



**ST MARGARET'S  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ACADEMY**



*“Achievement by faith and work”  
‘Inspired by the knowledge and love of God  
we all come together to learn  
in a Christian community where we are valued  
for who we are and who we could become’*

**(School Mission Statement)**

**POLICY ON : BULLYING PREVENTION**

**RATIONALE**

St Margaret's is a school, which rewards responsible behaviour and discourages irresponsible behaviour. Bullying is an example of the latter and the school unequivocally condemns it. As much as we are able, we want to ensure that aggression, both in attitude and behaviour, does not find a place in our school.

The people responsible for this policy and to whom observations and comments should be made are:

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Mr S Brierley   | Principal                    |
| Mr R. Kingston  | Assistant Safeguarding lead. |
| Mr Peter Oliver | Chair of Governors           |

Copies of this policy are available on request to: Governors, Staff and Parents.

Unless there is a change in legislation this policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

This policy was approved at a meeting of the Standing committee on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017

This policy is next due to be reviewed in March 2020

# St Margaret's Mission and Values

## Mission

Our Academy Mission Statement:

**Inspired by the knowledge and love of God,  
we all come together to learn  
in a Christian community where we are valued  
for who we are and who we could become.**

## Values

As an Academy we have adopted eight Christian values which we feel are the basis of our community.

- A Christian community is a community of faith, and at the heart of faith is **TRUST**. Trust is about letting go – putting ourselves in God's, and in other people's, hands. Jesus told his followers to "*trust in God; trust also in me*"; so as we work together, we expect members of our community to be trustworthy and reliable, and not to let others down.
- Education is not just about academic learning; it is about personal development too. As we work together, we expect that good working relationships, and **FRIENDSHIPS**, will develop, between students as well as between members of staff. In John 15, Jesus explicitly calls his disciples not servants, but friends. As a community, we celebrate the selflessness of friendship.
- **JUSTICE** is another value that is central to our community. Justice is about appreciating that our well-being is inextricably linked to everyone else's. It is not just about our response when someone acts inappropriately; it is also about ensuring that everyone is accorded the dignity and the respect and that is rightfully theirs. Isaiah encouraged us to "*seek justice!*" – and we do.
- From time to time, however, we all get things wrong. Jesus commanded us to show **FORGIVENESS** to each other, and as a Christian community we seek to obey Him. Someone in the wrong should show self-discipline and apologise, making reparation where appropriate; someone who is wronged should accept an apology and not seek to humiliate.
- Education is about far more than chemicals, conjunctions and crotchets! As a community, we seek to foster **WISDOM** and true insight into the way life works – an understanding of the consequences of our thoughts, words and actions and an awareness of the true value of things. Such wisdom is rooted in a proper reverence for God: as the Psalmist puts it, "*the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom*".
- St Paul looked back on his life and was able to say that he had "*run the race*" right to the end. All those involved in education need to demonstrate similar levels of **ENDURANCE** – learning is the ultimate life-long task, a marathon not a sprint. By showing patience and resilience we will ensure that no-one is left behind, and that all are able to achieve their God-given potential.
- These values will be all the easier for us if we show **COMPASSION**. Compassion is more than just sympathy: like Jesus, we aim to put ourselves in other people's shoes, understand their point of view, then do something about it – and thus to grow in faith.
- Underpinning all of these, we seek to be a community at **PEACE**. St Paul describes God as the God of peace. We therefore seek to demonstrate harmony, stability and security within our Christian community, downplaying dissent and accentuating the positive.

## Purposes

1. To significantly lessen/prevent bullying at St Margaret's.
2. To promote a school environment in which bullying cannot thrive.
3. To keep up to date with current issues in and around bullying , e.g. 'sexting'

We believe that every member (adults and young people) of the school has the right to:

1. Live and work in an environment that is free of humiliation, intimidation oppression or abuse.
2. Have their concerns with regard to bullying taken seriously at all times.
3. Have access to the correct procedures and appropriate personnel when incidents take place.
4. Swift and sensitive action in dealing with such incidents.

It is the responsibility of all staff to help create an atmosphere which is caring and protective. Whilst we recognize that it is impossible to eliminate bullying entirely, we aim to bring about a significant decrease through the application of this policy. It is our belief that every member of the school community is responsible for seeking to prevent bullying happening and reporting it when it does occur. It is particularly important that we develop a culture in which the victim feels able to inform staff or other persons who might help.

## DEFINITION

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'. This definition covers bullying which is racial or racist, religious, cultural, sexual or sexist, homophobic, or relating to special educational needs, disability or cyber-bullying (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and e-mail). It is important to stress that it is the perception of the victim and not the perpetrator that matters; too often perpetrators pass off their behaviour as banter.

