St John's Catholic Primary School

Anti Bullying Policy

2026-2027

Aim:

This policy aims to produce a consistent response to bullying by ensuring that all those connected with the school are aware of our opposition to bullying and understand their responsibilities with regard to the eradication of all forms of bullying.

To achieve our aim, we will:

- Deliver lessons as part of the RSHE/SMSC curriculum on bullying, what is can look like, and what to do if you suspect someone is being bullied or if you yourself are the victim of bullying;
- Help all children develop positive strategies and assertion skills;
- Make it clear that all types of bullying are unacceptable;
- Use an 'Okay to tell' and 'no-blame' approach taught through SMSC;
- Take every reported incident of bullying seriously and investigate - this includes instances of bullying on the way to and from school;
- Address bullying as a behavioural problem which should and can be changed;
- Support those who are being bullied and ensure they are listened to;
- Involve parents at an early stage where deemed appropriate;
- Record incidents of bullying in a consistent way that allows monitoring of behaviour;
- Request help from outside agencies where appropriate;
- Ensure all staff are informed of who to report instances of bullying to;
- Enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to respond to incidents of bullying;
- Involve the police where necessary.

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, school staff should report their concerns to their Local Authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying. See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

What is Bullying?

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of SEN, disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case."

Taken in part from 'Preventing and tackling bullying -Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.' DfE 2017

Bullying falls into two categories:

1. Emotionally harmful behaviour, such as taunting, spreading hurtful rumours, cyber-bullying and excluding people from groups and;

2. Physically harmful behaviour, such as kicking, hitting, pushing or other forms of physically abusive behaviour.

Whether in school, within the home or in the community the behaviour constitutes bullying if:

- It is repetitive, wilful or persistent;
- It is intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or group;
- There is an imbalance of power leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless.

Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff to be aware of:

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school;
- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling or reluctant to go to school;
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- Attempts or threatens self-harm or runs away;
- Feels ill in the morning;
- Begins to do make less effort with school work than previously;
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- Has possessions which are damaged or " go missing";
- Asks for money or starts stealing money;
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children or siblings;
- Loses appetite or stops eating;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- Lack of eye contact;
- Becoming short tempered;
- Change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Preventative Measures:

Our school takes a positive stand where bullying is concerned and actively seeks to prevent bullying in the first instance. It employs a range of measures to actively prevent bullying behaviour (including Cyber-bullying). This is done by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment with a strong ethos;
- A teacher and teaching assistant supervising morning playtimes and the headteacher and welfare staff supervising lunchtimes;
- Strong emphasis within RSHE and PSHE Curriculum.
- The use of drama, role-play, stories etc., within the curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour;
- Operating an open door and 'Okay to Tell' policy;
- Buddy support between Foundation Stage children and Year Six - giving very young children a person to communicate problems to where they feel comfortable;
- Where applicable, signposting victims to outside agencies who offer counselling and support;
- Children are regularly surveyed for their views and concerns and these are summarised and shared with staff and governors;
- Appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) for adults;
- If required, targeted small group or individual learning used for those who display bullying.

The ethos and working philosophy of St John's Catholic Primary School means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is acknowledged, praised and rewarded.

Staff regularly discuss friendship and bullying. This helps inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our school's Catholic Ethos and Values.

Staff follow the Equality Policy; supporting every child in our school.

Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include:

- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly;
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behaviour towards others are dealt with quickly;
- Tell a friend;
- Tell your School Council rep, Buddy, or member of the Pupil Senior Leadership Team;
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust;
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust;
- Discuss it as part of RHSE / SMSC time;
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given.

Responding to bullying:

If it is confirmed that bullying behaviour is evident, 'Bullying Reporting and Recording Procedures' are followed:

Reporting and Recording Procedures:

- In the event of a bullying incident, the member of staff who witnesses the incident or is responsible for the pupils at the time of the incident completes a 'Bullying Incident Form'. (Appendix A);
  - If support staff witness bullying behaviour during a lesson, they will either investigate it themselves, relative to their supervisory role, or refer it to the class teacher / Headteacher depending on the circumstances;
  - All lunchtime and playtime incidents are referred to the lunchtime supervisor. They then complete a 'Bullying Incident Form' and report the incident to the class teacher;
- The completed 'Bullying Incident Form' is handed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then investigate further, speaking with relevant members of staff and all pupils involved. This will be recorded on the Bullying Incident Form and may be recorded on the schools CPOMS. CPOMS is an online software package that enables us to record and log incidents and monitor behaviour throughout the school.
- Depending on the severity of the incident, the parents of all children involved may be called into school and informed of the incident by the head teacher, accompanied by the class teacher. The meeting will be logged by the head teacher on the 'Bullying Incident Form'. Actions drawn up in these meetings are shared with key members of staff to ensure close monitoring and support for those children involved;
- If children are involved in further bullying incidents, a further 'Bullying Incident Form' is completed, CPOMS is updated and the children's parents will be contacted to review previous strategies and discuss future actions;
- The Headteacher may, at any point, take advice from Lancashire Safeguarding Service and the School Advisor.

* Staff concerned about adult bullying incidents should refer to the policy for 'Workplace and Work-Related Bullying and Harassment.' *

Filling in Bullying Concern Forms (see Appendix A) should be done as soon as possible to the alleged allegation and where appropriate, with the person alleging the bullying behaviour. It should be concise and to the point. When filling in a form, staff will follow the same procedures as when logging a safeguarding concern i.e. – no leading questions should be used to inform what is written; simply listen and write down what is said; reassure the pupil/adult that they were right to inform; let them know it will be investigated and make clear that secrets cannot be kept.

Range of actions that may be applied

In conjunction and in accordance with our Behaviour policy, a range of sanctions will be applied appropriately to each individual case. Where necessary, advice will be sought from Lancashire Safeguarding Service and the School Advisor.

Dealing with complaints about bullying incidents

As mentioned previously, our school promotes a positive approach to combat bullying and will endeavour to deal quickly and effectively with all reports of bullying. However, if a parent feels that it has not been dealt with effectively or appropriately, they will be signposted to the School Complaints Policy.

Implementation of The Policy

The Role of Governors:
The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school. The governing body will not condone any bullying and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying and reviews the effectiveness of the policy. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies. In termly Headteacher reports, the Headteacher indicates whether or not there have been any incidents of bullying.

There is a nominated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding: Mr A Rimmer

Parents are informed of the Anti-Bullying Policy through its publication on our school website.

The Role of the Headteacher
It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school Anti-Bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) as well as regular visitors to the school are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour. During Whole School Worship, our zero-tolerance policy is regularly reinforced through the message of the Gospel. The importance of penance, forgiveness and reconciliation are also explored.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Headteacher addresses school site issues where bullying may take place.

The Headteacher keeps a log of all incidents through Cpoms. A record of incidents that occur outside school hours, and are brought to the attention of the school, are also logged.

We will know that this policy is having a positive impact by:
- Maintaining consistently positive responses on child and parental questionnaires
- Monitoring for trends amongst groups with our school setting
- Review and renewing policy.

Department for Education:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Legislative links
- Schools' Duty to Promote Good Behaviour (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89)
- Power to tackle Poor Behaviour Outside School (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89(5))
- The Equality Act 2010

Help organisations:

The Anti Bullying Alliance (ABA):

Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau. The AntiBullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Beatbullying:

A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for parents, Beatbullying have developed the Cybermentors peer support programme for young people affected by cyberbullying

Kidscape:

Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection. Advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Cyberbullying:

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.