



# Anti-bullying Policy

St Joseph's is a **happy, welcoming community**, enriched by our **diversity**, where we strive to be **better than our best**.

A place where we **love** one another, love **learning**, love **Jesus** and love **life**.

Date of Policy	Autumn Term 2023
Next Review	Autumn Term 2024

## Introduction

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Catholic belief is that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and as such, should all be treated justly.

*“The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her creation in the image and likeness of God.”*

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*

At St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, we strive to ensure that this belief is put into practice so that all are welcome. We work to ensure that each person, in all their uniqueness, is able to thrive in our Catholic school, irrespective of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic background, physical appearance, disability or the actual or perceived sexual orientation of themselves or of their parents/carers.

*“Because all people are equal in God’s sight, every person possesses the same dignity and has a claim to the same human rights. Hence every kind of social, racist, sexist, cultural or religious discrimination against a person is an unacceptable injustice.”*

*YOUCAT 330*

At St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, we endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where everyone knows that they are valued as God’s children. Every person has the right to be treated with respect and each person has the responsibility to treat others in the same way. Our mission statement is lived out so that children are enabled to have the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive and fair action will be taken.

***“We seek to create an atmosphere, supported through prayer and worship, whereby everyone who has an interest in our community can feel valued and believe their happiness is the pursuit of all, as we grow closer to Jesus Christ.”***

## Aims and objectives

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- To provide a secure, safe and positive Christian environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour, where children and adults can grow and develop.
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To produce a consistent whole school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- To work with all members of the school community (staff, children, parents/carers and governors) to foster productive partnerships which help maintain a bullying-free environment.
- To celebrate diversity and the uniqueness of individuals.

## What is bullying?

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Bullying can take many forms and can be experienced in many different ways.

DCSF 'Safe to Learn' 2007 defines bullying as

*'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'*

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as

*'The intentional repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power'*

DFE 'Bullying at school' November 2014 states that there is no legal definition of bullying. However, it states that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- *repeated*
- *intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally*
- *often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation*

*It takes many forms and can include:*

- *physical assault*
- *teasing*
- *making threats*
- *name calling*
- *cyberbullying – bullying via mobile phone or online (e.g. email, social networks and instant messenger)*

The DFE 2014 guidance states that schools should have their own definition of bullying. Bullying is defined by our school community as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or a group that is intended to cause harm or fear.

## **Types of Bullying**

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Bullying can be categorised into seven main types:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities
- Bullying related to gifts and talents
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying related to gender

## **Bullying related to race, religion or culture**

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Racist, faith-based or cultural bullying is bullying based on a person's background, colour, religion or heritage. This form of bullying has a negative impact on a child's sense of identity, self-worth and self-esteem. It also can be negative about the child's family, and about their ethnic or faith community as a whole.

## **Bullying related to home circumstances**

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The home circumstances of children can make them vulnerable to bullying. This may include obvious signs of affluence or lack of it, being a looked after child, being a young carer or having a family member with a disability or special need.

## **Bullying related to appearance or health conditions**

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Children with health or visible medical conditions, or perceived physical characteristics, such as size and weight may be vulnerable to bullying.

## **Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities**

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Children with SEN and disabilities are vulnerable to bullying. Their differences can be used by bullies to isolate them from friendship groups.

## **Bullying related to gifts and talents**

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Children and young people who are gifted and talented can be vulnerable to bullying. Their achievements and abilities can set them apart from their peers. This may lead to resentment and jealousy among their peers which may make them targets for bullying behaviour.

## **Bullying related to sexual orientation**

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Homophobic bullying involves the targeting of individuals on the basis of their perceived or actual sexual orientation. Homophobic bullying includes all forms of bullying but in particular it can include homophobic language. This is terms of verbal abuse used towards lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people or those who are perceived LGBT. It can be used as an insult or to refer to something or someone as inferior e.g. derogatory use of the word 'gay'.

## **Bullying related to gender**

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Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying affects both genders. Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes that, when expressed, demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Both sexes may be victims and each may be a victim of their own sex. Children who feel that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the stereotypically defined roles often ascribed to particular genders, can also become a target of bullying.

## Forms of Bullying

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Different forms of bullying can be seen within the seven identified types of bullying. Forms of bullying include:

### **Physical**

This can include physical harm such as punching or pushing, being made to give money or belongings, or forcing a child to act against their will.

