

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership

Date: September 2026

Review Period: Annually

Reviewed by: Headteacher

Date to be ratified by Local Governing Committee: 12 November 2026

Vision Statement

At St Mary's we welcome and value our children, families and wider community. We embrace and celebrate differences, enabling each individual to flourish and make a difference in the world. We create an enriching, safe environment that provides our pupils with an excellent education, underpinned by our faith and love of Christ.

Mission Statement

Every person matters, every moment counts.

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

Catholic Ethos and Commitment

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, our faith is at the heart of everything we do. Guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and our mission that *every person matters and every moment counts*, we are committed to ensuring that every member of our community feels valued, respected, safe and loved.

We recognise the unique dignity and worth of every individual as a child of God and believe that every member of our school community has the right to be treated with dignity, kindness and respect.

Through our Catholic values, we teach children to demonstrate compassion, forgiveness, respect, courage and responsibility in their relationships with others. We seek to nurture a culture where differences are celebrated, diversity is respected and all members of our school community are encouraged to live out Gospel values in their daily actions.

Bullying, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour of any kind are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We are committed to preventing bullying, responding effectively when concerns arise and supporting all those involved to restore relationships and move forward positively.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote a culture in which every person is treated with dignity, kindness and respect.
 - Ensure all pupils feel safe, valued and able to flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.
 - Prevent all forms of bullying through education, vigilance and early intervention.
 - Encourage children to speak out when they experience or witness bullying.
 - Foster an inclusive environment that welcomes, celebrates and respects diversity.
 - Provide clear procedures for reporting, recording, investigating and monitoring bullying concerns.
 - Ensure concerns are addressed consistently, fairly and effectively.
 - Support both those experiencing bullying and those displaying bullying behaviours.
 - Fulfil the school's safeguarding duties and responsibilities under education, safeguarding and equality legislation.
 - Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff, governors and external agencies where necessary.
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2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another person or group, either physically or emotionally, and involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. [\[gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

Bullying is typically characterised by:

- Deliberate intent to cause harm or distress.
- Repetition over time.
- An imbalance of power.

The school recognises that not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty or one-off incident constitutes bullying. Such situations will still be taken seriously and addressed through the Behaviour Policy.

However, some one-off incidents may be so serious that they constitute child-on-child abuse and will be managed through safeguarding procedures.

3. Types of Bullying

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

Physical Bullying

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Tripping
- Physical intimidation
- Damage to belongings

Verbal Bullying

- Name-calling
- Insults
- Derogatory comments
- Threats
- Taunting

Social or Relational Bullying

- Deliberate exclusion
- Spreading rumours
- Embarrassment or humiliation
- Manipulation of friendships
- Isolating another child

Online Bullying (Cyberbullying)

- Abusive messages
- Social media harassment
- Sharing images without consent
- Fake accounts
- Group chat intimidation
- Bullying through online gaming platforms

Prejudice-Based Bullying

The school recognises that some incidents of bullying may be motivated by prejudice relating to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including but not limited to:

- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- Special Educational Needs
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Family circumstances
- Looked After status
- Caring responsibilities
- Appearance
- Socio-economic disadvantage

Such incidents will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, recorded appropriately and addressed in accordance with the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

4. Relationship to Safeguarding

Bullying may be a safeguarding concern and some incidents may amount to child-on-child abuse. Where this occurs, safeguarding procedures will take priority and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately.

[\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

Examples may include:

- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Serious physical assault
- Coercive behaviour
- Exploitation

- Hate-related incidents
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images

The school adopts a child-centred approach and will always consider the wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child when responding to reports of bullying. [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

The school strives to create a culture where children feel safe to speak to trusted adults about worries or concerns. All concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

Where bullying is identified as a symptom of wider unmet needs, the school may consider Early Help intervention and work collaboratively with families and external agencies to provide additional support. [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

5. Signs and Indicators

A pupil experiencing bullying may:

- Become withdrawn or anxious.
- Show a sudden change in behaviour.
- Appear reluctant to attend school.
- Experience friendship difficulties.
- Display reduced engagement in learning.
- Have unexplained injuries.
- Have damaged or missing possessions.
- Experience sleep disturbance or heightened anxiety.
- Show reduced confidence or self-esteem.
- Demonstrate declining attendance or attainment.

These signs do not automatically indicate bullying but should always be taken seriously.

6. Reporting Concerns

Pupils, parents, staff and visitors are encouraged to report concerns as soon as possible.

Concerns may be reported to:

- Class teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Lunchtime supervisors
- Senior leaders
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Headteacher

All reports of bullying concerns will be taken seriously and considered appropriately.

Pupils will be encouraged and supported to report concerns. Concerns raised in good faith will always be taken seriously.

7. Responding to Bullying

All concerns will be:

- Taken seriously.
- Investigated where appropriate.
- Recorded appropriately.
- Monitored over time.
- Followed up to ensure concerns have been resolved.

Supporting the Child Experiencing Bullying

The school will:

- Listen carefully and without judgement.
- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Keep parents informed where appropriate.
- Provide pastoral support.
- Identify trusted adults.
- Implement protective strategies where required.
- Monitor wellbeing and progress.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Where bullying is substantiated, staff may:

- Facilitate restorative conversations.
- Use restorative approaches where appropriate.
- Apply behaviour sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Work with parents and carers.
- Implement behaviour support plans.
- Restrict privileges where necessary.
- Involve senior leaders.
- Seek support from external agencies.

Responses will be proportionate, fair, consistent and focused on achieving lasting positive behavioural change while protecting those affected.

