



## PURPOSE

To ensure St. Martin's School is an environment where all members of the school community can feel safe, respected, valued and confident that bullying will not be tolerated.

St Martin's School believes pupils will learn best in a safe and calm community that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. The school works to promote an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect. The school aims to create an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear or further bullying or discrimination and where pupils are not afraid to challenge and stand up for what they know is right.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

There are many definitions of bullying, but following consultation our student council is in agreement with the definition used in *CCBC: Bullying Prevention Strategy* which lists the definition given by *the 'Anti Bullying Alliance'*:

***'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Isolated incidents of hurtful behaviour, teasing, arguments or falling out between individuals of equal power should not be seen as bullying'***

It is important to note that anyone can be bullied and anyone can be a bully.

The opportunity to bully someone is more likely where adult company or staff supervision is intermittent e.g. at break times, on the journey to and from school, in the corridors and toilets.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures;
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- **Cyber** – all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging and phone call; misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

It can also include material bullying which includes damage to belongings and extortion. Perpetrators may use different pretexts as the basis of their bullying, basing their comments or actions on:

- The religious background or faith of the person bullied;
- A disability, perceived physical difficulty or Additional Learning Need;
- The race of the victim e.g. racist name calling, taunts, graffiti or gestures;
- The sexuality of the victim e.g. homophobic bullying.

## Special Educational Need or Disability

This can be characterised by:

- Name calling
- Comments on appearance
- Comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels

Adults also need to show sensitivity when grouping students, marking work, sharing of results and assessment arrangements etc. as well as maintaining an awareness of the need to use appropriate language when addressing students.

## Derogatory and Discriminatory Language

Derogatory and discriminatory language is used to make someone feel negatively about themselves. It can be used to create or reinforce stereotypes as well as offend the target.

## Vulnerable groups

There are a few vulnerable groups who are at higher risk of bullying. Particular groups may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities, young carers, Looked



After Children, those from ethnic and racial minority groups and young people who may be perceived as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

**It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasional falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional “joke” is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the occasional name calling or childish prank.**

### **THE ROLE OF THE PUPIL**

- Pupils should speak out straightaway;
- Pupils must report possible bullying to a member of staff;
- Pupils who are “bystanders” are encouraged to support their peers by reporting any suspected bullying.

### **THE ROLE OF STAFF**

- All incidents of suspected bullying will be dealt with by the member of staff they are reported to;
- All members of staff are responsible for the health and well-being of the children and have a duty to respond seriously to any claim of bullying;
- If they are unable to investigate the matter must be referred immediately to a Head of Learning or member of the Senior team;
- All instances of bullying will be recorded and monitored for patterns of behaviour.

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Parental support is paramount to the success of this policy and the school looks to parents to work together through discussion and agreement with the measures put in place to address pupil behaviour and the consequences of any behaviour deemed to be unacceptable.

Parents are encouraged to bring their concerns to school where they will be taken seriously and offered clear and positive advice.

If a child has been bullied, parents are asked not to approach the perpetrator or ask another child to deal with the bully. Parents must inform the school immediately and school procedures will be followed.

It is important parents advise children not to fight back and to reinforce the school’s policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.

During the course of any conversation with a member of the school staff parents will be asked to outline details of concerns, possibly be invited into school to discuss the incident and agree a plan of action. In the normal course of events parents can expect to be contacted following an allegation to be advised of the outcome. All information will be clearly recorded,

If necessary and appropriate, particularly if behaviour in school is repeated out of school, the police will be consulted.

Parents who are unhappy with the way in which the school has investigated an alleged incident have a right to complain; this can be done via the school’s complaints procedure on the school website.



## REPORTING

### Guidance for Pupils

The following advice will be given to pupils, displayed in prominent positions around the school and regularly reinforced:

#### ***If you are being bullied:***

- Tell an adult or somebody you trust what has happened straight away
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel

#### ***After you have been bullied:***

- Tell a teacher or another adult you trust within school
- Tell your family
- If you are scared to tell an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened

#### ***When you are talking to an adult about bullying, be clear about:***

- Exactly what happened to you
- How often it happens
- The person(s) involved
- If any others saw what happened
- Where it took place
- If you have already told someone or tried to deal with it yourself

### Guidance for pupils who witness bullying

The following advice will be given to pupils, displayed in prominent positions around the school and regularly reinforced:

If you have witnessed someone being bullied:

- Tell a member of staff what has happened immediately

### Guidance for Parents/Guardians

#### ***If your child has been bullied:***

- Calmly talk with your child about his/ her experiences
- Make a note of what your child says, including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened
- Reassure your child that s/he has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur s/he should report them to an adult immediately
- Make an appointment to see your child's Head of Learning
- Explain to the Head of Learning the problems your child is experiencing

#### ***When talking with staff about bullying:***

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that your child's teacher may have no idea that s/he is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened - giving dates, places and names of other children involved
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue



### ***If your child is bullying others:***

- Talk with your child and explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- Show your child how s/he can join in with other children without bullying
- Make an appointment to see your child's tutor and explain the problems your child is experiencing, as well as discussing how you can work together to stop her/him bullying others
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when s/he is co-operative or kind to other people

### **SANCTIONS**

The school will endeavour to apply sanctions fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably in line with the school's behaviour management policy.

***All actions MUST be recorded in SIMS.***

### **STRATEGIES TO REDUCE BULLYING**

These will include:

- The support group (no blame) approach
- Peer mediation
- Peer counselling
- Buddy systems
- Pupil development and training
- Staff development and training
- Restorative justice

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Staff should be aware that in certain instances, cases of bullying may need referring to the Safeguarding Officer when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. School staff therefore cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help.