### **Verbal**

Verbal bullying can include being teased in a nasty way, being called 'gay' in a derogatory way, being insulted about race, religion or culture, being called names or being the subject of offensive comments.

### **Indirect**

This can include being deliberately excluded from groups or ignored, or being the subject of tales or rumours.

### **Electronic / 'cyberbullying'**

This form of bullying includes verbal or indirect bullying via text message, email, instant messenger services or social network sites or images spread via the internet or mobile phones.

## Our Approach to Bullying

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Our approach to bullying is informed by the Catholic faith. We have a range of strategies and initiatives in place to support our mission statement.

*"Every human being is created in God's image and likeness and therefore is valuable and worthy of respect." Christ at the Centre*

- Our Anti – Bullying Policy is available to read on our website and a hard copy on request.
- Anti – Bullying information around school and on school reception notice board.
- Opportunity to use weekly newsletter, twitter and Facebook to inform parents.
- Questionnaires to pupils, staff, parents and governors.
- British values covered in Assembly each week.
- Staff meeting agenda to cover anti bullying
- Anti – bullying leaflets / posters / information displayed around school
- Anti – bullying posters created by children around school
- Anti – bullying display kept up to date
- Pupils voice through school council and Anti – Bullying team
- Celebrating diversity through My World Day

## Key Principles

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- The school leadership will work with all in our community to prevent all forms of bullying, including prejudice based bullying, and to fully address incidents of bullying as they arise.
- All bullying in its variety of forms and types will be taken equally seriously and addressed appropriately.

- We will address bullying within the framework of Catholic beliefs and Church teaching and in a way which is age-appropriate.

## Our Team

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Mrs Moore – Anti – Bullying coordinator  
Mrs Toward – Head of School / Governor  
Pupils - Anti bullying team

## Responding to bullying

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When responding to incidents of bullying we aim:

- to make the child who has been bullied feel safe
- to encourage better behaviour from the child who has displayed bullying behaviours

## Strategies for preventing bullying

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- All incidents considered to be bullying (as defined above) are recorded and monitored. The process for recording incidents is used to inform preventative strategies. Pupils will understand the school's procedures for responding to bullying and know that they are safe.
- At all times, children's concerns are our concerns. Pupils are encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. However, we recognise that children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help, so pupils can report their concerns anonymously by using a worry box. In these are situated on both the lower and upper corridors in school. The school's Behaviour Policy details the behaviour standards set within the school.
- It is important for children to know that procedures are being followed. In order to encourage pupils to continue to express their concerns, where appropriate, information is shared across the school about bullying incidents having been dealt with and resolved.
- Liturgies and assemblies are from time to time used to reinforce positive anti-bullying messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of a Christian message. Activities across the curriculum (largely in Personal, Social and Health Education, Religious Education and English) develop pupils' understanding of bullying and this includes key Christian messages, such as respect and forgiveness. Children are taught that each person is special and unique and that differences are to be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour. In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils are coached and guided in developing coping strategies and in how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to show good witness behaviour by reporting their concerns for others.

- Guidance is given to pupils who display behaviour that raises concern.
- Post incident support will be provided to all pupils involved in incidents, with a referral to the school counsellor if appropriate
- Friendship fixers are used to help children with playground issues.
- Buddies are used if children cannot find one of their own friends to play with.

## Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying and unkind behaviour (including staff responsibilities)

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All incidents of bullying must be reported and all such reports will be taken seriously. The perspective of the person who feels bullied will contribute to understanding and establishing the seriousness of the incident. When bullying has occurred special actions will follow.

The school recognises the importance of speed and wherever possible incidents will be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation and this can cause delay to the resolution. The school will need to take the time necessary to respond to and resolve incidents appropriately, while ensuring the safety of the child who feels bullied.

The role of all staff in responding to hurtful behaviour is made clear to them as part of their induction, including midday supervisors to give continuity of care. Incidents of bullying (see definition above) observed or reported at play and lunch times will be referred.

Single incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to and will be dealt with by the class teacher. (The Headteacher will be kept informed of any incidents dealt with by the class teacher so that she holds the overview across the school). Follow up and on-going monitoring will be conducted by the class teacher whilst keeping the Headteacher informed at all times, even if it is felt that the matter has been resolved. If the behaviour dealt with by class teachers continues it will be referred to the Headteacher or Deputy Head

All repeated bullying behaviour should be recorded, (See Appendix 2), and reported directly to the Headteacher or Deputy Head. All parents whose children are directly involved will be notified of significant incidents. In more extreme cases, for example when these discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies such as social care.

