



St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date: July 2023
Last reviewed on:	July 2023	
Next review due by:	July 2026	

1. Introduction

School ethos

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, respectful and safe learning environment for all of our pupils. Within the Catholic community of St Alban & St Stephen School, we aim to foster the spiritual and moral development of the children through the teachings of Jesus Christ, helping children to understand the true meaning of kindness and what it means to be loving and caring.

Bullying and prejudice-based language of any kind, involving pupils, adults towards pupils, staff or parents are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

We understand the devastating and lasting effect being bullied can have on some children and we will deal with all incidents equally seriously, quickly and effectively, whether it has taken place in or outside of school.

Preventing and tackling bullying is part of our work to support students' social and emotional development and to be recognised as a healthy school.

2. School responsibilities

We are aware of our statutory responsibilities in regards to preventing and tackling bullying as set out in:

- i. *Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:*
 - Every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and **prevent all forms of bullying** amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents;
 - Headteachers can discipline pupils for poor behaviour that occurs even when the pupil is not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.
- ii. *Equality act 2010*
 - We are committed to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation through addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying. This is part of the Public Sector Equality Duty which is required under the Equality Act 2010 and covers these protected characteristics; disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.
 - We take our responsibility for meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) seriously and take active steps to
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation
 - 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.
- iii. *Safeguarding children and young people-Children Act 1989*
 - A bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff will report their concerns to Hertfordshire Local Authority

- Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we will draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, and to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

iv. *Criminal law*

- Bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence. However some types of harassing, threatening behaviour or communications, could be a criminal offence, for example under the malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- If staff feel that an offence may have been committed they will seek assistance from the police.

v. *Bullying outside school premises*

- Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour when they are outside of the school premises and not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff
- This could relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport or outside local shops
- Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.
- The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or local authority
- If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

3. Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out the schools approach to preventing and dealing with bullying that occurs between pupils of this school which takes place:

- On the school premises;
- Outside the school
- On the journey between school and home;
- Online or by text at school or outside of school hours.

The policy aims to ensure that

- Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents and carers have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents and carers know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying occurs
- Pupils and parents and carers are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Effective, consistent action is taken both to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

4. Developing the policy

When developing this policy we took account of:

- DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2013
- Ofsted inspection framework 2014
- Ofsted’s briefings on inspections in relation to preventing homophobic bullying and equalities

Links to other policies

This policy links to our R.E, behaviour, equalities, safeguarding and PSHE policies and is part of our approach and commitment to promoting positive behaviour, dealing with inappropriate behaviour and improving the health and wellbeing of children. It also links to our Hertfordshire Steps Therapeutic Thinking approach to behaviour management.

5. What is bullying? Definitions

We have used the Department for Education’s definition in their guidance; Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2013.

Bullying is “Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

This means that to be described as bullying, behaviour has to be

- Deliberately hurtful
- Is repeated often over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can be:

- direct physical bullying (pushing, hitting, punching, kicking).
- direct verbal bullying (yelling abuse at another, name-calling, insulting someone, using verbal threats, offensive mimicry of accent and/or pretending not to understand what is said, using discriminatory language).
- indirect bullying, also known as social bullying or relational bullying (spreading rumours, social exclusion, disclosing another’s secrets to a third party, graffiti).
- cyberbullying –bullying using electronic media, such as email and texts, chat rooms, blogs and social networking sites, sharing derogatory videos and photos via mobile phones

People can be bullied because they are different or are perceived to be different and it is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or because of characteristics or features about which the person under attack can do nothing.

Bullying can relate to

- race, religion or culture
- special educational needs and disabilities
- young carers
- looked after children
- background
- gender
- appearance and size
- ability and attainment
- Sexist or sexual bullying (bullying based on a person’s sexuality)
- Homophobic bullying (a dislike or fear of someone who is or is perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual)

- Transphobic bullying (a dislike or fear of someone who is or is perceived to have changed their gender from male to female or female to male or someone who is difficult to categorise as female or male)

The difference between bullying and other hurtful behaviour

Our definition of bullying does not include conflict and/or friendship problems between children and young people of a similar age and size which does not involve an imbalance of power or intimidation. These problems will still be taken seriously and dealt with immediately to prevent them developing into bullying behaviour.

