will investigate the incident in line with the Behaviour Policy and procedures.

### **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

We are aware that as young people are growing up they can experience sexual identity and orientation confusion. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not be treated any less favorably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Relationships and Sexuality Education will help to promote positive views regarding sexual orientation and gender identity which in turn will help to raise the self-esteem of young people who may feel different. The school will handle all issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in a sensitive and reassuring way. As a Rights Respecting School, all negative and prejudice attitudes and behaviours will be challenged to create an inclusive learning environment.

Bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation is as unacceptable as it is on any other situations where someone is mistreated. All issues relating to homophobic language and bullying will be dealt with appropriately in accordance with this policy. Use of unkind language will be challenged and deemed as unacceptable.

### **School Responsibilities:**

- To promote an ethos of respect for self, for others and the environment;
- To set the highest possible standards for positive relationships among staff, pupils and parents;
- To ensure a safe environment for staff and pupils;
- To encourage openness about any form of unacceptable bullying behaviour;
- To investigate any reports of bullying;
- To take appropriate action when bullying is reported;
- To remain calm and positive when managing a bullying situation;
- To be assertive and clearly express expectations on the need for the pupil to stop bullying;
- To be confident in implementing practices that can have an impact on the pupil's future behaviour;
- To involve parents in addressing a problem situation when necessary;
- To promote the need for respectful behaviour, rights and responsibilities through the Pastoral and Personal Development Programmes and assemblies;
- To encourage the development of resilience among pupils when faced with diversity;
- To support and help both the person being bullied and the person bullying.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- To encourage their daughter to have self-confidence and to have confidence in talking to staff;
- To promote respect for self, others and property and support the school rules;
- To discuss with their daughters any fears or experiences of what appears to be bullying behaviour;
- To help their daughters work out simple, non-aggressive, strategies for dealing with what appears to be worrying behaviour on the part of another person;
- To discourage any tendency towards bullying behaviour on the part of their daughter;
- To encourage their daughter to accept the right of staff to correct them for poor behaviour;
- To inform the school of any serious concern regarding bullying behaviour;
- To co-operate with the school in resolving any difficulties involving bullying;
- To seek advice from the PSNI if they know their daughter is being bullied outside the school environment via social networking sites, mobile phones or the internet;
- To resolve situations/difficulties outside of school which may carry over into school.

### **Pupil Responsibilities:**

- To respect herself, others and the environment;
- To know her rights and responsibilities regarding personal safety;
- To have confidence in staff and to report any concerns regarding bullying whether for her own safety or the safety of others;
- To tell her parents/guardians if she is being bullied;
- To avoid any behaviour which could be understood by others as bullying: (e.g. giving 'dirty looks', calling names, spreading rumours, teasing, threatening);
- To practice self-control and avoid reacting to negative attitudes or behaviours of other in an aggressive way.

## **St Mary's Response to Bullying:**

Bullying incidents will be dealt with by the Year Tutor, Vice Principal or Principal. Form Teachers may be involved at the initial stage and will continue to have a supportive role. All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and the responses can include some or all of the following:

If bullying is reported to a member of staff by a pupil or parent or a serious bullying problem is suspected by a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Form Teacher, Year Tutor or Vice Principal will carry out an investigation into the matter. During this investigation the Principal will be aware of the issue.
- When the investigation is complete, the Year Tutor or Vice Principal will formally advise the Principal.
- Any bullying issues which are felt to be the result of family conflicts outside school will be dealt with by the Vice-Principal or Principal.
- It is important that the pupil who has been bullied and the pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour receive all the support they need.

## **Guidelines for Investigating an Alleged Instance of Bullying:**

To determine the level of severity, staff in all instances of bullying will take account of the following:

- The nature of the bullying behaviour – for example deliberate teasing, excluding or hitting.
- The frequency of the bullying behaviour: daily, weekly or less often
- The duration of the bullying behaviour: whether over a short or prolonged period of time
- The perceptions of the pupil being bullied

The school will always take immediate action if a pupil's personal safety is at threat.

The main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying that is taking place, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all those involved.

### **Low Level Bullying Behaviour:**

#### **Form Teacher and/or Year Tutor:**

The Form Teacher may have a very important role to play in the initial investigative process. He or she knows the pupil better than anyone else in the school. If the Form Teacher is dealing with the incident initially it is his or her responsibility to:

- Have a meeting with the pupil concerned to determine the seriousness of the incident;
- Listen sympathetically and provide reassurance;
- Record details in writing - dates, times, the type of bullying, the name of any pupil who witnessed what was happening, where the incidents occurred (in the classroom, on the corridor, outside);
- Inform the Year Tutor of the incident and provide him or her with a written report;
- Talk to the pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour and establish the extent of the problem;
- If appropriate and the pupil who is being bullied agrees arrange a meeting between the two pupils and aim to resolve the issues;
- Closely monitor the situation.