Bullying, therefore, includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Being called names
- Being teased because of disability or special educational needs
- Being pushed or pulled about, hit or attacked
- Having your bag and other possessions taken and thrown around
- Having rumours spread about you or your family
- Being ignored and left out
- Being forced to hand over money and possessions
- Having racial or racist remarks made about you
- Having sexual or sexist remarks made about you
- Being attacked or teased or called names because of your sexuality
- The use of social networking sites, text messages, photographs or e mails deliberately to cause distress

## **Procedure and Guidelines**

The school will react firmly and promptly where bullying is identified. There is a range of sanctions open to the staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The school will seek to:

1. investigate all reported incidents of bullying;
2. take verbal abuse seriously as well as physical abuse;
3. record bullying incidents that have been dealt with in a way that allows for monitoring of behaviour;
4. support students who are being bullied;
5. help bullies to change their behaviour;
6. involve parents as appropriate;
7. request outside help when necessary.
8. Keep a central log of all bullying instances.
9. In the cases of Racial bullying A 'Racist Incident form' will be completed and sent to the authority.

It will be the school's policy to issue a formal warning to bully/bullies on the first occasion rather than a punishment and to make it very clear to the bully that he/she is responsible for solving the problem. The exception to this will be when the bullying is of a very serious nature, such as actual physical injury. The warning will involve pointing out that a repetition of the offence will involve punishment and parents being informed. The person or group causing the problem, any witnesses and the victim will be asked to comment on further progress so that the situation can be monitored.

## **Other aspects of our action:**

1. We will seek to educate the students to reject bullying through the curriculum. This will be done mainly through Learning for Life (Learning for Life is taught typically in half-termly modules, one lesson per week). The outline schemes for Learning for Life in each Year Group are available elsewhere. Other areas of the curriculum address the issue of bullying, such as English and R.E.
2. We will seek to provide adequate supervision, particularly in secluded areas of the school.
3. We will encourage students to become involved in the reduction of bullying through comments to the Form Representatives of each Year Committee, which may then be put forward for discussion at School Council meetings.
4. We will seek to discover the motives for bullying and counsel those who do bully.
5. The school operates the sharp system available through the school website. This allows students and parents to contact Mr R. Kingston anonymously and regularly about bullying related incidents. There also some useful video clips which give information to the victim.
6. External presentations to raise awareness will be carried out during 'anti bullying week' and these are available on the schools website.

7. Peer Mentors – a team of Year 10 students who have been trained to offer support and help to our new intake. Each Year 7 form is allocated two/three mentors to help and support students with any difficulties.

### **Review and evaluation:**

Review and evaluation takes place in four ways:

- The Bullying Prevention Coordinator regularly updates the policy in the light of current practice
- The School Council's feedback is used to update practice and policy
- The Annual Questionnaire is used to update practice and policy
- Any relevant INSET related to the topic of bullying is evaluated and may be used to update practice and policy.

### **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF SHOULD BULLYING OCCUR**

When a student feels that he or she (Sixth Form) is being bullied, the procedures that should take place are outlined in the following code of practice:

1. The incident should be reported to the nearest available member of staff.
2. The teacher receiving this report has the right to make a professional judgement as to the seriousness of the incident.
3. If the incident is judged **not to be serious**, either because there has been no injury, or the distress is only at the level of mild irritation, the member of staff should speak to the student(s) as appropriate. They can then be dismissed. Details should be passed on to the Head of Year as soon as possible, so that the incident can be logged.
4. If the incident is judged to be **serious**, either because there has been injury, or significant distress, the following action should be taken:
  - (a) take any immediate protective action if necessary;
  - (b) escort the victim to the M.I. Room if necessary;
  - (c) place the aggressor in the Internal Exclusion Unit
  - (d) *Complete an incident log on PARS* and pass ON DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT(S) to the students' Head(s) of Year.
5. Once informed, the Head(s) of Year will take the following actions:
  - (a) the victim and aggressor (and witnesses if necessary) will be interviewed independently;
  - (b) a professional judgement will be made as to the level of intent/aggression exhibited by the bully and the level of distress of the victim;
  - (c) a professional judgement will be made as to whether a face-to-face apology is appropriate.

6. Punishment will be meted out according to the following criteria:
  - (a) whether or not it is the bully's first offence;
  - (b) whether or not there was any provocation from the victim;
  - (c) the degree of intent/aggression involved;
  - (d) the degree of distress caused.
  
