



St. Mary's Limavady

Scoil Mhuire Léim an Mhadaidh

Living Faith, Inspiring Learning, Shaping Futures

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

St. Mary's Limavady

Revised
To be Reviewed

January 2017
January 2019

Rationale

Articles 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, state that:

“Every child has a right to an education.....discipline in schools must respect children’s human dignity.....It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for parents, their own and other cultures and the environment”

Therefore, in the spirit of the convention, Bullying is unacceptable in St Mary’s School. Bullying interferes with the education of students and also impacts on parents and staff. As a school community, we must all ensure that St Mary’s is a safe and happy environment for everyone.

Purpose

- To ensure all students feel safe and secure within the school community.
- To ensure students are aware of the appropriate steps they must take when they feel they are bullied.
- To put in place a process that will enable us to deal with bullying effectively.
- To raise awareness of the issue within the school community and with parents.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time.
Bullying may be:

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, pushing, theft, invasion of personal space.
- **Verbal:** name calling including racist, sexual or sectarian remarks, homophobic comments etc.
- **Indirect:** spreading rumours, excluding someone, giving dirty looks, using social networking sites or texts to send hurtful or threatening messages or images.

Raising Awareness of Bullying within St Mary's

- The student definition of Bullying will be reviewed annually by the School Council and displayed around the school.
- All students will be given a copy of "What is Bullying Card".
- All Teaching/Support staff and Parents will be given a copy of the school Anti-Bullying policy.
- Assemblies and LLW lessons will promote St Mary's as a place where bullying is not accepted.
- PSNI presentations will be held to highlight the dangers of social networking sites and mobile phones.
- On line Anti Bullying Survey will be carried out each November during Anti Bullying Week by the School Council.

Processes

- All Teachers should be alert to bullying situations and will treat complaints seriously.
- Everyone in school must know what bullying is and the consequences if you bully someone.
- Active supervision of students at break and lunchtime by staff.
- All students will be made aware of what to do if they feel bullied and the key people they can turn to.

Procedures

When a student reports bullying in St Mary's all staff will:

1. Deal with it immediately and inform Head of Year/Senior Leadership Team.
2. Focus on the feelings of the victim.
3. Collect information about the incident from both parties and witnesses if necessary.
4. With consent of both parties, arrange a meeting to try and resolve the problem.
5. Contact parents and invite them to come to the school if necessary.
6. Students will be monitored on a regular basis and given the opportunity to express how they are feeling.

If a student Bullies anyone in St Mary's, there will be consequences which may include:

- Official warning to stop bullying/Parents contacted
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- A student may be put on Report Card and appear before the School Disciplinary Committee.
- Suspension for **repeatedly** causing hurt through words or actions.
- Permanent exclusion.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student that the incident will be dealt with immediately
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- Having the opportunity to meet with the School Counsellor if they so wish

A student who bullies others in St Mary's will be supported by:

- Discussing what has happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Informing Parents/Guardian to help change the attitude of the student
- Offering help of the school counsellor if necessary

Review:

This policy will be monitored by the Pastoral Team and School Council. It will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.