

# Holy Family Catholic High School & 6<sup>th</sup> Form



## Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved	June 2023
Review Date	June 2024
Governor Committee	Policy Review

## **Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

## **RATIONALE**

Our anti-bullying policy forms an integral part of our whole school behaviour policy and our aim is to reassure staff, pupils and parents that bullying is always unacceptable. We are a Catholic community, committed to the vision of the School as a place whose cornerstone is Christ. It follows that our community must be one of love and compassion.

It is therefore the responsibility of all members of the school: pupils, parents, teachers and support staff, to take immediate and appropriate action when relationships within our community fail to reflect these ideals.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a Bullying Behaviour Incident Form of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Progress Leaders are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's heads of year of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's Progress Leader or Form Tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

### **Statutory implications**

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening

behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

## **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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care 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 our first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

## **CYBER-BULLYING**

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience. The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. There is no need for the school to seek parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence

relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police<sup>1</sup>.

If a staff member material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

**NB.** The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

Click [here](#) for the Safeguarding Policy on *Child on Child Abuse*

## **HATE INCIDENTS**

Hate incidents are defined by the school as incidents that include speech and/or action[s] that the school judges to be motivated by prejudice or hate. This can be based on the victim's actual or perceived race, colour, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, age, disability or whether the person is transgender.

A victim of hate crime does not necessarily have to be a member of a minority group, or be classed as vulnerable, and incidents may arise because of association.

Hate incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse; threats insults; nuisance telephone calls, text messages, social media posts or any form of electronic communication; name-calling and intimidation.
- Physical assaults and attacks.
- Attacks against the person's property. For example, offensive graffiti and damage to property.
- Singling out another person and treating them differently because you are not the same as them.

The school takes hate incidents very seriously and, in some circumstances, they could lead to exclusion.

## **THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON THE INDIVIDUAL**

The lives of students who are bullied are made miserable – they may suffer injury, attend school erratically or infrequently, lose self-confidence, and underachieve educationally and socially. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as non-accidental injuries (including self-abuse), low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety. If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students than themselves. Bullying that is not addressed may have lasting effects on the child and his / her peer group and family.

## **SIGNS TO LOOK FOR**

- Marked changes in behaviour e.g. continually losing money or starting to steal
- Feigning illness
- Clinging to adults
- Changes in work patterns and or attainment
- Lack of concentration
- Truancy
- Physical signs
- Emotional changes
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

## **A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

As a school we need to undertake the following:

### **Identify the problem**

- Understand the problem and agree on the necessity of intervention
- Identify pupils at risk
- Identify places and times
- Involve everyone concerned: pupils, parents, all staff and outside agencies

---

<sup>1</sup> Section 62 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 defines prohibited images of children. Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 defines extreme pornographic images.

## **WHOLE SCHOOL**

Bullying is dealt with in many areas across the school:

1. Anti-Bullying sessions within the PHSE programme
2. Anti-Bullying posters in classrooms and on notice boards in corridors
3. Use of the curriculum time to raise awareness
4. Focus on anti-bullying week
5. Raise awareness of how to deal with bullying through the Assembly programme led by heads of year, form tutors and students
6. Involvement of school councils and other student forums in discussion of Anti Bullying
7. Audit of current practice, the school layout and transport arrangements
8. Rewarding good behaviour through the schools reward system (*Class Charts*)
9. Supervision of hotspots
10. Intervention and support delivered by Student Services.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

## **REPORTING**

The atmosphere in school and at home should be such that pupils feel confident and are encouraged to report instances of bullying to a teacher, a parent or another adult of their choosing. They should feel secure in the knowledge that all reported instances will be treated seriously and sensitively and will be dealt with immediately. Pupils should feel assured that reporting instances of bullying of either themselves, or another pupil, will not make matters worse and that ALL bullies will be sanctioned. Not reporting protects the bully and could give the impression that they may continue, perhaps bullying others too.

## **GUIDELINES TO ALL STAFF WHEN DEALING WITH BULLYING**

### **Stage One**

It is vital that we create an atmosphere where any pupil who is being bullied or witnesses bullying can speak freely and be believed. Pupils should be confident that the matter will be handled with sensitivity and discretion. Sometimes a pupil may find it difficult to acknowledge a problem in school and will confide only in a parent. It is equally important that parents who approach the school are dealt with sensitively and discreetly. Pupils also have the opportunity to meet with peer mentors (Anti-Bullying Ambassadors)

All Staff should:

- Listen to pupils
- Assure them that their allegations will be dealt with in confidence initially, but that a referral may need to be made to another member of staff e.g. Progress Leader, Learning Mentor, Behaviour Lead or Inclusion Manager.
- Assure them that appropriate action will be taken
- Encourage them to involve their parents

An appropriate member of staff should make a full investigation

## **Stage Two**

The appropriate member of staff should then take the following action:

- Support the victim
- Obtain reports from victim, bully and any witnesses
- Speak privately to the bully
- Attempt mediation and reconciliation between victim and bully
- Encourage an apology from bully to victim
- Counsel bully and victim to enable them to face their peer group positively
- Speak to the parents of the bully and victim and offer them support
- Break up group dynamics of pupils known to be bullying others
- Establish a monitoring open door period to ensure reconciliation has been successful
- Exclude the bully for a fixed term if appropriate

A record of the incident should be passed to the Progress Leader who will keep a central record of bullying incidents (Bullying Behaviour Incident Form) for his/her year group as it passes through the school. The Senior Leader i/c Behaviour will maintain an audit of bullying incidents.

The victim should be seen at regular intervals to ensure they feel secure and that there are no further incidents. Senior staff will be involved if any further incidents occur.

We are all responsible for making sure that everyone is safe, happy, able to achieve and can make a positive contribution in the school.