

Sacred Heart



Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

2026-27

Mission Statement

At Sacred Heart Primary School, we serve our diverse community with open and honest hearts.

Through our thoughts, words and actions, we share God's love with all. A place where everyone is loved and valued, we strive to always be the best that we can be.

Our Catholic Mission

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child is created in the image and likeness of God and is loved and valued equally.

Our Catholic faith calls us to recognise the dignity and uniqueness of every individual and to treat one another with compassion, respect, forgiveness and justice.

Our school community should therefore be a place where every child and adult feels **safe, valued, respected, included and able to flourish**. We will not tolerate bullying and will work together to prevent it, challenge it and support anyone affected by it.

Policy Statement

At Sacred Heart, bullying is taken seriously.

We are committed to:

- preventing bullying wherever possible;
- creating an environment where children feel safe to report concerns;
- ensuring that allegations of bullying are listened to and investigated fairly;
- responding promptly and proportionately to incidents;
- supporting children who experience bullying;
- helping children who bully to understand the impact of their behaviour and make positive changes;
- educating children about kindness, respect, relationships and responsible behaviour;
- challenging prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes;
- working in partnership with parents and carers;
- ensuring that bullying does not prevent any child from accessing education or participating fully in school life.

Bullying is **deliberate, repeated behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate or undermine another person and involves an imbalance of power.**

Bullying can be:

Physical

- hitting, kicking, pushing or punching;
- damaging or taking belongings;
- physical intimidation;
- deliberately blocking or restricting someone's movement.

Verbal

- name-calling;
- insults;
- threats;
- mocking;
- humiliating comments;
- persistent teasing.

Emotional or Social

- deliberately excluding someone;
- spreading rumours;
- encouraging others not to play with or speak to someone;
- manipulating friendships;
- deliberately embarrassing someone;
- intimidating or controlling behaviour.

Cyberbullying

- abusive or threatening messages;
- inappropriate comments or posts;
- sharing sensitive images or information;
- excluding someone from online groups;
- creating fake accounts;
- using gaming platforms or social media to intimidate or humiliate;
- encouraging others to participate in online bullying.

Cyberbullying may occur outside school but can still affect children's safety, wellbeing and ability to learn in school. The school will respond where appropriate and within its legal and safeguarding responsibilities.

Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying may be related to a person's:

- race or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- disability or additional needs;
- gender/gender identity;
- sexual orientation;
- nationality or culture;
- or any other characteristic or perceived difference.

Bullying and Unkind Behaviour

Not every disagreement, friendship difficulty or incident of unkind behaviour is bullying.

Children are still developing their emotional regulation, social understanding and ability to resolve conflict. Children may sometimes say or do things that hurt others without intending to bully them.

Staff will consider:

- what happened;
- whether the behaviour was deliberate;
- whether it has been repeated;
- the impact on the child;
- the relationship and power balance between the children;
- whether the behaviour is part of a wider pattern;
- the age and developmental stage of the children;
- whether SEND, communication difficulties or other additional needs are relevant.

A single serious incident can nevertheless require a significant response, particularly where there is a safeguarding concern, threat, discrimination or serious harm.

Our Preventative Approach

Preventing bullying is everyone's responsibility.

We promote positive relationships through:

- our Catholic mission and values;
- assemblies and prayer & worship;
- our curriculum (including Relationships and Health Education & PSHE);
- promoting positive friendships;
- celebrating diversity;
- promoting inclusion;
- providing opportunities for children to talk to trusted adults;
- pupil voice and school council activities;
- appropriate supervision at break and lunchtime;
- staff vigilance around less visible areas of school;
- positive behaviour expectations and recognition;
- partnership with parents and carers.

We explicitly teach children that **being a bystander is not neutral**. Children should know how to seek help when they see someone being bullied.

Reporting Bullying

Children can report concerns to:

- their class teacher;
- teaching assistant;
- lunchtime or playground staff;
- a member of the senior leadership team;
- the Headteacher;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- another trusted adult in school.

