Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Adopted: December 2024
Review Date: December 2025

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Good Behaviour & Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2022)

Our Anti-Bullying Statement

As a Catholic school, Our Lady's provides an education, which is based on Gospel values, recognising the uniqueness of every child. We are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn, play, feel valued and thrive. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously.

We acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that the incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a 'TELLING' school and this means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, parents and carers will have a common understanding of our agreed definition of 'bullying'.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know and follow the school anti- bullying policy. All pupils, parents and carers will know the school anti-bullying policy and be clear on what they should do if bullying arises.
- Parents, carers, pupils, staff and governors will all be assured that we take bullying seriously and that bullying behaviour will **not** be tolerated.

Consultation:

This policy was drawn up after consultation with pupils, parents, governors and staff. Pupils have been involved through discussions during assembly, circle times and school council meetings.

Limits of this policy:

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including children and adults. It applies, not only on the school premises, but also on the journey to and from school when children are not accompanied by parents/carers; on all educational visits/extra-curricular activities; and on the way to and from activities off site during the school day.

It also applies to incidents of cyber bullying involving children from Our Lady's Catholic Primary School. Where children from other schools are also involved, we will contact the parents of the child(ren) and the other school (if known), to report the incident.

In cases of extreme violence, which could be criminal or which poses a serious threat, the Head teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police and/or Social Services.

All confirmed incidents of bullying will be reported to the Governing Body and Plymouth CAST in the Headteacher's Report and SG4 form.

All incidences of racial bullying will be reported to the Local Authority.

Our Definition of Bullying

Bullying behaviour **deliberately** causes hurt (either physically or emotionally). Bullying behaviour is **repetitive** (though one-off incidents such as the posting of an image, or the sending of a text that is then forwarded to a group, can quickly become repetitive and spiral into bullying behaviour) or **persistent,** with incidents occurring over a period of time. Bullying behaviour involves an **imbalance of power** where an individual or a group intentionally hurts another individual or group.

It is sometimes premeditated and sometimes opportunistic but is always a **conscious** act to hurt. **Bullying is physical or verbally aggressive behaviour that occurs 'Several Times On Purpose' (STOP).**

 *It is possible for hurtful behaviour to happen, that is not persistent. **Whilst this is not labelled as bullying,** (as it is not sustained over time), it is still considered unacceptable in our school. Please refer to our Behaviour Policy.*

Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying involves hurting a person's body or damaging their possessions. It may include:

- hitting/kicking/pinching/hair-pulling
- spitting
- tripping/pushing
- taking or breaking someone's things/graffiti
- making mean or rude hand gestures or facial expressions

Verbal Bullying involves saying or writing mean things. It may include:

- teasing / banter with the intent to hurt or demean
- sending nasty notes
- name-calling/racist comments
- inappropriate sexual/rude comments
- taunting
- threatening to cause harm/coercion/dares

Emotional Bullying involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. It may include:

- leaving someone out of an activity with the intent to hurt/ignoring someone on purpose
- telling other children not to be friends with someone
- spreading rumours about someone/whispering about others
- embarrassing someone in public
- hiding books/belongings
- laughing at or mocking a hurt or upset person
- mocking differences - race, disability, gender, physique, religion, ability, sexual orientation

Cyber Bullying

- spiteful texts/threatening texts/ malicious communications
- spiteful emails or messages on any forum
- rude inappropriate language online
- posting/publishing images/videos or information designed to embarrass and upset · sending chain-mail
- sending texts/emails pretending to be somebody else

Friendship Bullying

- Not allowing someone to join a group
- Leaving someone out of a group
- Refusing to share friends
- Refusing to work with a classmate
- Refusing to sit next to someone
- Eye rolling
- Laughing at someone
- Sarcasm
- Giving someone the silent treatment
- Forcing a friend to pick sides in a disagreement
- Trying to stop two people from being friends

- Relying gossip/rumors to the target of the gossip (this can be an innocent attempt to "try to help a friend" but it is far more hurtful than helpful)

Bullying is not…

It is important that all stakeholders understand that bullying is **not** the odd, occasional falling out with friends or name-calling; it is not when children have an argument/quarrel or when an occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset or have a difference of opinion. It is an important part of a child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns and to resolve differences. They need to learn how to repair relationships and develop the social skills necessary for life as an adult. **When occasional problems of the above nature arise, it is important that we do not class these as bullying.**

It is not:

- teasing between friends **without the intention to cause hurt**
- falling out/fight between friends after a quarrel or disagreement
- behaviour that all parties have consented to eg a game 'gone wrong'
- thoughtlessness (which all of us may be guilty of)

Please refer to our Relationships and Behaviour Policy for details on how we encourage all school family members to respect their own, and the rights of others.