Bullying can also happen between adults and children and between adults.

We believe that all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based behaviour and bullying are unacceptable and should be dealt with seriously.

6. Preventing bullying

Our approach to preventing bullying involves direct teaching about bullying and its consequences, celebrating difference and diversity and promoting positive behaviour.

We do this through

1. *Whole school ethos and environment*
2. *Whole school activities*
3. *Curriculum*
4. *Training and support for staff*
5. *Involving pupils*
6. *Involving parents and carers*

1. Whole school ethos and environment

We aim to create a positive, safe and inclusive environment that reduces the opportunities for bullying to take place, promotes positive relationships and where students can discuss bullying openly. Through the children's journey in faith and ever developing spirituality, they are encouraged to develop self-respect and respect for others.

- We expect students to have respect for each other and accept responsibility for their behaviour
- Staff model good behaviour and communication skills both with students and other adults in the school.
- We teach students the kind of behaviour we expect and reward good behaviour
- Staff challenge students when they use prejudice-based language, explaining why it is wrong and how hurtful it can be.
- We encourage students to tell an adult if they are worried or upset about anything
- We recognise and celebrate difference and diversity
- We have activities during break and lunchtimes that promote cooperative activities
- Our break and lunchtimes are well supervised and staff and outside agencies organise structured activities and encouraging all students to participate
- We talk to students about how safe they feel in the playground
- We take particular care of vulnerable students, who may be more likely to be victims of bullying and make sure that they feel safe and included in school and help them to develop skills to manage emotions and relationships and handle friendship situations.
- We have an "acceptable use of computers and technology" policy

2. Whole school activities

- We provide indoor lunchtime opportunities for student
- We carry out surveys with students and parents/carers about how safe students feel in school.
- We use restorative approaches for dealing with conflict between students and between staff and students.
- In addition to Anti-Bullying Week in November, Internet safety Day in February and Mental Health and Wellbeing Week in February, we organise specific assemblies on bullying and its consequences throughout the year and what children should do if they see or experience it.

3. Curriculum

Teaching about bullying and its consequences is taught through PSHE.

Students learn

- what bullying is, how it feels, why people bully, what to do about it and how to prevent it
- about the differences between people and about the importance of being inclusive and celebrating difference and diversity and that we are all equal in the eyes of God
- about the impact of prejudice and discrimination
- skills to manage feelings, develop empathy, resolve conflict fairly, to cope with friendship problems and make and maintain positive relationships
- how to keep safe and behave responsibly when using the internet and mobile phones

We use a range of activities and outside agencies that enable a greater understanding of difference and diversity through their use of language, cultural attitudes and images, avoiding stereotypes, racism and sexism and celebrate difference such as including children with disabilities.

7. Training and support for staff

We have annual safeguarding training which includes an update of this policy and to ensure that staff know how to identify bullying and what to do if it occurs. We have regular staff INSET on tackling bullying and on preventing and dealing with bullying.

8. Involving pupils

We conduct surveys of students to find out how safe they feel in school and whether they feel confident speaking to staff about issues such as bullying.

9. Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers have a very important role in supporting the school's anti-bullying policy and in actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. We have regular contact with parents and carers so any bullying issues are discussed and addressed as soon as they are known. We also conduct surveys regarding how safe they feel their child is in school,

10. Dealing with bullying

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying and prejudice-based language seriously and will deal with it promptly and seek to prevent it from taking place. There is guidance in the staff handbook on how bullying and prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously, no matter what type of bullying it is.

We will investigate and act upon any bullying incident that is reported to school staff, including taking place outside of school eg on school or public transport or outside local shops. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the incident.

