ST MARTIN'S SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

10a

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Policy owner: Headmaster/Assistant Head (Pastoral)
To be reviewed by: Teaching & Learning

Contents

Introduction

At St. Martin's School (which includes the EYFS) bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination will not be tolerated. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable, and St. Martin's School is committed to minimising its occurrence and dealing with it effectively when it arises. When an incident of bullying is identified it will be investigated with sensitivity and the perpetrator dealt with firmly and fairly. If bullying problems, once identified, persist, the school reserves the right to exclude the bully from school. Every pupil has the right to live their lives and to attend school without feeling threatened, vulnerable, or unsafe.

Aims

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to:
- identify what bullying is,
- outline what the school will do to prevent bullying and
- outline the procedure to be followed should an incident of bullying occur.
- comply with the requirements of:
  - *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2021
  - *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (*July 2017)
  - *Equality Act 2010*
  - *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)*
- In compliance with the above legislation:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This policy exists to ensure that pupils can live and learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

At St. Martin's School our community is based upon respect, good manners, and fair play. Part of our school's ethos is to value individuals, and this is a culture we seek to nurture.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another pupil over a sustained period of time. Bullying may occur by physical (including sexual), verbal (including social websites, text messages and email) and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting, or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity which falls short of direct participation. Bullying can be hidden and subtle or overt and intimidatory in nature.

Bullying may involve actions or comments which are racist, sexist, homophobic or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying may focus on religious, cultural, or sexual prejudices or differences. Bullying can happen at any time and anywhere. At St. Martin's School bullying is taken very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities as well as with its social and moral principles.

Examples of bullying may be:
- **Physical:** where a child is physically punched, hit, kicked, or spat at, etc.

- **Intimidation:** this could be gesturing, miming, signals, tone, and physical proximity, aggressive or threatening looks.
- **Verbal:** i.e., name calling. It may be directed towards gender, race, sexuality, religion, culture, disability, or personality.
- **Exclusion:** i.e., from discussions, activities, play or groups of friends.
- **Damage** to or hiding of property or theft. A pupil may have property stolen or damaged or may be physically threatened by the bully so that their property is handed over to the bully.
- **Cyber-bullying**: the sending or posting of harmful or cruel texts or images using internet Social Networking Sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc.

Possible symptoms of bullying may be:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually careless work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others
- Books, bags, and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g., giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to First Aid with symptoms such as stomach pains / headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults rather than their peers
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide/running away

There may be other causes of the above symptoms but a repetition of or a combination of these possible signs should be investigated by parents and teachers. St. Martin's School recognises the serious consequences of bullying in causing both physical and psychological harm and that, in cases where there is significant harm, it is a Child Protection issue. Bullying may even lead to suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour, and these may apply to incidents of bullying.

Who are the bullies?
Bullies could be adults or children. Possible characteristics include:
- People who are trying to get attention
- People who may be having problems at home
- People who have been / are being bullied themselves
- People who think they will impress others

Why do they bully?
Possible reasons include:
- They enjoy the feeling of power
- They are insecure and cowardly
- They are prejudiced
- They are jealous
- They are easily led and want to impress their peers

Preventative Measures
St. Martin's School works hard to combat bullying through:

- Assemblies – to raise awareness and explore issues relating to bullying.
- Providing a Life Studies (PSHEE) programme which promotes personal well-being and gives pupils awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. Pupils are taught that they have a responsibility to prevent bullying and are given advice about what to do if they are by-standers to incidents of bullying.
- Developing resilience, a collaborative ethos and self-esteem through our growth mindset agenda.
- Emphasising the British values of tolerance and respect for all people, including those of different faiths or beliefs.
- Subjects such as English, Drama and RS teach moral and spiritual values that show bullying is unacceptable.
- Subjects such as RS, Art, English and History and school events/visits are used to raise awareness of cultural differences and appreciation of these.
- Providing a Pastoral System to support children who are experiencing bullying.
- A Code for the Use of Technology and the Internet. (AUP)
- Extra-curricular activities promoting teamwork and valuing the contributions of individuals.
- Staff modelling respectful relationships with pupils and creating an environment where considerate behaviour is the expected norm.
- Mentoring and support for vulnerable children.

Pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff or parent if they or somebody else is being bullied.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Assistant Heads and Head at St. Martin's School will annually review this policy and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Responsibility of the School, Staff and Governors

- We have an experienced pastoral team (Form Teachers, Section Heads and Assistant Heads) who support the Head in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to the possible signs of bullying. Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on the handling and reporting of bullying incidents and on follow up work with both victims and bullies.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and have had training to help them implement the Anti-bullying Policy on a regular basis through staff INSET sessions. Staff should be aware that pupils with SEND issues may be more vulnerable to bullying and be alert to this. In all investigations, any SEND issues will be considered in the investigation and specific supplementary support may be required for such pupils.
- Staff should be aware that bullying may be a safeguarding matter and as such refer the incident straight to the DSL before recording on CPoms.
- Staff have regular opportunities to share concerns over behaviour and potential/actual bullying at Section Pastoral Meetings.
- Staff are always on duty when pupils are not in class and are alert to signs of bullying and inappropriate language or behaviour. A system for monitoring and always supervising the cloakrooms and playgrounds and after school periods ensures that children feel secure, and the likelihood of bullying is reduced.
- We will exert our right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits or trips or that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

- Our Governors are responsible for overseeing the implementation of our Anti-Bullying and Child Protection procedures.

Bullying Procedure / Response

Once a bullying incident is reported or identified by staff:

- The incident will be recorded in the CPOMS Database by the member of staff to whom it was first reported or by the Assistant Head (Pastoral). In EYFS incidents are also recorded, where appropriate, in the "Early Conversations" file.
- The staff will control the situation, reassure, and support the pupils involved. The member of staff will inform/report to an appropriate staff member for further investigation i.e., Form Teacher/Assistant Head/senior member of staff.
- The member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary procedures potentially involved.
- The victim and bully will be interviewed separately.
- The appropriate Form Teacher, Assistant Head and Head will be informed.
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated quickly, and efforts will be made to stop the bullying should the allegation be shown to have substance.
- The sanctions outlined in the Behaviour Policy will be used, where appropriate.
- At the discretion of a senior member of staff, the parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter.
- Where appropriate, pastoral support will be offered to the victim and an appropriate apology will be required from the bully.
- The bully will be told not to comment or make any remarks as to what has happened to third parties. The bully/bullies will be supported to change their behaviour. In this regard, help may be sought from outside agencies.
- Should the bullying persist, the bully's parents will again be informed, and the victim's parents will also be contacted.
- An unsuccessful outcome of the above procedures will result in a formal meeting with parents, the bully and the Head which may result in suspension for a period of time. The school reserves the right to permanently exclude a pupil. (See Behaviour Policy).
- In very serious cases it may be necessary to report the matter to the Police or Social Services.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place after a serious bullying incident has occurred.
- The CPOMS database on our school computer shared area keeps a record of any incidents of poor behaviour and bullying. All intervention taken by staff to prevent and tackle suspected bullying is recorded on this database. CPOMs will be used to identify any trends or patterns in incidents of bullying.
- Where bullying is reported outside of the school premises it will be investigated and acted upon in the manner outlined above. The Head will decide whether it is appropriate to notify the Police or Local Authority.

Advice for Parents

- Parents should always encourage their child to speak out about bullying. They can be reassured that St. Martin's School will carefully, sensitively, and seriously investigate any incidences of bullying.
- If parents suspect that their child may be being bullied, they should encourage them to speak about the problem. Parents are advised to listen calmly and not overreact.
- Initially, parents are asked to contact the child's Form Tutor to discuss the problem.
- Parents are advised not to take matters into their own hands as this may make the situation worse.

- If a child is suspected of bullying, parents will be contacted by a senior member of staff to discuss the incident.

Cyber-Bullying

In addition to the preventative measures set out above, St. Martin's School has the following measures in place to deal with Cyber-bullying incidents:

- All pupils are expected to adhere to its Code for the Safe Use of the Internet; websites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- St. Martin's School may impose sanctions for misuse or attempted misuse of the Internet.
- All pupils in Main School are issued with their own school computer login. Access to personal email sites, such as Gmail are not allowed.
- Pupils are given guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHEE and Computing lessons.
- Internet Safety Week
- Pupils are given guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- If mobile phones are brought into school by pupils, they must be handed in to the school office at the start of the day and collected before the child leaves school.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed in washing and changing areas or in the Swimming Pool.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss safe ways of using the Internet and mobile phones and what is appropriate/inappropriate use of such technology.

Specialist Support

The following organisations can provide additional specialist support and advice on dealing with bullying:
- The Anti-bullying Alliance
- Kidscape
- Child Exploitation and On-line Protection (CEOP) Centre

Links to other policies
This policy particularly links to the following policies:
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy