



## Anti-bullying policy

Last updated	25/1/2018	Approved by	The Full Governing Body
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### What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, which can be an isolated incident or repeated over time, that hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally, real or perceived. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

There are different types of bullying, but the four main types are:

Physical	eg hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money
Verbal	eg name calling of individual pupils or members of their families, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes/comment, making discriminatory comments linked to an individual's characteristics ( such as gender, faith, ethnicity, sexuality)
Emotional	eg being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, intimidating/unkind looks; encouraging others to do this
On line or cyber	- ie bullying through information and communication technologies, mediums eg mobile phone text messages, emails, phone calls, internet chat rooms, instant messaging and the social networking websites. The bullying may appear as a message, text, digital image (moving or still) or an audio file

People react differently and it is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset.

### Philosophy

At St Thomas More we recognise the right of every individual to grow and develop in circumstances where they can feel safe and happy, and to be protected when she/he is feeling vulnerable. Fundamentally it is felt that bullying offends the Catholic ethos of the school.

### Principles

The aims of our anti-bullying policy are to:

1. Clarify to pupils, parents/carers and staff that bullying is always unacceptable.
2. Encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear.



3. Identify pupils who are being bullied and those who are bullying.
4. Create an atmosphere in the school where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, report/share their concerns with an adult, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.
5. Make it clear that by not telling about bullying protects bullies and gives them the message that they can continue and perhaps bully others as well.

## Practice

a) It is important to establish that bullying has or has not taken place and that pupils who are being bullied are identified as quickly as possible. The signs to be aware of are:

- Changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, seeming to be unhappy and clinging to adults
- Changes in their work patterns such as lack of concentration, a downturn in the quality of work, playing truant and/or increasing absence.

b) Pupils must be made aware of whom they can speak to if they, or someone else, are being bullied, that what they say will be treated as confidential and that no action will be taken without them being consulted.

c) It will be made clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and that to the bully that her/his behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem through counselling and/or the use of our process of Restorative approaches. (1).

At this stage incident slips will be written for each student to outline the circumstances of the events.

d) In addition, parents/carers of both parties will be informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. A record should be made when in contact with the parents/carers.

e) Depending on the seriousness of the bullying it may be seen as appropriate to apply sanctions. However, counselling and/or Transforming Conflict will be offered and encouraged whether sanctions are applied or not.

f) It must be made quite clear to the bully, and their parents/carers, the action which will follow should a further case of bullying or intimidation take place. Some cyber bullying activities could be criminal offences under a number of laws. Some of the relevant legislation is: Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

The following will be made clear to:

## Pupils

If you are being bullied, or you know that someone else is, please tell a member of staff straight away, and it will be dealt with. Not telling means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully may victimize other pupils as well. We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in the school.

# St Thomas More Catholic Primary School



As part of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, pupils will be educated in the appropriate use of ICT for communication, the risks and dangers of online or cyber bullying, how they can protect themselves from such offence and how to report it.

## Parent/Carer

If you think your daughter/son is being bullied, or she/he tells you that she is, in the first instance, please let the class teacher know straight away. Please reassure her/him that we will deal with it sensitively but firmly. If your daughter/son is being bullied, or we discover that she/he is bullying others, we will contact you, and we will discuss together how the situation can be improved.

A school email address is available for pupils to report any incident :

[report@stmprimary.org](mailto:report@stmprimary.org)

## Staff

If you think that bullying is happening, talk to the student(s) concerned and ask them what has been happening. Either ask them to write it down, or scribe for them. Inform the class teacher.

We need to be particularly observant at breaks, lunch times, in the playground and the toilets. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen.

Non-teaching staff may well have particular opportunity to note instances of bullying both in and out of the classroom.

The PSHE curriculum can enhance this policy by the topic being dealt with in lessons and in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties. It will also make apparent the hurt and pain caused by bullying.

## (1) Restorative approaches

Restorative approaches, the concept of mediation, is used by staff to resolve issues to benefit all those involved. The issue of bullying in school can leave a feeling of hurt, resentment or fear.

Restorative approaches allows those involved to consider the harm caused and to understand why actions/sanctions have been taken, allowing pupils to feel fairly treated.