



Policy on Bullying

What is bullying?

Occasionally, the normal day to day disputes, which take place between pupils, enter a more serious category, that of bullying.

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful action, which is often unprovoked.
- It is repeated often over a period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take many forms but three main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings.
- Verbal – name-calling, insulting, racist remarks, including those that are very subtle.
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups.
- Cyber bullying – over the internet (facebook, texting, Twitter etc)

(Bullying – Don't suffer in silence. DfES publication)

Rationale for the Policy

The policy is to:

1. State the basic principle that bullying is not an acceptable form of behaviour at St. Margaret's and will not be tolerated.
2. Make the case that prevention of bullying is the main emphasis.
3. Outline the procedures for dealing with bullying incidents should they occur.

The Principle

Bullying is not an acceptable form of behaviour and will not be tolerated at St. Margaret's.

The Contribution of this Policy to Racial Awareness

Racial bullying can take many forms but the three main types are the same as for all our children:

- Physical - assaulting a child because of their race or the colour of their skin
- Verbal – racist remarks and insults
- Indirect – exclusion from social groups because of race and skin colour.

This kind of bullying is particularly insidious and will not be tolerated at St. Margaret's. The school's position regarding racial harassment and bullying is outlined in detail in the school's policy on Racial Awareness.

Prevention

Sociable behaviour is encouraged at St. Margaret's. There are several elements involved.

- R.E and Collective Worship which give a strong moral and spiritual lead.
- The Personal and Social Education (P.S.E) Programme of Study, includes issues concerning bullying and explains what bullying is. It also explains to children what they should do if they feel that they are a victim of bullying or if they see an incident, which they feel could be bullying.
- Firm, friendly handling of all incidents in the classroom or in the playground as they occur.
- Staff regularly discuss good practise in behaviour management.
- Counselling of children to help them handle anti-social feelings and to encourage self-control and consideration for others. This has been enhanced by the implementation of the SEAL materials.
- Training of welfare staff in strategies for dealing with children.

Procedures for Dealing with a Bullying Incident

1. Children are encouraged to report all anti-social incidents, including bullying to a member of staff, whether they are the victim or a witness.
2. These incidents are dealt with in confidence so that there can be no repercussions for the child. An incident may be reported by parents, who are told at the initial parent's meeting, when the child starts at this school, that staff need to hear about bullying or situations that could develop into bullying, in order to nip them in the bud.
3. The children involved and witnesses are spoken to and the best account of what happened emerges.
4. The incident is reported to the class teacher in the first instance. More serious incidents are reported to the Headteacher, Mrs. Perry.
5. The person on the receiving end of bullying is counselled and parents are informed where necessary.
6. At lunch time incidents should be reported to the Senior Lunchtime Organiser who will inform the class teacher and/or the Head Teacher where necessary
7. The bully is sanctioned, by one or more of the following, according to the seriousness of the incident. See also Appendix D of the 'Behaviour and Pastoral Care Policy)

Counselling to explain the nature of inappropriate behaviour.

Sanctions such as:

- Time out (Of the classroom)
(Of the playground for one, two or three days for more serious incidents.)
- A repetition of the bullying behaviour will lead to parents being contacted by phone and then in writing, where the problem persists. The co-operation of the parents is vital if the problem is to be resolved.
- The Head Teacher maintains the right to exclude a child for repeated incidences of bullying as it is an unacceptable form of behaviour at St.

Margaret's. The school will inform the Governing Body, should a fixed term or permanent exclusion be needed.

The decision to exclude any child on a temporary or permanent basis lies with the head teacher.

If a child is excluded on a fixed term or permanent basis, the parent(s) have the right to appeal to the Governing Body.

It is the school's genuine wish that this should not happen. If this were to be the case it would be as a last resort, when all other strategies had failed.

8. Observations are made of both children in various school situations to see if they are behaving normally with lots of friends.
9. Staff continue to counsel both children over a period of time to make sure that the victim is happy and settled and that the bully shows improving behaviour.
10. All anti-social incidents are recorded.

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