

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Rationale:

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has a legal duty to have an anti-bullying policy and to safeguard children / young people from harm. Parents and children should have access to this policy.

[Research studies](#) show that young people spend more time being affected by bullying than many other significant life events. All children whatever their race, gender, belief, physical and intellectual abilities have the right to develop in an environment free from harm.

Children have a right to be respected for what they are and have the right to personal dignity. This policy recognises that bullying can occur anywhere.

In establishing this policy the school has drawn its practice and procedures from advice outlined by the Anti Bullying Alliance and states its commitment to creating an environment:

- Which takes action to protect its children from harm and bullying.
- Where everyone feels cared for and valued for what they can bring to the whole community.
- Where everyone is vigilant to the possibility of bullying.

Introduction:

At St Joseph's Catholic School, we aspire to create an environment where each child is safe and secure and can enjoy learning and reach their full educational and personal potential.

We endeavour to raise the self-esteem of all members of the school community by encouraging an atmosphere of mutual respect.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Children's Anti-Bullying Charter □ Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy.

Aims:

Our Anti-bullying Policy is based on the belief that children should enjoy learning at school, be free from the worry of harm and are responsible for the way they behave and the consequences of their actions.

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The school's Christian values encourage all to "Walk in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together". Through this we aim to create a caring, enabling and effective learning environment where unkindness and bullying can't exist.

Where applicable, this is reflected through the school's virtues and values in the following way:

- Respect:
- How we treat each other is based on the respect we have for an individual and what makes them who they are.
 - Respecting others means that a person's uniqueness will never be used as a reason to harm them.
 - We lead by example where courtesy and good manners are demonstrated and expected at all times and by all members of the school community.
- Aspiration:
- We aspire to make our school the best place it can be where everyone show kindness and compassion to one and other.
- Serving and Giving:
- Those who are part of our community do so because they respect and aspire to the school's mission and that bullying has no place within this.
 - Serving and helping others means that we do nothing to harm or abuse another person.
- Resilience and Peace:
- We challenge bullying in any form and aim to give the children the skills to do this by empowering them to say No to bullying.
 - Through this we aim to create a school where children feel safe, protected from harm and have the agency to know what to do when they see abuse or unkindness.
- Curiosity:
- We are curious about what we observe in the behaviour of others. We seek to understand and explore the things we see or become aware of.
 - Where we see negative behaviour or unhappiness we seek to understand why this is and take actions to address this.
 - No one will walk past problems.

How we define bullying:

Bullying can be described as the systematic abuse of power, to deliberately or repeatedly harm others. Bullying can take various forms i.e. emotional, physical, online messaging, racist, sexual, homophobic, or verbal abuse.

Bullying is the abuse of power where a person or group causes harm on purpose, physically, emotionally or psychologically, to a less powerful person or group.

The reasons for this abuse can be wide ranging but may link to personal beliefs or prejudice, home and school experiences or low self-esteem. ([Anti-bullying Alliance definition](#))

It is generally agreed that a **single** incident of verbal or physical unkindness is not necessarily bullying. Wherever unkindness happen, children are always encouraged to talk to an adult.

Unkindness and abuse that leads to bullying can include but is not restricted to repeatedly subjecting another person to one or more of the following:

- Being hit, kicked, pinched, spat at or threatened
- Being called names or receiving deriding comments
- Making a fool of someone

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- Teasing or sending nasty notes
- Spreading malicious gossip
- Deliberately damaging or destroying another person's property
- Repeatedly excluding someone by not talking to them, or not letting them join in □
Malicious Texting, emailing, messaging, publication etc.
- Harmful and abusive remarks or actions linked to a person's race, gender, socio economic group, physical / intellectual abilities or sexual identification.

This policy recognises that it is **not bullying** when two individuals have the occasional fight, quarrel or disagreement.

It is important when defining bullying to consider the implications on the whole community.

Remember **all** members of the community, adults and children, can be subject to being bullied and being a bully.

This policy recognises that a bully may not necessarily be a bully all of the time. Their behaviour towards others may be a reflection of a difficult episode in their own life.

Child on child abuse:

Child on child abuse is where the behaviour of one child against another causes significant harm from a physical, emotional or sexual perspective (see Part 1 30-33 of [KCSiE 2024](#)).

Bullying can form part of this abuse. Where this is the case, this abusive act will be addressed as a safeguarding concern, recorded as such, and not managed through the systems set out in this or the school behaviour policy.

Any child who may have been victimised and/or displayed such harmful behaviours, along with any other affected child, will be supported through the school's regularly reviewed pastoral system.

We minimise the risk of child on child abuse by providing:

- A relevant curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Established / publicised systems for pupils to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously.

The DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) liaises with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments and appropriate specialist targeted work for pupils who are identified as posing a potential risk to other children. This is done using a Contextual Safeguarding approach to ensure assessments consider risks posed by any wider environmental factors present in a child's life.

How we use our school culture to prevent bullying:

- Through the school's Christian foundation and values we aim to create a respectful, caring community in which bullying and harassment have no place. We aim to do this by recognising and celebrating diversity within the school and local community.
- We celebrate and recognise children's efforts and achievements, helping them to have a positive self-image and pride in their school. We reward effort, determination, positive relationships and achievement equally.

