**St Mary’s Primary School Paisley**

**Anti-Bullying Policy**



**January 2019**

**St. Mary's Primary School**

**Maxwellton Road**

**Paisley**

**PA1 2RJ**

**Renfrewshire Council**

**St Mary’s Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy 2019**

Renfrewshire Council believes that a safe, nurturing and respectful learning environment is fundamental in supporting every child to thrive and achieve. The Council recognises the impact that bullying behaviour can have on wellbeing and is committed to preventing, reducing and responding to bullying behaviour in all forms in our establishments.

Children and young people should be encouraged to report incidences of bullying behaviour or suspected bullying behaviour. Every learning establishment must offer a range of friendly, safe and confidential ways for children and young people to raise concerns about themselves or others

Renfrewshire Council’s Policy can be found here and should be read in conjunction with this policy -

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/2043/Anti-Bullying-Policy/pdf/Anti_Bullying_Policy2.pdf?m=1535032176043>

If anyone ask to see the school’s policy, we should offer them both the Renfrewshire Council Policy and the St Mary’s Primary one.

**What is bullying?**

We recognise that bullying has a different kind of impact from other behaviour, it affects how children see themselves and the choices they can make. Children who are bullied feel unsafe and other people affect the things they feel they can do. At St Mary’s Primary School, we define bullying as

*Bullying is both behaviour and impact: the impact is on a person’s ability to feel in control of themselves. It is unkind behaviour that make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.*

Pupils at St Mary’s have explored this definition and agree that we should use it here. Our parents and carers who attended consultation sessions were also happy for this definition to be used.

Bullying can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. This behaviour happens face to face and online.

This behaviour can reflect prejudice and we will always address prejudice-based language and behaviour in line with the expectations set out in Renfrewshire Council’s Anti-Bullying Policy. Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences.

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual’s actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person’s identity or circumstance. Prejudice-based language and behaviour will always be challenged at St Mary’s.

**Children’s Rights**

Children have the right to be safe. Children’s Rights sit within a document called the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC. The UNCRC has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child’s life and sets out rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. This includes the right to be safe, the right to an education and to have your views taken into account.

Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. We will make sure that our anti-bullying work at St Mary’s is informed by the UNCRC and that our staff and pupils are aware of Children’s Rights.

**Creating the right environment**

Our aim to create a school where bullying does not thrive, we do this through partnership with parents, through listening to and empowering our pupils and supporting and developing our staff. All our work is driven by our Vision and Values.

**Vision**

Our vision is that, through the care and education provided by our school community, our pupils will be nurtured to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

The Values Driving our work are our core values: love, honesty, fairness and wisdom. These are reflected in our school rule:

***Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.***

**Aims**

* We aim to provide a Safe, happy and nurturing environment where we show respect for each other at all times.
* We aim to provide teaching that is high quality and learning experiences that pupils enjoy and that provide appropriate challenge.
* We aim to make sure we communicate with our families and include them in learning.
* We aim to provide an environment where all relationships are strong.
* We aim to be a school where: responsibility is given to pupils to take leadership roles; where your opinion always matters; and be a school that includes everyone.

We have a number of initiatives at St Mary’s that we use to promote wellbeing safety and inclusion, these include:

* Playground buddies
* P1 Buddies
* Inclusion Support Assistant
* Citizenship Groups
* Internet Safety Week
* God’s Loving Plan

-PATHS – Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies

- Road Safety Week

- Health and Wellbeing Curriculum

- Health Week

- Outdoor learning

- Active Schools Clubs

**Responding to Bullying**

If a pupil is concerned about bullying, they can approach their teacher or a member of staff and share their concern. They can tell a parent, grandparent or carer who can share this with the school. Parents and carers can phone the school when they are concerned or approach a teacher.

Children should also be signposted to Childline (0800 1111) as they may value the chance to chat to someone who does not know them as a way of coping.

We know that bullying is made up of both behaviour and impact, when investigating and responding to concerns about bullying, we will always look at both behaviour and impact.

Staff at St Mary’s Primary School will always ask –

**What was the behaviour?**

**What impact did it have?**

**What do I need to do about it?**

We will always ask children who are being bullied what they would like us to do as well and ensure they can influence the direction we take to support them and their families.

Our approach at St Mary’s is to explore behaviour and impact, and to respond appropriately to both.

We know that sometimes hurtful behaviour or words can have no impact. At St Mary’s Primary, unkind behaviour, harmful or prejudiced-based language will always be challenged no matter what impact it has.

Our pupils also understand that sometimes a person can feel bullied, but they have not been. This does not mean that the behaviour is okay just because it had little or no impact. We will always challenge unacceptable behaviour.

We also know that sometimes children can over react to low level behaviour. This can mean that someone’s behaviour was not bullying or unkind, but it is about how a child had felt that day and how they have reacted. We will always support someone when they feel this way. We will help them develop way to manage their feelings and understand their own and the actions of others.

Bullying happens when hurtful language and behaviour impacts on a person’s ability to feel safe and in control of themselves. We will always deal with what a person did and the impact it had.

Pupils value choice when responding to bullying. It is our role as adults to explore their options and choices and to find a route that works for them. Some will cope better than others with behaviour and may be able to use verbal skills more than others. It is through exploring what they feel works for them that we find solutions and help children regain a sense of control and influence over how they feel.

We will not label children wherever possible – we shall instead focus on labelling the behaviour and helping them change that

**What can Pupils expect at St Mary’s Primary School?**

**Pupils can expect -**

* To be treated fairly
* To be safe and to be themselves
* To be listened to and involved and asked about what is happening to them
* Children who are bullied will not be kept in at break or have reduced access to the playground.
* To choose who they tell, and that person will take their concerns seriously.
* To be supported and helped when bullied, we will always address the impact of bullying and support children and their families to feel safe and that children who are bullied are helped to feel like themselves again.
* We will monitor this in an ongoing basis and recognise the impact of bullying can continue after incidents have been resolved.

**Children who bully can expect -**

* That there are consequences for bullying. These will vary in severity depending on each situation and how well they have responded to initial responses.
* We understand that all behaviour is communication. We need to help children and young people who are bullying by providing clear expectations about behaviour as well as providing a range of ways to respond. This can include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends.
* Children who are bullying may also get reduced time in the playground and increased supervision.
* That we will challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour.
* In line with the feedback form parents and carers we recognise that those who are bullying should get support from both parents and the school and that bullying should be dealt with fairly and consistently.
* Our parents and carers told us that bullying was a very serious issue but recognised that exclusion is not always the answer, and many felt it always ‘depended’ on the circumstances and that some need a chance to ‘reflect on their actions’.

**Pupils feedback**

Our Pupils told us they know they can tell a teacher or a parent, but they sometimes worry about getting into trouble themselves or ‘making it worse’. Many stated that, it is ‘hard to tell’ when you’re being bullied because ‘you worry’.

Some pupils felt bullying is only physical and only happens when people argue, but this changes as they get older where they feel verbal bullying is more frequent. They also feel that boys are mostly physical, and girls use words more.

Our pupils told us that some have been told to ‘hit back’ on occasions. Most stated that this was not helpful advice, and many said that they would always avoid things like hitting, as they worried about the impact of this and recognised that it is not something that always makes behaviour stop.

As a result of this feedback

* We will let our pupils know that it is okay to tell us when they are worried, and we will deal with it sensitively.
* We will as a school, not seek to reinforce the belief that boys behave one way and girls another as these beliefs impact on what boys and girls see as bullying.
* We will always support children and their families to develop safe ways to respond to bullying

**Partnership with parents and carers**

The majority of our parents and carers indicated that are confident the school will deal with bullying effectively, over 80% with only 10% disagreeing.

When asked about what they feel parents and carers can do to respond to bullying, most parents and carers told us that ‘talking’ and ‘communicating’ with their children was vital as was ‘communication with the school’. Parents are keen to see a balanced approach to behaviour and impact and that behaviour is always challenged even if it will lead to difficulties on some occasions.

Parents will be informed when there are concerns about bullying. The school will investigate these first and make a judgment on the severity of the behaviour and the impact before contacting parents or carers. 97% of our parents and carers share the belief that it is a joint responsibility to teach children about relationships. We shall maintain a partnership approach at St Mary’s and seek to listen and resolve concerns together.

We asked our pupils about what advice and guidance we should give to parents and carers on responding to bullying.

They stated consistently that they would like parents and not to over react and to listen resist the temptation to ‘jump straight in’ and that they should ‘say calm’. This feedback has been shared with parents who recognise this and that it is not always easy, but we need to be led by what our children need from us.

As a result of the consultation parents and carers can expect -

* Partnership with the school.
* To be included and informed when there are concerns about bullying
* As a result of the feedback form pupils, we ask all adults - school staff and parents and carers, to be mindful of how their response can help a child feel listened to, included and safe.
* Guidance and support if your child is being bullied or is bullying.

**Monitoring and Recording Bullying**

In line with Renfrewshire Council guidelines, all incidents assessed as bullying will be recorded on SEEMIS, our electronic management of information system, within the Bullying & Equalities module. Renfrewshire Council advises that staff should use their professional judgement when deciding what to record on SEEMIS.

Not all disagreements between children are necessarily bullying and it is recommended that staff should consider behaviour and impact before deciding if it is bullying and whether it should be recorded.

The purpose for recording is for schools to learn about what kind of bullying is happening in their establishment and to identify if there are trends or issues which require addressing. To this end, recording is an improvement tool.

When recording bullying incidents, the following information must be included:

* The children and young people involved as well as other adults
* The type of bullying experienced – name calling, threats or rumours etc.
* Any underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristics
* The impact of the bullying incident, including consideration or personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns and
* Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

**Training**

All staff at St Mary’s have had training on this approach to anti-bullying.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed in three years in line with Renfrewshire Council’s Policy.