7. There will be a hierarchical order of sanctions, which will follow the current S.M.A.R.T. system, up to and including exclusion with the following additions:
  - (a) In the case of any incidents deemed serious, the parents of the bully will be contacted, even if it is a first offence;
  - (b) Parent/carers will be contacted about trivial aggression, if it becomes repetitive.
  
8. The victim will be consulted about the sanctions procedure, but his/her wishes are not binding.

### **GUIDELINE FOR STUDENTS SHOULD BULLYING OCCUR**

#### **Points to note if you are being bullied:**

- 1) Try not to show you are upset – although this may prove difficult.
- 2) Walk with confidence – even if you do not feel that way inside.
- 3) Try to appear confident in what you say.
- 4) Avoid being alone in places where bullying happens – try to stay in supervised areas.
- 5) Speak to an adult or friend you can trust.

#### **You can help stop bullying.**

- 1) Do not stand by and watch – fetch help from a teacher.
- 2) Give sympathy and support to students who are being bullied.
- 3) Be careful about 'skitting' – imagine how you might feel.
- 4) If you know about bullying going on, tell an adult you can trust. The victim may be too scared and lonely to tell.

#### **You can do the following:**

1. Use the Sharp system
2. See a peer mentor
3. See a prefect
4. See your form tutor
5. See your Head of Year or Mr Laird/ Mrs Jones (sixth form)

6. Speak to any other member of staff
7. See one of the school's child protection officers – Dr D. Siloverstone, Mrs V . Wyke  
Mr R. Kingston

### **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS SHOULD BULLYING OCCUR**

- Take an active interest in your child's social life.
- Watch out for signs of bullying such as;
  - unwillingness to attend school
  - headaches
  - stomach aches
  - equipment going missing
  - requests for extra pocket money
  - mood swings
  - aggressive behaviour
- **If your child has been bullied**
  - Calmly talk with your son or daughter about his/her experience
  - Make a note of what he/she says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it is has happened and what has happened or any other relevant information.
  - Reassure him/her that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying and discuss with him /her how he/she would like the problem to be tackled
  - If he/she considers the school should be informed contact your son/daughter's Head of Year, The head or assistant Head of sixth form or one of the school's child protection officers.
- The school, usually via the Head of Year, will initiate an investigation and will inform you of the outcome.

#### **Talking with staff about bullying**

- Try to stay calm- bear in mind that the member of staff may have no idea that your son/daughter is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your son/daughter says has happened- give dates, places and names of other children involved
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take
- Stay in touch with the school. Let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue
- If the problem persists, and/or you are not satisfied with the way the situation has developed, ask for a meeting with the Head of Year, Dr Silverstone, Mrs Wyke or Mr Kingston (the child protection officers) or the Head teacher, Mr Brierley.

#### **If your son/daughter is bullying other children**

Children may be involved in bullying others at some time or other. Often parents/carers are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

### **Children sometimes bully others because:**

- They don't know it's wrong
- They are copying brothers/sisters or other significant family members
- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- Their friends encourage them to bully
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out negative feelings

### **To stop your son/daughter from bullying others:**

- Talk with your son/daughter; listen to what they have to say as there may be some difficult feelings that are causing the behaviour.
- Explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes others unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behavior or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your son/daughter how she can join in with other pupils without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your son's Head of year to discuss the difficulties/problems your child is experiencing: discuss how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others. Working together, the situation can improve dramatically for your child and the issue can be resolved.
- Regularly check with your son/daughter and ask him/her how things are going at school.

## **CYBER-BULLYING**

### **Definition**

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

### **Some Issues**

- Technology can allow the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- No place provides sanctuary from the intrusion of a threatening text message or an abusive e-mail.
- Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.
- Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can often seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS - Parents over Shoulder, TUL - Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

### **Types of Cyberbullying**

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort



- **Sexting** involves sending images- often of themselves or someone they know- of a sexual nature. Police can be involved and serious consequences follow, e.g. appearing on the sex offenders register
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. ‘Happy slapping’ involves filming and sharing physical attacks
- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. As with all mobile phone bullying the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else’s phone.
- **E-mail bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages.
- **Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web –based chat room
- **Bullying through instant messaging(IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online
- **Bullying via social media website** is an internet based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages which can be seen by many e.g. ‘facebook’

#### Some Useful Contacts

If you feel you are being bullied through your mobile phone, either with phone calls or text messages, you will be able to seek help from your phone network provider using the phone numbers below:

EE - 07973 100 150, or 150 from an Orange phone

O2 - 202

Vodafone phone191

Virgin Mobile - 789 or 333 from a Virgin Mobile phone or  
03333003333

Mobile phone APPS are available to block unwanted calls.

NO caller ID, do not answer

Much useful information on anti-bullying issues can be found on the anti-bullying network website at [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)