



Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Cluster Executive Headteacher: Mr David Miller

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Chair of Governors: Mr David Low

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Anti-Bullying Policy

'The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them'.

Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

'Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.'

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Introduction

At Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide an environment that is both safe and secure, in which children may develop and grow positively to achieve their full potential. Therefore, we believe that all of our children are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate fully in school life without experiencing intimidation. Bullying prevents this entitlement from being met and as such cause's inequality of opportunities. It is the responsibility of all members of our school community to prevent this from happening.

By promoting a positive attitude towards all people, we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfils an essential component of our ethos.

We understand the importance of listening and aim not only to actively listen to the children and young people in our care, but also to act accordingly on information imparted to us. In this way, we hope to ensure that a safe, secure and positive environment is maintained.

It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence and Bullying – A Charter for Action*. This policy reflects this guidance.

Bullying involves dominance of one person by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. Our Lady & St. Joseph's interpretation mirrors that of the DfE:

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." (DfE – What is bullying? July 2013)

At Our Lady & St. Joseph's, we discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, with all pupils through assemblies and PSHE lessons. We agree that:

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful, usually physical hurting, name calling, nasty looks or leaving people out.
- Repeated, often over a period of time and is usually on-going.
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.
- Bullying usually happens when the relationship is imbalanced.

Within school we recognise and target all forms of bullying, including;

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings, etc.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down, etc.

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- **Emotional/psychological:** excluding someone from a group, humiliation, creating a feeling of danger, etc.
- **Racist:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name-calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence, etc. This range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, can make the person feel unwelcome marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin, or national status.
- **Sexual:** sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact, etc.
- **Homophobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, homophobic violence, etc.
- **Bi-phobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, biphobic violence, etc.
- **Transphobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived gender identity, name-calling, graffiti, transphobic violence etc.
- **Disabled:** name calling, insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived disability.
- **Electronic:** bullying by text message and on the internet (in chat rooms, smart phone apps, social media, online multiplayer games and through other instant messaging services).
- **Cyber:** Cyberbullying can also be referred to as online bullying, which is via social networking sites, gaming sites, apps or anywhere online. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content. The school's separate Acceptable Use Policy sets out Our Lady & St. Joseph's policy and expectations on the use of technology including mobile electronic devices.
- **Child-on-child:** Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- **Prejudice-based bullying:** bullying that is motivated by actual or perceived differences between children, such as where a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. Discrimination-based bullying: bullying may also be:
 - Sexist, related to a person's sex or gender reassignment.
 - Racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture.
 - Related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic bullying).
 - Related to pregnancy and maternity.
 - Related to a person's home circumstances.
 - Related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning.
 - Difficulty, health or appearance.
 - Related to a person's age.

We endeavour to be proactive with regards new developments in the technology our children use and regularly review the websites and apps which are popular with our children through contact with parents, fellow staff members, other schools in our partnership and local area and the children themselves.

Aims and Objectives

At Our Lady & St. Joseph's, we understand that bullying is an action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally. We understand that bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to create a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

We aim to build an anti-bullying climate in school, therefore increasing understanding for the victims of bullying.

The four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpin our Anti-Bullying Policy from the moment a pupil enters our school, and throughout their time at Our Lady & St. Joseph's. They are:

- Every pupil is a unique pupil, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Pupils learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Pupils learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- Pupils develop and learn in different ways and at different rates including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Signs and Symptoms

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
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Absconds from home or school
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- 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
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in attitude to people at home

There is no formula for detecting bullying, however, this list can help our staff, parents and carers know what to look out for. Especially if they see a number of these behaviours in a child in their care. 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.

A culture of openness and talking

Pupils can either report bullying incidents through:

- Class councillors
- Class 'worry boxes'
- Digitally via the worry box on the website
- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied or if they feel someone else is being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. They are continually reminded that, 'We are a telling school'.

Vulnerable groups

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Looked After Children
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian or bisexual

Equality and Inclusion

As a school we treat all individuals equally and promote inclusion. We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil, on the grounds of their sex, race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins. This is in line with the 2010 equality act and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

Anti-Racism

It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.

We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. So, for example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in school. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, the history curriculum gives due emphasis to ancient African traditions and cultures in the work that the children do on the Ancient Egyptians. In the religious education curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children study the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

Should anyone at our school be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

SEND

Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to the principles of inclusion. We have a caring, supportive ethos that seeks to value all individuals. Our school promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use our school.

By promoting a positive attitude towards disabled people, we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfil an essential component of our ethos.

Our school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where each pupil can develop to the maximum of his/ her potential and feel valued as an individual who can contribute to the life of our school and society in general.

We promote:

- Pupil self-confidence so that each pupil develops a sense of personal worth and is confident in his/her ability to succeed.
- Positive relationships to help pupils develop good relations with others, based on mutual respect and consideration, and an understanding of, and a tolerance towards various races, religions and cultures.
- Co-operation to develop the abilities of pupils to contribute as members of groups and recognising their responsibilities.
- Self-discipline so that pupils understand the need for high standards of behaviour and to develop responsibility towards people and property.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors

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

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. 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.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher strives to promote positive behaviour at all opportunities through good teacher/pupil relationships and the use of verbal praise, stickers, and golden book nominations.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) 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 in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime 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 is also responsible for monitoring the Incident Log via CPOMs & Arbor to check for any patterns in events, pupils, situations, locations that may occur. They will respond to any patterns that may occur by making appropriate adaptations and alterations.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All staff in school pride themselves on building good professional relationships with all children. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour through verbal praise, house points and the use of stickers. Additionally, in our school, we take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place. **This behaviour is not accepted or tolerated.**

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed on the school website.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. This is endorsed through yearly home school agreements.