If bullying occurs we will

Use Reflect, Repair and Restore strategies (Behaviour Policy) and

- Talk to the students involved separately to find out what has been happening and why and to any witnesses.
- Explain to the student who is bullying why their behaviour is wrong and try to help them to see this for themselves. Be clear that bullying is not tolerated at school
- Expect the student who is bullying to engage in a restorative process to enable them to take responsibility for their actions and to agree to stop their behaviour. A restorative meeting may take place, depending on the circumstances
- Tell the parents/carers involved and keep them informed of how the incident is being dealt with and whether the bullying has stopped
- Use formal sanctions, such as keeping children in at lunchtimes, missing a special event or fixed term exclusion.
- Continue to monitor the situation and intervene if the bullying appears to be carrying on or to have started again.

We will also:

- Record all incidents of bullying and prejudice-based language, including race, disability, religion, ethnicity, gender, SEN, homophobic/transphobic, and appearance and describe how they have been dealt with
- Spend time talking to the student who has been or is being bullied to see if they could benefit from further support such as counselling or from other interventions with our multi-agency team to help them develop their personal and social skills
- Spend time talking to the student who has done or is doing the bullying and try to find out if there are underlying reasons for their behaviour and if they could benefit from support or interventions to help them manage their behaviour and/or develop their personal and social skills
- Address with other young people who may have been bystanders, observing or supporting the bullying behaviour, how they could intervene to stop bullying behaviour in future.
- Provide regular training for staff to help identify bullying and work to prevent it happening and to intervene effectively to stop it.

Recording and Reporting

Staff who identify or who are told about bullying or prejudice-based language make a written record of this. All incidents whether one off or defined as bullying are logged.

Information is recorded about

- Whether it is defined as a one off incident or bullying
- The type of incident or bullying eg racist, sexist
- The kind of behaviour eg verbal, physical, cyber

- A description of what happened and who was involved
- How the incident or bullying was dealt with and resolved
- How parents were involved
- Students involved in the incident or who have been bullied, and their parents will be asked for feedback on how well they felt the school dealt with it

All staff must work together to promote the therapeutic approach to behaviour that we aspire to in our school. Consistency is the key to success. Everyone must work collaboratively to ensure that our school is a happy and safe place to be for our children and our staff.

Records of one-off incidents and bullying are reviewed to ensure they have been resolved effectively.

We encourage staff, students, parents and governors to report bullying or prejudice-based language and we have a range of ways this can be done including:

- Talking to any member of staff

11. Evaluation

Following any bullying we use the feedback from parents and students to evaluate our approach and make changes as needed. We analyse data on bullying and prejudice-based language to help plan future actions to reduce bullying and eliminate discrimination.

12. Support for pupils and parents

Advice to young people

- If you are a victim of bullying (whether in or outside of school), it is very important to tell somebody you trust. You can tell a member of staff or anyone you want to talk to
- The school will always take you seriously and take action to stop the bullying and support you to feel safe again
- If you cannot tell anyone at school, you can tell your parents who will tell us
- You can also email, text and have an online chat with a counsellor at Childline. Their website is: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

- Friends of victims should tell staff or a parent
- Nobody deserves to be bullied– remember, you have a right for this not to happen to you and it is not weak to tell someone

Advice to bystanders

Do not ignore or support bullying behaviour if you see it happening to someone else. If you do see someone being bullied please:

- Do not join in even if you feel pressured to do so
- Tell a member of staff what you have seen
- Tell your parents or carers or someone else you trust
- If you feel safe to do so, tell the bully/bullies they should stop
- You could tell the person who has been bullied that you don't agree with what's happened. When people are bullied they can feel very alone and can blame themselves, so it's good to have support
- If you are not sure what you should do, you could call Childline which is a confidential advice service for children. The number is: 0800 1111
- You can also email, text and have an online chat with a counsellor at Childline. Their website is: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

If you are bullying someone

- Stop!
- Talk to someone about what you're doing and ask for help to understand and change your behaviour – and to find out how you can apologise and make amends to the person you've been bullying.
- If you are not sure what to do, you could call Childline which is a confidential advice service for children. The number is: 0800 1111. You can also email, text and have an online chat with a counsellor at Childline. Their website is: <http://www.childline.org.uk> They won't judge you and they understand that there are often many reasons why children and young people bully others, sometimes because they themselves have been bullied.

