



English Martyrs'

CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Anti-bullying Policy



Approved by:	Gemma Ellis	Date: September 2022
Last reviewed on:	January 2023	
Next review due by:	September 2024	

"At English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy, we offer a broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of our pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life."

INTRODUCTION

At English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy we are very aware of the possible consequences of bullying and through this policy and practice we strive to address the



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negative effect that such experiences may have on both pupils and staff within the school.

In accordance with our Mission Statement we pledge through our Christian ethos and our school curriculum to keep pupils and staff safe from bullying in any of its forms. This is also supported by the extensive opportunities pupils are exposed to through the school's work in the PSHE curriculum, the RSE curriculum, Catholic Social Teachings and off timetable wellbeing days.

This policy works in conjunction with other relevant school policies particularly the Behaviour and Safeguarding Policy which sets out to ensure that everyone - pupil, families, staff and visitors to the school, understand and adhere to our school rules and expectations. This will contribute towards a safe, inclusive school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Despite this, we are aware that instances of bullying may still occur. To minimise this, the aims of this policy strive to:

- To raise awareness of bullying
- To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future
- To ensure a whole school approach to bullying
- To reduce and if possible, eradicate instances of all types of bullying

We, at English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy, focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and all members of our community are of equal worth. Our approach to equality is based on the following principles:

1. To promote the ethos that all learners are of equal value.
2. To recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.
3. To foster positive attitudes and relationships.
4. To foster a shared sense of belonging.
5. To have the highest expectations of all our children.
6. To work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

The Head teacher Gemma Ellis has overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school. They are responsible for liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate. They are responsible for:



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- Policy development and review (ensuring that pupils, staff, governors, and parents/carers have opportunities to contribute)
- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in our school are Jo Pettifer, Helen McElhone, Emma Raiseborough and Gemma Ellis. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all; however, all staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.

The nominated Governor with responsibility for Anti-Bullying and Behaviour is Claire Newman

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, July 2017)

Although there are a number of definitions of bullying, these definitions would include the following characteristics:

- It tends to be repetitive
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It may be verbal, physical or psychological

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour. We must respond in a way which will help the bullies improve their behaviour. Increasing their anxiety and alienation from us is not likely to work.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.



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- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Signs of bullying can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual. It is important, however, that parents/carers and school staff are aware of the signs and symptoms associated with bullying so that they can identify possible problems. The more common signs include:

- Physical signs e.g. Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress
- Emotional signs e.g. mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility and defensiveness
- Behavioural signs e.g. withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour



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- General e.g. frequently “lose” money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/ leaving school with others.

Advice to children about bullying/abuse:

- If you are a victim of bullying/abuse, you can tell a member of staff (anyone you feel safe to talk to) - It is always ok to do this.
- If you do not want to tell anyone at school, you can tell your parents who will tell us.
- Friends of victims should let staff know of bullying/abusive incidents.
- Nobody deserves to be bullied or abused – remember, you have a right for this not to happen to you and a right to feel safe.

We want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

When bullying has been alleged, reported, or observed then the following 7 steps will be taken (Stage 1)

The incident is logged on MyConcern, the school Safeguarding recording system by the adult dealing with the incident and it is then allocated to a DSL.

1. INVESTIGATION: The DSL will start by talking to the victim and alleged perpetrator about his/her/their feelings and complete Form 1 and 1a, 1b (Initial Investigation into allegation of bullying, Factors to help determine if incident constitutes bullying, initial investigation of bullying additional information sheet and Restorative questions). It is at this point a judgement is to be made as to whether bullying has occurred or not. Parents of all parties are informed.

2. CONVENE A MEETING: The DSL arranges to meet with the pupils who have been involved, this may include bystanders. The victim must give permission for this to take place and feel at ease with this. The meeting will include bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate bullying. Complete forms 3a and 3b (Support provided for targeted child and Support provided for child who bullied).



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3. **EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM:** The teacher tells them/the perpetrator about the way the victim is feeling and might use a piece of writing or drawing to emphasise his/her/ their distress. At no time does the DSL discuss the details of the incidents.

4. **SHARE RESPONSIBILITY:** In cases of group bullying the DSL does not attribute blame but states that they know that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

5. **ASK THE GROUP/INDIVIDUAL FOR IDEAS:** The perpetrator or each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The DSL gives some positive responses but will not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

6. **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY:** The DSL ends the meeting by sharing the responsibility with the group to use the guidance given to address the problem. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.

7. **FOLLOW UP MEETING:** A week later the DSL discusses with each pupil, including the victim and the perpetrator, how things have been going. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.

The above procedure is Stage 1. During Stage 1, all adults who come into contact with the children are informed. Additional supervision is put into place if required. If the situation is not resolved, after following this process and the behaviour continues, then the following stages are considered:

STAGE 2: Contact parent/carer and convene a meeting to discuss the above. Decide if any sanctions need to be applied in line with the school behaviour policy

STAGE 3: Contact other agencies e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychologist, Police (If a child is over 10 years of age they are criminally responsible). Complete form 4 (Confirmed Bullying Incident Reporting Form)

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.



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INVOLVING PARENTS

The school has an open-door policy and the staff will strive to speak with parents to discuss any concerns immediately. Parental involvement in the response process has been outlined in the Response to Bullying section above. Parental questionnaires will be completed annually.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION THE POLICY

- The policy will be part of the everyday life of the school. It will be maintained regularly through display of posters, curriculum, RE curriculum and Liturgical Prayers or assemblies.
- It will be a regular item on School and Class Council Agendas, at staff and Governors' meetings.
- Its effectiveness will be monitored through annual parent, pupil and staff questionnaires and reported incidents.
- The policy will be reviewed annually.



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