They should:

- Expect the school to take bullying seriously.
- Support school in its policy against bullying by discussing it with their child.
- Encourage their child to follow the school anti-bullying code.
- Inform school if their child is experiencing bullying.
- Support school in its actions against those who bully.
- Always contact school if they have a concern about bullying.

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Our school and children develop the school aims which are based on support, mutual respect and teamwork.

Responding to Bullying

All incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class are recorded and reported to a member of SLT (Senior Leadership Team). We also record incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying should record it in the behaviour log and report it to a member of SLT.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Headteacher, or member of the SLT. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as social services.

All members of staff undergo training, attend staff briefings and undergo appraisal which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Teachers also address bullying issues as part of their PSHE/ SEAL curriculum and as part of the National Anti-Bullying Week, every November. The PSHE coordinator also has the responsibility for promoting anti bullying strategies in school. Members of staff also teach pupils how to stay safe online, these messages are repeated on a termly basis.

Through their training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- Celebrating achievement;
- Anticipating problems and providing support;
- Disciplining sensibly, fairly and consistently, considering any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil and the needs of vulnerable pupils;
- Providing opportunities to listen to pupils.

Prevention of Bullying

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of their age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, culture or special educational need or disability, home circumstances or because they are new in the school, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. They may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

Our expectation of all members of the school community is that:

- Everyone will uphold the school's policies on behaviour.
- A pupil or a member of staff or volunteer who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it in accordance with the terms of this policy.
- A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously.
- No-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

At Our Lady & St. Joseph's and in every year group:

- Discriminatory and offensive words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable.
- Positive attitudes are fostered towards people with any protected characteristic including those who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the school.
- Positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences through the RSE curriculum.
- Incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics will be distinguished in the school's Arbor / CPOMs records.

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. Our policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

We have a number of school rules, but the primary aim is not a system to enforce rules. It is a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn. This policy supports the school community in aiming to allow everyone to work together in an effective and considerate way.

We expect every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others.

Prevention of bullying is evident in all parts of school in because the children know and understand that we are a Rights Respecting School. The children understand that any allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with by the Headteacher.

As a school we have a positive approach to behaviour management. We reward good behaviour, as we believe that this will develop an ethos of kindness and co-operation. This policy is designed to promote good behaviour, rather than merely deter anti-social behaviour.

Children hold positive relationships with all members of staff and children. Children are encouraged to work together as one family, caring and looking after one another. As we school, we want the children to live the Gospel and only when necessary, use words. We want them to understand that together we are all ***Living, loving and learning together with our eyes focussed on Jesus.***

As a school we have extremely supportive home links and have an open - door policy, welcoming and involving parents at every given opportunity.

The children are reminded about school procedures relating to bullying through class discussions, assemblies and whole school events. Training and Anti Bullying Week are used to remind the children that there is a zero tolerance to any form of bullying. In addition, children are taught how they might respond to and deal with bullying type behaviour. Other examples include:

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E-safety: All children are reminded about how to use all aspects of IT on a daily basis; however key messages are also shared with children on Safer Internet Day every February and during Anti-Bullying Week in November.

Equality: All children are encouraged to celebrate diversity. Every year the children spend a week studying Judaism during November and a week looking at Islam in March. During these weeks the children learn about these world faiths in detail and why they believe what they believe. The children are also taught about the special needs of others within school. This might be when a child joins school or when a special educational need develops.

Staff training: All staff and governors receive Child Protection training annually. This enables them to support any child who may reveal any issues during the investigation of any bullying incidents.

The Headteacher will monitor incident records to spot trends or patterns of behaviour and to act to challenge prejudice.

School rules

Our School Rules are regularly promoted in assemblies and displayed throughout the school. As a Rights Respecting School, we teach children their rights but also the importance of following rules. We regularly reinforce expectations to ensure children respect both staff and their peers.

All children know that there are 3 behaviour principles in school known as the 'pocket principles'. These are to:

- Be ready
- Be respectful
- Be safe

Behaviour Policy

Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.

Advice to Parents

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, or a member of the SLT.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on Arbor and the Headteacher will be notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child, or by speaking to their parents in person or via social media.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

Help Organisations

- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321
- Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345
- KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204
- Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
- Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.
- Visit Viva Anti-bullying services website www.bullyinterventiongroup.co.uk for further support, links and advice

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "Stop Bullying", "Preventing Bullying" and "You Can Beat Bullying", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (marked "Bully Pack") with 6 first class stamps to: Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Why incidents might not be reported?

There are many reasons why a pupil who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. They may become demoralised and may think, for example:

- It is telling tales.
- They won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular.
- The things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult.
- It is all my fault anyway for being overweight / too studious, etc.
- There are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do.
- It will get back to my Parents and they will think less of me.
- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin.
- I will lie low and not draw attention to myself.
- This is a normal part of growing up and going to school.

There are also reasons why a pupil who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. They may think:

- It is "grassing," and I will become unpopular.
- It is not my concern anyway.
- I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him / her.

Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

When we implement this policy, we encourage every pupil (and their Parents) to understand that:

- Every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously.
- Members of staff and volunteers will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received.
- There is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying.
- A pupil who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis.
- **The primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless this is necessary.**
- We may need to support the bully as well so we can address the causes of bullying behaviour.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness. They do this by examining the school's behaviour log, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed by the LGC in September 2026.

