



**Saint Martin's**

# Anti-Bullying Policy

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## **AIMS**

At Saint Martin's School, the school community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. The School is committed, through its Code of Conduct, pastoral care and curriculum to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment, so that every pupil can develop to her full potential. There is an expectation of good behaviour and mutual respect which permeates the whole school environment and beyond the school gates. This is reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example. The School celebrates success to support this positive ethos.

The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Pupils are expected to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation, so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of school. Parents have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at School and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all of our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

This policy applies to all pupils in the School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- to prevent all forms of bullying (see definition below)
- to familiarise staff, pupils and parents with the School policy on bullying so that they know what they should do if bullying arises
- to educate pupils so that they understand that bullying is not acceptable and that it must be reported
- to support pupils who are being bullied so that they feel safe
- to build resilience and confidence in our pupils
- to help perpetrators to face up to the impact of bullying on the victim and help them to modify their behaviour.

## **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including:

- physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind)
- sexual
- psychological (knowing what upsets someone)
- verbal (including cyber-bullying via email, social media, gaming, and SMS or other instant messages)
- emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours).

It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND), or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time, including online in the form of cyber-bullying and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

## **CYBER-BULLYING**

Cyber-bullying can be defined as "*the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others*" (Belsey, <http://www.cyber-bullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, and often against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/ herself. The School recognises that the rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for "virtual bullying", and acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take place inside School, outside of School and at any time of the day.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube)
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, and sexting.

## **THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING**

The School will always treat bullying, including cyber-bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be

subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside school premises and outside school hours.

## **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the First Aiders with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded as appropriate in accordance with this policy.

## **PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

### **Pupils**

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school. All new pupils (including EYFS pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying, that they can talk to any member of staff if they are being bullied or see bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported
- The School uses appropriate assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying
- The PSHCEE programme emphasises improving self-esteem and equipping pupils with the skills and strategies to deal with difficult situations through role-play and discussion. Examples of undesirable or uncomfortable pressures such as media, peer influence and difficult friendships are explored. There are open discussions about the varying forms that bullying can take and PSHCEE sessions equip pupils with "lines" and strategies to deal with potential bullies and peer pressure. At age appropriate levels they discuss differences between people which could motivate bullying such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudice based language
- Anti-Bullying Week material is used which provides additional opportunities for increasing awareness of relevant issues, including cyber-bullying and the role of the bystander
- Bullying is also discussed periodically at School Council

- Other lessons, such as Drama and Form Time, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable; pupils are also given the opportunities to discuss concerns and examine case studies
- All of the pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place
- The School buildings display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Bullying UK, and the Samaritans
- The School provides leadership training to the Head Girl and her team which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils; and
- The School does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils, and all staff remain alert to such actions.

## **Staff**

- On Induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the School. The School will ensure that all staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support
- Staff are proactive in getting to know the pupils in their care and are vigilant about looking for signs of potential conflict and distress; they are also alert to those who may be vulnerable to bullying. Pupils are helped to distinguish between bullying and the lower level difficulties they can experience as they learn to deal appropriately with the problems that can arise in their relationships with each other
- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others, and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and LGBT pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of the pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. The School always monitors reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the office of the Deputy Head in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- The School has a strong and experienced pastoral team who are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying
- The pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly, using outside experts. There is a culture of early intervention for pastoral and academic issues
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times, to raise awareness, on the action they should take if they receive reports of bullying or suspect bullying and the sources of support available to them and the pupils; a playground incident book is used in Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS"), Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to help monitor patterns of behaviour in the playground. It is reviewed by the Head of Nursery to Year 6
- To encourage wide friendships and to minimise exclusion, staff use seating plans and direct paired work so that the girls are not usually responsible for finding their own group or partner
- The School has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips, or that otherwise occur outside of school. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such acts. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the School's Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of SEND or vulnerable pupils

- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), without delay.

## **Parents**

- Parents are provided with a copy of this policy so that they are clear on the School's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying
- The School encourages close contact between the pastoral teams and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously
- The School welcomes feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of the preventative measures and all other aspects and results of this anti-bullying policy
- The Head has a Complaints Register which also records if matters relate to bullying. The Register is reviewed at SLT team meetings.

## **Prevention of cyber-bullying**

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, the School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policies. Certain sites are blocked by the filtering system and the IT Department monitors pupils' use
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet in accordance with the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address. Access to all social media sites and personal email sites such as "hotmail" is not allowed from school computers/ tablets inside the School
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHCEE and ICT lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data
- Ensures its pupils are aware that cyber-bullying can have severe and distressing consequences and that participation in cyber-bullying will not be tolerated
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others without the permission of a member of staff for educational purposes
- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas
- Has an E-Safety Committee which meets every half term to support the prevention of cyber-bullying and other E-Safety concerns.

## **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING**

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about bullying and cyber-bullying, both on and away from school premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on the Deputy Head's files, and also on pupil files. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate in order to enable the School to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

Incidents of bullying can be reported to any member of staff. All staff will be trained in handling an allegation, and will be aware that they must listen to the pupil, not ask leading questions and make a written record of the allegation to the best of their ability.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The member of staff to whom the incident was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation (the "Case Handler"), and will reassure and support the pupils involved, without promising absolute confidentiality
2. The Case Handler will inform an appropriate member of the School's pastoral team about the bullying allegation as soon as possible
3. The victim, and the alleged perpetrator/s will each be interviewed individually by the Case Handler on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write their account of events
4. Where the Case Handler considers that the reported bullying behaviour may be criminal, or considers that there may be a risk of harm to a member of the public, the Case Handler will report the matter to the Police
5. The incident/s should be recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated by the Case Handler before it is given to the Deputy Head or Head of Nursery-Year 6, as appropriate, who is responsible for keeping all electronic records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences, securely. If it is not practicable to use the incident form, the incident must still be written down, signed and dated by the Case Handler, and held securely the Deputy Head
6. The Deputy Head will inform the tutors, Assistant Head (Head of Years 7-11) of both the bully/ bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Head should be informed
7. The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator/s. She will be offered support to develop a strategy to help herself. It will be made clear to her why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate
8. The alleged bully will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. She will be offered guidance on modifying her behaviour
9. Problems can often be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, following the above procedure, without the need for disciplinary action. However, the School's Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy may also be invoked. If disciplinary action is considered necessary, the punishment imposed will be agreed by the Head of Nursery to Year 6 / Deputy Head or the Head of EYFS. Sanctions under this policy might include, for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or exclusion from school. The School may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe or persistent bullying or in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level
10. The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into School to discuss the matter, and the appropriate sanctions under the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy. The parents' support will be sought in respect of preventative measures, and any concerns of either party will be addressed
11. A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support may be needed by the pupils who are being bullied, and also by the pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the School's Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy if appropriate
12. As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode

13. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record
14. In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police, the DSL or to Children's Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the School's Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

### **Procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying**

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyber-bullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyber-bullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

### **Electronic devices**

In response to an allegation of cyber-bullying, certain staff are permitted to conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a pupil's mobile phone, with the authority of the Head. Staff do not require the consent of the pupil, or their parents to undertake a search, provided they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, and provided they have the Head's prior consent to undertake a search.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the School rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the School may examine any data or files on the device, where there is good reason to do so, for example, where there has been an allegation of cyber-bullying. Parental consent to search through electronic devices is not required.

The School may also erase any data or files from the device if the School considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted and the device must be given to the Police without delay.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to an offence, the School can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy and the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy. The School may then take steps to punish the student in accordance with the Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy, where appropriate. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

## **EYFS CHILDREN**

Even the School's youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Head of EYFS is in charge of the management of behaviour in the EYFS setting.

The School explains to the EYFS children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the EYFS setting; but sometimes we may remove a privilege for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head of EYFS who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action and introduce a more appropriate action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed towards their child, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and the Head of EYFS, to formulate a mutual agreement regarding action.

In EYFS staff support children using "the six steps of conflict resolution" as follows:

- Approach calmly, stopping any harmful actions
- Acknowledge all children's feelings
- Gather information from all parties
- Restate the problem
- Ask for ideas and solutions and choose one together
- Be prepared to give follow up and support.

The Behaviour Management Policy for EYFS children is included in the whole school Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use the School's Complaints Procedure (which is published on the website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The School will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Head, together with the Deputy Head and Head of Nursery to Year 6, will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the School. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually, by the Senior Management Team and Governors.

## Guidance

- A. ["Preventing and Tackling Bullying", DfE, July 2017](#)
- B. [ISI Inspection Framework](#), February 2018
- C. [The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2017](#)
- D. [Bullying UK: Cyber-bullying](#)
- E. ["Cyber-bullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff"](#), November 2014
- F. ["Cyber-bullying Guidance: Understand, Prevent and Respond"](#) - Childnet International
- G. ["Searching, screening and confiscation"](#), DfE, January 2018

## RELATED POLICES THAT ARE REQUIRED OF SCHOOLS

- Behaviour Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Disability Policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection Policy

**Head Teacher; Nicola Smillie**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of the Governing Body; Carol McNidder**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_