



Sacred Heart School

Anti-Bullying Policy

At Sacred Heart School we all aspire to provide a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in EYFS.

Written by:	Head Teacher
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
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Leading by example we teach children to respect themselves and each other as unique and equally valuable members of God's universal family.' (Mission Statement)

Introduction

This policy is based on the DfE guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2024), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), and other statutory and supporting documentation, including Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Childnet's Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond.

Policy Objectives

Sacred Heart School is committed to preventing and tackling all forms of bullying and to promoting a culture of respect, inclusion, and wellbeing for all.

This policy outlines the school's procedures for preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying behaviour and sets clear expectations for staff, pupils, parents, and visitors.

Links with Other School Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies
- Staff Code of Conduct
- PSHE and RSE Policies
- Complaints Procedure

Links to Legislation

This policy takes account of the following legislation:

- Education and Inspections Acts 2006 and 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Public Order Act 1986
- It also aligns with DfE guidance Behaviour in Schools (2024).

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate and implement this policy and ensure consistent practice.
- The Governing Body to monitor and review its effectiveness.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to oversee recording, monitoring and support for pupils affected by bullying.
- All staff to uphold this policy, respond promptly to concerns, and record incidents appropriately.
- Parents and carers to work in partnership with the school to support respectful and positive relationships.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual physically or emotionally” (DfE).

It may involve physical, verbal, emotional or discriminatory abuse and can occur face-to-face or online. Abuse is abuse and should never be passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up.”

All concerns will be taken seriously, recorded and addressed in line with safeguarding procedures.

Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers, but is not limited to, the following forms:

- Physical and emotional bullying
- Sexual or gender-based bullying
- Online or cyberbullying
- Appearance-related bullying
- SEND-related bullying
- Prejudiced or discriminatory bullying (e.g., race, religion, culture, sexuality)
- Bullying related to home circumstances or caring responsibilities
- Bullying involving digital manipulation or AI-generated content

School Ethos

The Sacred Heart community recognises that bullying, if left unaddressed, can have a serious impact on wellbeing, learning and emotional development.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we create a safe, inclusive and disciplined environment where all pupils can learn, grow and flourish.

We promote kindness, empathy, digital responsibility and respect in all interactions.

Responding to Bullying Concerns

When bullying is suspected or reported:

- The member of staff informed will take immediate action.
- The DSL will be notified and record the concern securely.
- The Headteacher or DSL will meet with all parties involved to establish facts and agree next steps.
- Parents/carers will be informed, as appropriate.

- Support and sanctions will be applied in line with school policies.
- Where necessary, external agencies such as the police, Early Help or CYPMHS may be involved.
- Bullying incidents that occur outside school hours, including online, will be investigated and responded to in accordance with this policy.

Cyberbullying

In responding to cyberbullying, the school will:

- Act swiftly to support the victim and address the behaviour.
- Encourage pupils to retain evidence of the bullying (e.g., screenshots).
- Work to identify and remove harmful content.
- Seek support from online service providers or the police where necessary.
- Educate pupils on responsible and respectful digital communication.
- All actions will comply with the DfE guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2023).

Online and AI-Related Bullying

Sacred Heart School recognises the growing risks associated with new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), deepfakes and synthetic media.

This includes:

- Creation or sharing of altered images, voices or messages to imitate or harm others.
- Use of AI tools to generate offensive or deceptive material.
- Online harassment using AI-driven platforms or chat functions.
- The school will:
- Educate pupils about digital ethics and responsible AI use.
- Treat all AI-related bullying as cyberbullying under this policy.
- Prohibit the creation or distribution of AI-generated material that causes harm or distress.
- Act in line with data protection and safeguarding legislation to remove content and support those affected.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Immediate reassurance and pastoral care.
- Safe opportunities to share experiences with trusted staff.
- Individual support plans where necessary.
- Engagement with parents and relevant external agencies.
- Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be supported to understand the impact of their actions and to change their behaviour through education, reflection and restorative practice.

Supporting Adults

Bullying of adults, including staff and parents, is not tolerated.

Adults who experience bullying will be supported by:

- The opportunity to discuss concerns confidentially with the DSL, a member of SLT or the Headteacher.
- Clear reporting and recording processes.
- Referral to external support if appropriate.
- Incidents of adult bullying will be addressed in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure and relevant HR policies.

Preventing Bullying

The school community will:

- Promote inclusion, respect and positive relationships.
- Provide clear and accessible routes for reporting concerns.
- Challenge language or behaviour that undermines our values.
- Educate pupils about diversity, equality and digital wellbeing.
- Maintain visibility of anti-bullying messages throughout the year, including during Anti-Bullying Week and the school's Anti-Bullying Pledge.
- Offer ongoing training for staff on recognising and responding to all forms of bullying.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

Bullying will be reported regularly to the Governing Body.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance.

Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline – www.childline.org.uk
- Childnet – www.childnet.com
- NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre – www.saferinternet.org.uk
- YoungMinds – www.youngminds.org.uk
- Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content – <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>

Anti-Bullying Pledge

Bullying is the ongoing act of deliberately hurting another person with words or actions.
Please discuss the following with your teacher and parents before signing the pledge.

I pledge to:

Treat others with kindness and respect

Never deliberately hurt another person

Always think about how words and actions affect others

Show kindness to others, thinking about how they may feel

Refuse to be a bystander when others are bullied

Report bullying to a trusted adult

Speak up when I am being bullied

We must all unite to end bullying. By signing this pledge,
I agree to the above points and promise to be a safe and respectful student.

Name: Date: Signature:



Sacred Heart School
Wadhurst