Preventing Bullying

- Raise awareness of bullying so that all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers will have an understanding of what bullying is and what procedures should be followed. This may be focused through embracing the annual National Anti Bullying Week but is reinforced daily through our relationship and behaviour policy.
- Train all staff including MTAs to identify bullying and to follow policy and procedures relating to the recording and monitoring of bullying incidents.
- An anti-bullying, pupil led, assembly to be held at least once a term and other more regular assemblies around the themes of friendship.
- Use PSHE materials throughout the year to address bullying throughout the whole curriculum developing pupils' social and emotional skills, including resilience.
- Use of our Thrive practitioners, School Council, SLT and nurture groups to empower children against bullying, building self-esteem and confidence.

- Parents, pupils and the school sign a home/school agreement.
- Encourage the children to tell an adult - STOP (Start Telling Other People) if they feel they are being bullied or if someone they know is being bullied.
- Bystanders/ pupil witnesses are encouraged to be proactive and to report bullying behaviour.
- Teachers and children to explore rules and expectations for their class at the beginning of a new school year and termly. This should also involve exploring acceptable/unacceptable behaviours and how to air concerns and worries with the adults working in that class.
- "Calm" areas in the playground to be provided where boisterous play can be avoided. · A positive, caring ethos is developed within the school, where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from fear of being bullied. Children know that all adults in the school will listen and take their concerns seriously.
- Have a clear Good Behaviour and relationships Policy which is centred on the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Children, rewards positive behaviour, focuses on positive attitudes and encourages children to reflect upon their own rights and the rights of others. With all rights, come responsibilities.
- Rewards and the sanctions linked to not being Ready, respectful or safe. This is analysed regularly by senior leaders to identify patterns of behaviour.
- Children have the opportunity to share concerns about bullying with the school council through their suggestion box.
- Use the school website to educate parents and children about safe internet use and the possibilities of cyber-bullying.

What are the possible indicators of bullying:

- There may be behavioural signs that a child might be suffering from bullying.
- All staff should be aware of these signs and investigate the possible causes if they are noticed.
- This is by no means an exhaustive or all-encompassing list but rather a guideline to what might be observed. *(Appendix 2)*

Procedures – Reporting:

Children

- Children are encouraged to 'Start Telling Other People'.
- They are encouraged to report possible bullying to any member of staff they trust, a friend or a member of their family.
- Children can request to talk to someone.
- Children who are 'bystanders' are encouraged to support their peers by reporting any suspected bullying.

Adults

- If an adult feels that they are being 'picked on' or bullied, they too are encouraged to start telling other people - a colleague or member of the SLT. See our Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff

- All incidents of suspected bullying will be dealt with by the member of staff it is reported to, usually the class teacher. These are to be logged and communicated to SLT via CPOMS
- All 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, firstly to the teacher or a senior member of staff.
- The Head teacher will also be informed and, if bullying is confirmed, it will be logged and entered on CPOMS under Peer on Peer Abuse. All instances of bullying will be recorded and monitored for patterns of behaviour.

Parents

- Parents are encouraged to share any concerns with their child's class teacher in the first instance or with a member of senior management if dissatisfied with the first response. · In serious/confirmed cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, particularly if behaviour in school is repeated out of school, further action may be taken. Please refer to our Behaviour and Exclusions Policy.

Procedures – Outcomes:

Victim (Support)

- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated immediately and the bullying stopped.
- Victims will be reassured that they have done nothing to deserve the bullying and that what may have happened is not their 'fault'.
- The victim will be consulted on how to rebuild relationships with the perpetrator if they want to do this.
- Following investigations, staff will periodically 'check in' with children that have been the victim of bullying to ensure that the child feels happy and secure at school.

Perpetrator (Support, Restoration and Sanctions)

- Most importantly, the perpetrator should be helped to realise that bullying will **not** be tolerated, that it must stop immediately and that there can be no recurrence.
- Children are helped to reflect upon their actions and to reflect on how the bullied child may feel. This may be achieved through the use of a 'Reflect and Resolve' session. (*Appendix 7)*
- Children that have been bullied are supported in order to modify their behaviour – this may be through a behaviour plan, structured lunchtimes including pastoral support, and involvement of parents to reinforce the unacceptable nature of bullying.
- Other sanctions may be actioned such as loss of break time or other 'privileges' in school. · A fixed term exclusion may be considered.
- After incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Parents

- In cases of confirmed bullying, parents/carers of both victim and perpetrator will be kept informed throughout the process.
- Close contact will be maintained with the victim's parents or carers to ensure that the victim adjusts positively back to school life as quickly as possible.
- Parent views will always be considered, but the school will stress that wherever possible, reconciliation will be considered in order to provide clear resolution for all concerned while not condoning the bullying.

Recording

All behaviour incidents are recorded by staff via CPOMS. These are regularly reviewed by SLT so that patterns of behaviour can be identified and issues resolved in order to prevent bullying taking place.

Alleged/Confirmed incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS

- Incidents of bullying outside of school hours that are reported to the school by parents, carers, pupils or others are logged in the same way. Such incidents will be followed up and if necessary reported to other relevant authorities ie Social Services, Police or other schools involved.
- The Head of School will investigate the incident by speaking to the victim, the child accused of bullying, any witnesses and the reporting adult.
- The parents of all children involved will then be informed of the investigation and its outcomes.
- The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for liaising with class teachers and other staff, to ensure incidents of bullying are not missed.
- The Senior Leadership Team will periodically analyse our behaviour data to measure the success of the policies and procedures against the number of incidents, the number of children involved and the sanctions required.

Reconciliation
- The perpetrator will be asked at a suitable point to genuinely apologise, in writing or in person and restorative work will take place.
- Children will be encouraged to reconcile any issues over a period of time so that any injustices can be rectified.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with an adult of their choice reassurance that the matter is being dealt with
- offering continuous support to restore self esteem and confidence
- close monitoring of their well-being to ensure that they are no longer suffering

Pupils who have been bullying will be helped by:
- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change

- support being offered to parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil
- Partaking in restorative conversations and actions.

Sanctions

- In line with our Behaviour Policy, the following sanctions may be used to deal with bullying. They will be applied on a case by case basis and be appropriate for the children involved.
- Withdrawal of playtime and/or lunchtime outside for a period of time.
- removal from class - internal seclusion for a session (morning/afternoon)
- Withdrawal from participation in school events, which are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- Fixed period suspension.
- In cases of very severe and persistent bullying, the head teacher and Governing Body may consider permanent exclusion.

Monitoring and evaluation

Data from the records kept will be reported to Governors in the Headteacher's reports.

The policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by theSLT, who reports weekly to the Executive Headteacher.

HELPFUL ADVICE

Advice to Pupils

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear. Look the 'bully' in the eye and tell them to stop saying 'Stop it! I don't like what you're doing/saying".
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell and adult straight away. Be clear and tell them exactly what happened, where you were, how often it has happened before this, who else saw what happened and what you have already done about it.
- Tell a member of your family.
- Talk to a friend (if you are scared/worried to tell an adult on your own) and ask them to help you to tell someone.
- Do not blame yourself - it is not your fault.

Advice to Staff

- Investigate fully and confirm that the incident does satisfy the school definition of 'bullying'
- Follow the recording and reporting procedures consistently.
- Never ignore suspected bullying.
- Never make premature assumptions.
- Listen to **all** accounts - several children saying the same thing doesn't necessarily mean that it is true.
- Inform SLT of the incident and what you have already done about it. Keep clear records. · Keep the parents of the children involved, informed of developments.