Responses to bullying behaviour will be educative and seek to ensure that the behaviour will not be repeated. A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others, the reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age appropriate ways. Those who have been bullied **have a right to know that action has been taken.**

## Homophobic bullying and using homophobic language

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Homophobic language can be used as an insult or to refer to something or someone as inferior such as the derogatory use of the word 'gay'. The derogatory use of homophobic language in our school will always be challenged even if it appears to be being used without any homophobic intent.

## **Children with SEN or disabilities**

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Our school is committed to actively promoting the equality of opportunity for all children with SEN or disabilities. Where children with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) school will expect the same standards of behaviour as those which apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

## **Staff training**

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Training of all staff including all teaching and support staff takes place annually and attendance is logged. All adults working in the school know the anti-bullying policy and the procedures and proformas used for reporting of incidents. Training on anti-bullying is part of the induction of new staff.

All staff receive training about being sensitive to the changes of behaviour that may indicate that a child is being bullied. Those being bullied may demonstrate physical, emotional and behavioural problems or changes.

Staff are expected to take preventative measures. This includes being aware of where and when bullying might take place. This awareness is informed by discussions with children and from questionnaires completed by children. The staff training includes equality training to raise awareness among staff of potential prejudicial behaviour and how not to reinforce stereotypes.

## **Curriculum**

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As a Catholic school Religious Education is the core subject of our curriculum. There are opportunities within RE to make links with Rights Respecting Schools, Fairtrade and Mini Vinnies, for example, to reinforce the principles of human rights, Catholic social teaching and the uniqueness of the individual, made in God's image and likeness. Our curriculum as a whole is planned and delivered to enable children to develop empathy, to understand the effect bullying has on people and to take responsibility for trying to prevent bullying. Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, role-play, class performances, celebration assemblies, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of diversity and an assortment of strategies to protect themselves from bullying. This is explicitly planned within the PSHE programmes delivered in school and through the annual



celebration of Anti-bullying week. Staff are also expected and encouraged to take advantage of unplanned opportunities to celebrate diversity and to reinforce the principles of anti-bullying.

## **Pastoral structure**

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Children are elected to the School Parliament each year. The elected school council regularly meets with the Headteacher/Member of Teaching Staff and discusses topics such as playground rules/behaviour/buddy systems etc. The Anti-Bullying Team meets regularly with Mrs Moore to ensure that the children produce their own Anti-bullying Policy and work towards achieving an Anti-Bullying Charter Mark.

Class teachers provide a structure of support for all children and help to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity.

## **Collective Worship**

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In collective worship, themes and values play a part in challenging prejudice and promoting justice for all. The timetable of collective worship includes specific opportunities throughout the year (e.g. Statements to Live By, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Anti-bullying week) which support work in anti-bullying. The children are encouraged to live the gospel values by following Christ's example.

## **Reporting and recording of incidents of bullying**

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Our school has a clear and well publicised system for reporting bullying. Staff have annual training and children and parents/carers are explicitly reminded of the school's procedures each year during anti-bullying week.

***Role of Staff guidelines and reporting arrangements are outlined in Appendices 1 and 2. It is imperative that these are adhered to.***

## **The Role/Involvement of Pupils**

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Pupils will progressively develop their understanding of bullying and related behaviour issues through the curriculum. All pupils will be expected to develop appropriate witness behaviour and to show concern for others across the school community. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their resilience and problem solving strategies in the face of hurtful behaviour.

Some concerns and worries related to incidents and bullying in general may be explored and shared publicly, but pupils will have access to anonymous reporting opportunities through the use of a worry box (Talk it out Box). The seriousness of making false reports will be understood.

Pupils will be actively involved in anti-bullying developments through the school council, curriculum work and special initiatives e.g. peer mentoring and playground buddy schemes and the formation of

the children's own Anti Bullying Policy. From time to time pupils may be involved in group support for vulnerable individuals (those who have been bullied and those who have bullied).

## **The Role/Involvement of Parents**

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Parents have an important role in actively encouraging their children to be a positive member of the school. Dealing with behaviour problems effectively requires the school and parents to work in partnership

If parents have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour, (whether their child might be being bullied or those who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying), they should take up those concerns with the class teacher as soon as possible.

Parents should raise any concerns about bullying or other hurtful behaviour directly with the school and not with the parents of other parties, involved or otherwise. While we recognise that parents who are friends may wish to resolve matters informally, they are advised that the school should always be made aware of tensions and difficulties so that the children can be supported appropriately. The best place to resolve conflicts between children is in school where all sides and aspects of incidents can be explored.

Parents are expected to exercise reasonable confidentiality around incidents in which they are involved. In particular, parents are requested not to spread stories about incidents. Partial information can be inaccurate and may affect the reputation of the school and individual children and damage the atmosphere in the school community.

## **Reporting to the Local Authority**

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All incidents of racist bullying are reported to the local authority.

## **The Role of the Local Governing Committee**

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The local governing committee monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. This is done through a monitoring log and through the questionnaire which is conducted annually with Year 6. 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.

The local Governing Committee responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases the local governing committee notifies the Headteacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case and report back to a representative of the local Governing committee.

## **Monitoring the Policy**

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This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy (termly). To discover the extent to which bullying exists in school and to monitor the extent to

which our anti-bullying policy is effective, the log and strategies will be reviewed alongside the Year 6 questionnaire.

It is the responsibility of the school governing body to review the effectiveness of this policy. This is done by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook and through the report of the headteacher.

Governors will analyse information with regard to the types and forms of bullying.

The local Governing committee will review this policy annually. They governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the local Governing committee receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

**Staff are expected to comply fully with the school's Anti Bullying Policy and any associated procedures. Failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence.**

## Appendix 1

# Guidelines for Staff on Anti Bullying

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The following actions are appropriate for use with children who are bullied and those who are involved in bullying.

### **Ensure that bullying incidents are dealt with promptly.**

- Ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the children
- Protect and support all parties while the issues are being resolved
- Take the necessary steps to stop the bullying. This could include:
- Listen to the children and showing sympathy and concern
- Discuss the incident and subsequent consequences
- Consider a range of strategies to ensure bullying does not occur again
- Record incidents (Appendix 2) and action being taken and notify the Headteacher and/or Deputy Head teacher.
- If necessary, inform parents and discuss the situation with them calmly. The decision to talk with parents is at your discretion. As a broad message you may consider a single incident may not be worth reporting at this stage. On the other hand this incident may follow a pattern and intervention may be needed at this point.
- If you feel at any time that the situation could get out of hand, or you need the support of either the Headteacher or Deputy Head, do not hesitate in seeking support

Once the Record of Incidents and Action (Appendix 2) has been handed over to the Headteacher or Deputy Head it becomes their responsibility.

- Maintain contact and work with parents
- Always respond calmly and consistently

### **Listen, Take Action, Record, Follow Up**

**Appendix 2**

## **Record of Incidents and Action Taken**

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Name of Child being bullied: \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date of First Notification of Bullying: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Summary of Incident /Concern

**Date**

**Record of Incident/Action Taken**

**Named Person**

## Appendix 3

# Guidelines for Parents of Children being Bullied

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1. **Your child has the right to be safe**
2. **Your child has the right to expect other people, including yourselves, to help keep them safe**

If you suspect your child is being bullied:

- Talk to your child about what is happening:
- Stay calm
- Show sensitivity
- Show concern
- Reassure your child that they are not to blame
- Keep a record of what your child tells you. Include details such as names, dates, time and nature of incident. You may wish to record this privately.
- Do not pressurise your child – give them time and space.
- Once you are certain of the concerns, if at all possible act with your child's agreement.
- Contact someone in school. This would normally mean contacting your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will deal with the concern and inform the Headteacher and /or Deputy Head.
- If you believe the incident warrants bypassing your child's teacher, do not hesitate in contacting the person responsible for implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy. At St. Joseph's RC primary school, the named persons are Mrs Graham (Executive Headteacher) or Mrs Toward (Head of School)
- Maintain contact and work with the school.

### Some Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** listen to your child.
- **Do** take your child's concerns seriously.
- **Do** encourage your child to tell you what has been happening and to report any trouble that has been encountered.
- **Do** help your child to try and find a safe solution.
- **Do** talk to the school.
- **Do** look for signs of distress shown by your child.
- **Don't** ignore your child if they say they are worried about certain people
- **Don't** tell your child to 'put up with it'. Bullying is not acceptable and action needs to be taken
- **Don't** tell your child to fight back
- **Don't** rush off and deal with the situation yourself