13. Guidance for parents and carers

What to do if your child is being bullied

Your child may not tell you that he or she is being bullied. However, you may notice some changes in his or her behaviour, including:

- being unwilling to talk about their day
- looking less happy
- coming home with cuts and bruises
- coming home with toys and things you have not bought for them
- taking things from home without you knowing
- avoiding certain children or activities
- be ingreluctant to go to school
- feeling unwell, often with a headache
- anxiety
- aggression towards you or others in your family
- bedwetting
- waking in the night

These things can happen for other reasons but they can be a sign of bullying so it's important to find a quiet time to talk to your child about your concerns. It might also help to talk to others who know and care for your child including their teachers.

If your child is being bullied,

- Take time to listen to your child and stay calm
- Calmly talk with your child
- Explain to them that bullying is unacceptable and that no one should have to put up with it. Promise to do all you can to stop it.
- Write down what your child has said. If it involves cyberbullying, keep any evidence of emails and texts
- Encourage your child to talk to their teacher or someone at the school
- Never intervene with other children or children's parents, but let the school know.
- Contact the school soon as possible to let us know your concerns. The school will take any incident of bullying extremely seriously and will deal with it quickly to find out why it has happened and to prevent it happening again
- Staff may not know about the bullying and will need to know what has happened and will discuss with parents and carers action to be taken
- Staff will update parents and carers about what they are doing to resolve the issue and when it has been resolved
- If you are not satisfied with the response you get and any action taken, you should contact the Head teacher with your concerns.
- If you remain dissatisfied, you should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school prospectus. There is information on the Herts for Learning website giving advice about how to complain about a school service.
Email: cs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- Call or go on the website of one of the organisations dedicated to supporting parents and carers. They will give you independent advice and support. For example, Parentline Plus on 0800 800 2222 or the Parents Anti-Bullying Helpline on 08451 205 204.

What to do if your child is bullying someone else

It can be a shock to parents and carers that their child could be bullying another child in the school. There are many reasons why some children and young people bully others. Sometimes it's because they are copying someone at school or elsewhere, or being encouraged to bully or that they have been a victim of bullying themselves. It may be hard to spot although one sign could be that they come home with possessions, money or other things that you have not given them.

Children who bully others may also suffer from long lasting consequences and may continue with bullying behaviour into their adult lives. It is important that young people receive help and the issues are dealt with straight away. You should:

- Talk with your child and explain why bullying is wrong
- Make an appointment to speak to someone at school to talk about how the bullying can be dealt with
- Call or go on the website of one of the organisations dedicated to supporting parents and carers. They will give you independent advice and support. For example, Parentline Plus on 0800 800 2222 or the Parents Anti-Bullying Helpline on 08451 205 2

14. Roles and responsibilities

The *Headteacher* will:

- Ensure that the policy is implemented and reviewed regularly
- Provide a termly report of incidents of bullying to the governing body

- Monitor bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and take action if there is a cause for concern
- Provide a report on the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Ensure the policy is regularly publicised to the whole school community and the message that bullying is not accepted is reinforced through whole school activities and information
- Ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with bullying

The *Governing Body* will support the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will:

- Require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and report on them to the governing body on a termly basis.
- Require the Headteacher to report annually to the governors about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- Notify the Headteacher of any request from a parent or carer to investigate incidents of bullying and ask the head teacher to conduct an investigation and report back to the governing body. The governing body will respond within ten days to the parent or carer and keep them regularly updated with regards to the investigation and, where possible, meet with the parent or carer to ensure they are satisfied with the outcome.

15. Sharing the policy

A full copy of this policy is freely available to parents and carers on request