Advice to Parents of a bullied child:

- Talk to your child calmly and reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking to you about it.
- Make a note of what your child says - it is best to write these things down especially at times of heightened emotions.
- Explain to your child that you will be reporting it to the school and that they should tell an adult at school straight away if anything else should happen.
- Make an appointment to speak to the class teacher or to our Parent Advisor as soon as you can. Our Parent Advisor will be able to point you in the direction of support agencies including Parent Partnerships who will also be able to offer support.

Advice to Parents of a child who is bullying others:

- Talk to your child and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy.
- Show them how to join in and play with others without bullying.

- Make an appointment to speak to the class teacher soon as you can.
- Talk to your child regularly to check how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise when they are being kind or considerate to others.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

*Signs **may** include:*

- Sudden changes in behaviour or demeanour of child near others
- Child doesn't want to go to school
- Sudden gatherings or flows of children in one or two directions/areas of the playground · The child appears frightened of walking to or from school or attending/participating in particular activities
- Sudden dispersal of groups of children when adults approach
- Changes to usual routines
- Untidy clothes
- Beginning to lack confidence or a sudden loss of self esteem
- Increased evidence of heightened tensions e.g. child looks cagey, appears embarrassed, shouts, makes poor eye contact and is wary of staff
- Attempted suicide/self-harm
- The child cries him/herself to sleep and/or has nightmares
- Excuses are made not to go to certain areas or activities – a change in pattern · Stammering starts
- Attendance is poor or drops on particular days. May follow a specific pattern throughout the week/month.
- Money is stolen or is unexpectedly asked for
- Delay in the child leaving the classroom at playtime, offering to do odd jobs etc. · Bullying behaviour starts
- Sudden bouts of unexplained sickness
- A reluctance to talk about what is wrong
- Sudden changes in achievement
- Excuses for any of the above are given
- A sudden change in punctuality e.g. early or late arrival
- Child comes home from school hungry when food/money has been provided for them. · Loitering may occur where the child feels that there are adults and where there is a perception of safety (may become clingy).
- Changes to attitudes with regard to other children which are sudden.

SUPPORTIVE SCRIPT FOR INVESTIGATING AN INCIDENT

When investigating a reported/observed incident and completing the 'Alleged Bullying Incident Form', please use this script to ensure that all children have been treated equally and have not been unfairly blamed or labelled.

Describe what happened.

Exactly where and when did the incident take place?

Were there any other children around at the time? If so, who?

Was there an adult around at the time? If so, who?

Do you know the names of the children involved?

What were you doing before the incident took place?

Can you remember exactly what happened or what was said?

What happened next?

What would you like to happen now?

References to bullying in KCSIE 2022

- All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:.. behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)- page 7
- Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. These policies should include individual schools and colleges having: a behaviour policy, which includes measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) - page 26-27
- Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes:...the different forms child-on-child abuse can take, such as: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) - page 39
- The Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges guidance sets out how schools and colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their pupils and students. - page 45
- "Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:... these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children [and] the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs" - page 48-49
- "LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse." - page 49
- "Schools and colleges should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities. The unique challenges regarding social media are discussed at paragraph 469 along with potential support. In addition, the principles described in Childnet's cyberbullying guidance could be helpful." - page 113
- The guidance makes it clear that children (regardless of if they are the "victim" or "perpetrator") should be protected from bullying: "Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college. It will be important that the school or college

ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online)." - page 121 "It is important that the school or college do everything they reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made." - page 127 "Following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, it is likely that some children will take "sides". The school or college should be doing all they can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed." - Page 132

- "All staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:... bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)" - Page 137
- Additional advice in relation to bullying can be found here: "Preventing bullying including cyberbullying - DfE advice" - page 154 "Childnet provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying" - page 155 "Government advice about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying" - page 157 "Anti-Bullying Alliance - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support." - page 159
- "The designated safeguarding lead …… can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online" - page 165-166

Definitions and Indicators which refer to bullying in KCSIE:

- "Serious bullying" (including cyberbullying) is listed as an indicator for emotional abuse. - page 11
- Child-on-child abuse is described as likely to include "bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)" - page 12 & 39
- Online safety is categorised into four areas of risk. One area is 'conduct'. Conduct includes "online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying" - page 35
- Sexualised online bullying is listed as a form of sexual harassment. - page 106