8. Confidentiality

Incidents of bullying will be handled sensitively and information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support pupils.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where there are safeguarding concerns or where information must be shared to protect a child.

9. Recording and Monitoring

All bullying concerns, investigations and outcomes will be recorded using the school's safeguarding and behaviour recording systems.

Records may include:

- Date and location.
- Pupils involved.
- Nature of the concern.
- Actions taken.
- Outcomes reached.
- Follow-up actions.
- Any relevant protected characteristics.

Senior leaders will regularly monitor records to identify:

- Patterns and trends.
- Repeat incidents.
- Vulnerable groups.
- Equality issues.
- Effectiveness of interventions.

Senior leaders will analyse records for patterns relating to protected characteristics and vulnerable groups to ensure that no group is disproportionately affected and that appropriate action is taken where trends emerge.

10. Preventing Bullying

Preventing bullying is everyone's responsibility.

Catholic Life and Curriculum

Through Religious Education, Catholic Life, Collective Worship, PSHE, Relationships Education and Online Safety Education, pupils learn about:

- Human dignity.
- Respect for others.
- Compassion and forgiveness.
- Positive relationships.
- Diversity and inclusion.
- Responsible citizenship.

Positive Relationships

The school promotes:

- Positive behaviour and mutual respect.

- Strong pupil-staff relationships.
- Inclusive classroom environments.
- Celebration of achievement and diversity.

Vulnerable Pupils

The school recognises that bullying can affect any child. However, some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying or may find it more difficult to report concerns.

This may include pupils with SEND, those with medical conditions, looked after and previously looked after children, young carers, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health difficulties.

The school will take proactive steps to support vulnerable pupils through pastoral support, trusted adults, early intervention and appropriate monitoring.

Pupil Voice

Pupils contribute to anti-bullying work through:

- School Council
- Pupil surveys
- Class discussions
- Worry boxes
- Leadership opportunities

Targeted Support

Support may include:

- ELSA provision
- Counselling
- Trusted adults
- Nurture support
- Key worker support
- Social skills interventions
- Pastoral mentoring

Awareness Raising

The school promotes anti-bullying messages through:

- Assemblies
- Curriculum activities
- Displays
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Parent engagement
- Online safety events

11. Online Safety and Cyberbullying

The school recognises that bullying may occur online both inside and outside school.

The school may investigate and respond to incidents that occur outside school where they have an impact on a pupil's education, safety or wellbeing, or on the wider school community. [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

Pupils are taught:

- Responsible online behaviour.
- Digital citizenship.
- Safe use of technology.
- How to report online concerns.
- The consequences of cyberbullying.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Governors will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- Review bullying information and trends.
- Ensure statutory compliance.
- Provide challenge and support to school leaders.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy.
- Promote a culture of respect and inclusion.
- Monitor incidents and outcomes.
- Ensure appropriate staff training.
- Report relevant information to governors.

Staff

All staff receive regular safeguarding, behaviour, online safety and anti-bullying training. Staff understand that bullying may be an indicator of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns and must report concerns in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff are expected to contribute to a whole-school culture of vigilance, safeguarding and pupil wellbeing. [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

All staff will:

- Model respectful, inclusive and professional behaviour at all times.
- Promote inclusion and positive relationships.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour.

- Take concerns seriously.
- Follow reporting procedures.
- Record incidents appropriately.
- Fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.

Lunchtime Supervisors

Lunchtime supervisors play a vital role in preventing and responding to bullying.

They will:

- Promote positive play and relationships.
- Intervene promptly when concerns arise.
- Follow the Behaviour Policy.
- Report concerns in accordance with school procedures.
- Inform teaching staff and senior leaders of concerns.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the school's anti-bullying approach.
- Encourage children to speak to trusted adults.
- Raise concerns promptly.
- Work collaboratively with school staff.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, kindness and respect.
- Live out the Gospel values promoted by the school.
- Tell a trusted adult if they experience bullying.
- Tell a trusted adult if they are worried about someone else.
- Support those who may be vulnerable or isolated.
- Take responsibility for their actions.
- Contribute positively to a safe, inclusive and welcoming school community.

13. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and senior leaders will monitor:

- Recorded incidents.
- Outcomes and trends.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent feedback.

- Staff feedback.
- Whether pupils feel safe.
- The effectiveness of interventions.

Governors will review the effectiveness of the policy through regular reporting and oversight.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local circumstances require.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

Legislation

- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004

Statutory Guidance and DfE Advice

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, updated July 2026) [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years

Linked School Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Attendance Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Agreements
- Complaints Policy

No Blame Support Group

- In this method, the child who is the target of the bullying meets with a trusted adult and is asked to draw a picture or write a poem about how the bullying has affected them
- The teacher or trusted adult will then hold a meeting with a group of pupils including the bully, those who may have seen the incidents and others who are not directly involved (positive role models)
- The teacher explains to the group how the victim is feeling (without identifying the bully) and the group then offer suggestions to find a solution
- Removing blame from the process allows the bully or bullies to involve themselves in finding a solution without feeling threatened or defensive
- Those who were bystanders are given a chance to see that by doing nothing, they were condoning the bullying
- The group is encouraged to come up with practical problem-solving solutions and the responsibility for carrying out these ideas' rests with the group
- Each pupil in the group then carries out their own solution, so that a child who has been excluded from activities with other children may now have someone to play with and another may accompany him on other occasions to make sure there is no bullying
- A week or so later the group reconvenes to discuss progress and what has been achieved