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- We make our explanations regarding behaviour in and around the school very clear.
- We ensure that pupils are supervised appropriately, are given opportunities to apply selfcontrol when working independently and are aware of the possibility of bullying and harassment within this ethos of trust.

We embed skills to deal with and understand bullying into our curriculum so that children think, talk and listen together as we consider people's behaviour and attitudes. All classes have Circle Times or class discussions. The school's vision and assembly foci continually reinforce the need for and messages and lessons linked to being positive members of a caring community and society.

- We respond firmly with agreed strategies if bullying or abuse occur.
- We ensure that children know who to talk to, especially if they feel they are being bullied or are a bully themselves.
- We encourage the School Council to take an active role in monitoring and preventing bullying.
- We are aware of those pupils who may have a vulnerability to bullying or being a bully.

How we remain vigilant and maintain an awareness of bullying:

We are **alert** to signs of bullying and harassment and do not ignore, overlook or dismiss these, even when these may emanate or occur outside of school hours.

Children are made aware of signs and symptoms of bullying through the curriculum and through school worship activities and events e.g. Anti-bullying and Safer Internet Weeks. Children are signposted to help through posters, presentations and leaflets. Adults associated with the school are made **aware** of this policy through the school handbooks.

We encourage children to **tell any adult** or **School Council** member if bullying or serious harassment occurs. (This entails explaining clearly what we mean by bullying: we do not expect to be told of every broken friendship.)

We encourage all children to be "Up-standers" and tell an adult when they see bullying. We define not acting and standing against bullying as being a "bystander", (up-stander / bystander [definition 1](#) and [definition 2](#)).

We **explain** to children that their happiness, and that of their friends, matter to us and we show this in our dealings with them. (Circle Times may be used to consider such matters.)

Protocols to respond to incidents of bullying:

If bullying has been observed or reported we:

- Take the occurrence seriously
- Act as quickly as possible
- Talk to the victim(s), offering safety and support
- Talk to the alleged bully and offering support
- Where appropriate investigate incidents through interviews with other children / witnesses.
- Record occurrence and outcomes on the school's electronic recording system (CPOMS)
- Seek advice through Wiltshire Children's Services, [Integrated Front Door](#) (IFD) with respect to assessing if a bullying incident constitutes Child on Child abuse.

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Where a behaviour or bullying incident has occurred, a member of school staff will talk separately with the children involved. This will be away from the classroom or playground. Wherever possible this conversation will be initiated by the class teacher or teaching assistant. The fact that the anti-social behaviour has been noticed and challenged may prove enough to prevent its re-occurrence.

- On the basis of all discussions, school staff will decide if bullying may have occurred. Where the class teacher or head teacher feels that bullying has not occurred, the school's behaviour policy will be followed. Where bullying is suspected, the school will enact the following protocol:

A stepped approach:

Step 1 The "bully(ies)" is / are told that the behaviour is unacceptable. Where appropriate, the class has a circle time to discuss collective feelings and ways to support each other.

- Sanctions as specified in the school behaviour policy will be employed. These sanctions reflect the guidance in the school's behaviour policy and take account any special educational needs. In establishing sanctions, the school also considers the motivations behind the bullying and whether these also reveal concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.
- Mechanisms to support the victim and the bully may be put in place. The chosen course of action will be based on the type of bullying and the school's knowledge of the individuals involved, (mediation, mentoring, restorative justice, assertiveness training, anger management).
- School staff will have a follow up meeting with the victim and the bully.
- Parents of both parties are informed and involved in the school's actions. Parents are provided with information to help them support their child.

Step 2 If the bullying persists:

- Parents are involved immediately and further actions such as the involvement of the Behaviour Support Team or higher levels of sanctions such as exclusion may happen (see Behaviour Policy).
- Records kept of bullying incidents are reviewed in line with the school's Child Protection review schedule. Repeated incidents of bullying are assessed against the school's criteria of Child on Child abuse.
- The school Governing Body are informed through the Head Teachers Report to Governors of the number of bullying incidents within the school and the outcome of actions taken to address these issues.

Bullying away from the School Premises:

Under the 2006 education act and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has powers to apply this policy to pupils whilst not on the school premises, including travelling to and from the school, and if both the victim and the bully are from our school. In these instances, action will be taken as if the incident had occurred within the school, and this includes informing parents.

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If a child from St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is involved in a bullying incident with a pupil from another school, we will liaise with the other school to ensure that there is effective information sharing and liaison with respect to actions.

Where possible, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will support pupils who have been bullied, especially on their way to or from school or by pupils from another school.

Where incidents happen beyond the school and involving those from other schools, one or all of the following protocol will guide our actions:

- Communication and collaboration will be initiated with an appropriate person from the other school (e.g. the headteacher).
- Communications and reports to the police about problems on the local streets.
Engagement with the IFD for advice or Children's Services involvement □
Initiate support mechanisms for victims or perpetrators as appropriate.
- Ongoing involvement with parents and carers

Notes

§ The terms 'bully', 'perpetrator' and 'victim' are used in this document but they are not used as 'labels' in school.

Calling a child by any name risks affecting his/her self-image and worth and may impact on future development. We are conscious to maintain and boost the self-esteem and self-worth of all children. We do not blame children for being bullied and we stress it is the bully's actions we disapprove of.