### **Intermediate Bullying Behaviour:**

#### **Year Tutor or Vice Principal:**

When the Year Tutor or Vice Principal receives details of the incident he or she is required to:

- Meets with the pupils separately (pupil who has been bullied, witnesses, pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour) connected with the incident;
- Record details in writing - dates, times, the type of bullying, the name of any pupil who witnessed what was happening, where the incidents occurred (in the classroom, on the corridor, outside);
- Determine if there is a case of bullying;
- Contact both sets of parents explaining what has been happening and how the incident will be dealt with;
- Arrange meeting with the parents of the pupil who has been bullied and pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour;
- Ensure the Principal is informed of the details of the incident;
- The Vice Principal or Principal will always be present;
- Determine the appropriate disciplinary action agreed with the Vice Principal or Principal;
- Inform relevant staff of outcomes and disciplinary action taken.

### **Complex or High Risk Bullying Behaviour:**

#### **Vice Principal and Principal:**

Bullying behaviours assessed as being complex or high risk will always be dealt with by the Vice Principal and/or Principal. There may be a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all the pupils involved. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures may need to be invoked. A Risk Assessment will be completed to determine a plan of intervention and risk management that will be communicated to all. This planning may occur through a multi-agency discussion, involving EA Southern services and other external agencies.

**All written internal reports of bullying will be kept securely in school.**

### **Outcome of the Bullying Investigation:**

Whenever the investigation has concluded and it has been established that bullying has taken place the response can include some or all of the following:

- The pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour will have to explain their behaviour to the Year Tutor, Vice Principal or Principal;
- The reasons for their behaviour will be recorded;
- Her parents will be informed of the incident and invited into the school for a meeting;
- The pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour will have to apologise to the pupil who has been bullied;
- The possessions of the pupil who is being bullied will have to be replaced or repaired if damaged.

Depending on the seriousness and level of the bullying incident one or more of the sanctions will be applied:

- Placed on detention after school or lunchtime;

- Placed on Behaviour Report;
- Remain in the care of their Form Teacher or Year Tutor for an agreed period of time and school work is provided;
- Moved to a different Form Class if the pupil who has been bullied is in the same class;
- Permanently excluded from the Dining Hall;
- Suspended from school for three days;
- Permanently excluded from school.

## **Support Provided for Pupil who has been Bullied and Pupil who is Displaying Bullying Behaviour:**

### **Pupil who has been bullied:**

The pupil who has been bullied should be reassured that they are not in any way to blame. Support and protection should be provided and agreement reached with them on an appropriate course of action. Bullying, especially when serious or prolonged, can have lasting emotional and psychological ill-effects and a distressed pupil will be offered support from staff. In serious cases, it will be necessary to offer counselling to the pupil who has been bullied.

### **Pupil who is Displaying Bullying Behaviour:**

As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with St Mary's Behaviour Policy and Procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour. Bullying behaviour should be treated in the same way as other forms of behavioural difficulties. It is important that the pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour is spoken to calmly and sensitively and asked to think about and talk about the implications of their behaviour for the pupil who they had targeted. It is also important to speak to her parents to help identify any relevant background information and secure their support in this situation. The pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour may also need counselling.

## **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE PUPIL WHO HAS BEEN BULLIED AND THE PUPIL WHO IS DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR RECEIVE ALL THE SUPPORT THEY NEED, BOTH NEED OUR HELP**

### **Use of External/Support Agencies:**

We acknowledge the importance of a range of external support agencies in promoting and supporting pastoral care within the school but also the importance of ensuring that such agencies adhere to the values and ethos of our school.

Current external/support agencies include:

- Social Services and LAC Team
- School Counsellor
- CAPS and YPP
- PPDS
- GP and CAMHS
- NSPCC
- School Age Mums (SAM)
- xL Princes Trust

- Women's Aid
- Related Theatre groups/productions
- Religious Retreat Teams/Programmes
- PSNI
- STEPS Programme
- EWO Service
- Behaviour Support Team
- MENSANA – Mental Health Team

### **Related Whole School Policies:**

This policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care and as such should be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Behavior Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Personal Development Policy
- RSE Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- ICT and Internet Policy
- SEN Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- CRED Policy
- School Charter

Key Pastoral Policies are given to Year 8 parents at the beginning of each academic year and available from the school website [www.stmarysnewry.com](http://www.stmarysnewry.com).

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:**

Mr Fitzpatrick, the Vice Principal and Designated Teacher, is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the implementation of the Anti Bullying Policy. Mr Fitzpatrick will update the Policy and Procedures in light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually. This will be done in consultation with the governors, SLT, staff, students and parents.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.