Children may report bullying:

- verbally;
- in writing;
- through a worry box or other agreed system;
- through a trusted adult;

- on behalf of another child.

We will ensure that children know that **telling an adult is not “telling tales”** when someone is being harmed or is at risk.

All reports of suspected bullying will be taken seriously.

Staff will:

1. Listen calmly to the child.
2. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
3. Establish the immediate facts.
4. Consider whether there is an immediate safeguarding concern.
5. Record the concern appropriately.
6. Speak to relevant children and adults.
7. Take appropriate action.
8. Support the child who has experienced bullying.
9. Address the behaviour of the child or children responsible.
10. Inform parents/carers where appropriate.
11. Monitor the situation afterwards.

Investigations will be conducted sensitively and fairly. Staff will avoid making assumptions before the relevant information has been gathered.

Restorative Approaches

As a Catholic school, we value reconciliation and the restoration of relationships.

Where appropriate, restorative approaches may be used to help children:

- understand the impact of their actions;
- listen to the other person’s perspective;
- take responsibility;
- express their feelings;
- apologise;
- repair harm;
- agree how they will behave in future.

However, restorative work will **not** be used automatically.

A child who has experienced bullying will never be required to meet the child who bullied them if this would make them feel unsafe, distressed or pressured.

An apology does not remove the need for appropriate consequences or safeguarding action.

SEND and Additional Needs

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that affect their communication, social interaction, emotional regulation or understanding of social situations.

Where appropriate, staff will consider whether:

- the child has difficulty understanding the impact of their behaviour;
- communication needs have contributed to an incident;
- reasonable adjustments are required;
- additional support or teaching is needed;
- the child's SEND provision should be reviewed.

SEND will **never be used as an excuse for bullying or harmful behaviour**.

Equally, children with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to bullying and staff will remain alert to this.

Safeguarding

Bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern where a child is at risk of significant harm, serious emotional or physical harm, exploitation, abuse or other forms of vulnerability.

Staff must follow the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** where safeguarding concerns arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be consulted where appropriate.

Serious incidents may require referral to external agencies, including the police or children's social care.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- talk regularly with their child about friendships and wellbeing;
- contact school if they are concerned about bullying;
- provide relevant information to help the school investigate;
- encourage their child not to retaliate;
- support the school's approach to resolving concerns;
- reinforce positive behaviour and respectful relationships at home;
- monitor online activity appropriately.

When a concern is raised, school will communicate with parents/carers sensitively and appropriately. Parents/carers should not approach or confront another child or their family directly about an alleged bullying incident.

Consequences

Bullying is unacceptable and will result in an appropriate response.

Consequences will be:

- proportionate;
- consistent;
- age-appropriate;
- informed by the circumstances;
- consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Serious or persistent bullying may result in significant sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

Where appropriate, consequences will be accompanied by education, pastoral support and opportunities to make positive changes.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that this policy is implemented;
- ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities;
- overseeing serious or persistent bullying concerns;
- ensuring appropriate records are maintained;
- monitoring patterns and trends;
- reporting to governors/trustees as appropriate.

All staff are responsible for:

- modelling respectful behaviour;
- challenging bullying and discriminatory behaviour;
- listening to children's concerns;
- reporting concerns appropriately;
- maintaining appropriate records;
- contributing to a safe and inclusive environment.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding concerns arising from bullying are dealt with in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Governors / Trustees

Governors/trustees are responsible for:

- ensuring that the school has an appropriate anti-bullying strategy;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the school's approach;
- challenging leaders where appropriate;
- ensuring that the school's Catholic mission and values underpin its approach

Parents and carers are expected to:

- work positively with school;
- raise concerns appropriately;
- support their child's understanding of respectful behaviour;
- reinforce safe and responsible use of technology.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- significant incidents indicate that changes are required;
- school monitoring identifies a need for improvement;
- the school's behaviour or safeguarding procedures change.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated through:

- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- parent/carers feedback;
- behaviour records;
- safeguarding information;
- analysis of patterns and trends;
- governor/trustee monitoring.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy

- Attendance Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct