St Bede's Catholic Infant School
Anti-Bullying Policy

Agreed by Staff	Autumn 2026
Approved by Governors	Autumn 2026
Review Date	Autumn 2027
Signed Chair of Governors: Ms S Howard	Date: 24.11.26

This Policy is adapted from the model Halton Children's Trust Anti-bullying Policy and is the result of consultation with parents, pupils, staff and governors.
This Policy is supported by other policies which Safeguard and Promote the welfare of children in this school.

At St Bede's Catholic Infant School it is the intention of
the Whole School Community
to nurture a loving, safe, caring, supportive, quality environment in which the individual has an opportunity to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Context

Why do we at St Bede's Catholic Infant School have an Anti-Bullying Policy?

St. Bede's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".

We have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practised across our school when dealing with bullying behaviour within our setting.

What is in the Anti-Bullying Policy?

Our policy sets out the rights of all members of our school community in relation to bullying.

It contains definitions of bullying and signs and signals for staff, pupils and other stakeholders to be vigilant that this may indicate that a person has been, or is being bullied. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combating bullying.

Our policy takes into consideration consultation with stakeholders, as well as the latest guidance that exists, data available and training undertaken. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance, see Appendix 1.

It reflects current practice within the school. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders. This policy is supported by and links closely to other policies such as the School's Behaviour Policy, Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy, Confidentiality and Curriculum Policies and all policies which safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

Supporting Information

In this context, with a co-operative and restorative ethos, bullying is less likely to emerge. We recognise that proactive preventive strategies are better than reactive. However, there is a need to have in place clear strategies for both.

We as a school promote the following principles in relation to anti-bullying:

- We will not tolerate bullying under any circumstances and all members of our community will challenge any bullying, prejudice and discrimination at all times recognising and respecting the difference and diversity of our community
- We expect good behaviour from all and expect staff to model good behaviour
- We value education and the right of each individual to learn and work in a safe environment
- We expect each individual to take responsibility for their actions, understanding how our actions affect others.

As a school we review our Anti-Bullying Policy, Procedures and Practice regularly to ensure it reflects the latest guidance.

At St Bede's Catholic Infant School are aware that some instances of bullying and harassment will constitute a criminal offence. These instances may involve a hate crime or hate incident as detailed later in the Policy. If the incident does constitute a criminal offence, individuals are advised to contact the Police by the school.

Types of Bullying

Bullying is defined as:
'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.
(DfE Preventing & Tackling Bullying October 2017)

Anyone can practice bullying behaviours/be a bully.

Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent. However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

A one-off incident tends not to comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours it happens again and again over a period of time.

Instances of bullying tend to have the following common characteristics:

Repetitive and Persistent

Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.

Intentionally Harmful

The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.

Involves an imbalance of power

Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some case an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures (refer to the school safeguarding procedures)

We recognise that there are levels of bullying. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical (for example, hitting, kicking, theft);
- verbal (for example, racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling);
- emotional (for example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group);
- cyber – mobile phone calls, text messages, pictures or video clips, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking websites.

Signs of Bullying

There is no certain way of spotting that a person is being bullied.

The following physical and behavioural signs have been identified by a number of agencies who have undertaken research around bullying (including Kidscape, Anti-bullying Alliance) as indicators that bullying may have been or may be taking place. Staff should be vigilant in order to identify any of these physical or behavioural changes in a person as soon as possible.

- Significant changes in normal behaviour or attitude
- Challenging behaviours
- Appearing upset
- Anger
- Being withdrawn
- Quietness
- Depression
- Appearing frightened or subdued, possibly in the presence of particular people
- Flinching at actual or anticipated physical contact
- Asking not to be hurt
- Refusal to eat
- Refusal to participate
- Unwillingness to travel on public transport
- Not wanting to go to a certain venue
- Starting to bully others
- Incontinence
- Vomiting
- Unexplained illness
- Claims of feeling unwell with no apparent signs or symptoms
- Bruising or other physical marks
- Torn clothing
- Unexplained loss of money or possessions
- Sleepless nights
- Repeating words the perpetrator has said to them, e.g. “shut up or I’ll hit you”.

We also recognise the role of pupils and other stakeholders in reporting incidents and not taking on a role of bystander if they witness an incident of bullying. We aim to promote a positive, caring ethos within our school.

At St Bede’s Catholic Infant School, we are taking proactive steps to support our vulnerable pupils by supporting individuals and small groups. There are designated staff roles. We are aware of our individual pupil’s needs, have school intervention programmes and nurture groups as well as working in partnership with external support agencies.

Victims are more likely to have the following vulnerability characteristics:

- Lack of assertiveness, anxious or fearful and unlikely to fight back.
- Loners with few friends.
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.
- Appearance
- Ability
- Health issues, including mental health, diet, etc
- Home circumstances
- Social class
- Ethnicity
- Gypsy/Roma and Traveler Children
- Looked After Children
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual or Transgender children
- Young carers.

In order to support all pupils within the school, we focus on each individual pupil. Evidence of this is recorded as appropriate through different methods, which can involve regular tracking and monitoring of absence and attendance rates, pupil voice and other plus targeted support for pupils.

Procedure

As a school we recognise the need for a prompt response to an incident that appears to be bullying. The following list of actions might be used by staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the incident:

- Remain calm
- Discuss and log incident with victim using patience or understanding. Consider the antecedent and environment that might make the victim more vulnerable.
- Listen carefully. Allow the victim or reporter of the incident to tell their story. He/she may wish to have another person present, such as a friend.
- Record events using exact wording at every stage, including actions agreed/taken. Add incident and record on CPOMS.
- Try to establish what type of bullying is taking place and where, how often the bullying is occurring, who is carrying out the bullying and how the victim is responding to the bullying
- Advise the victim not to hit out at the bully or bullies as they themselves may end up being accused of bullying.
- Discuss options to resolve the situation, agree actions advise the victim of what happens next, (e.g. restorative practice script if appropriate).
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible.
- Arrange to speak with the alleged perpetrator, to be able to define the experience from each person's view (e.g. restorative practice script if appropriate).
- If it appears to be bullying, make the unacceptable nature of the behavior clear to the bully, ensuring the act is separate to the person.
- Try to enable the bully to see things from the victim's position (e.g. restorative practice script if appropriate).
- Explain clearly the reparation.
- Inform the Headteacher or Assistant Headteachers who will have overall responsibility for overseeing the records, reports and the effectiveness of interventions of the incident.
- Complete the School Bullying Incident Report Form (guidance for this is attached in Appendix 2)
- Arrange to meet the parents/carers of all of those involved in the incident(s) (e.g. restorative practice script if appropriate).
- Think ahead about supporting both victim and bully.
- Discuss relevant documentation and resulting action with parents/carers and what they can do to reinforce and support the school action.
- Arrange follow up discussions within an agreed timetable.

The types, rates and patterns of bullying, and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to SEN, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment or disability are taken into account.

We, as a school, are aware that the school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils outside school and it is our responsibility to safeguard and take action, providing evidence that we have done so. We are teaching our pupils about staying safe online and internet safety and the consequences of inappropriate actions.

The school aims to analyse incident logs, behaviour in and out of lessons, complaints, pupil/parent and other stakeholder voice, rewards and sanctions and to respond to these appropriately.

At St Bede's Infant School we continually monitor and measure the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy and practice and will make changes to bring further improvements to the procedure as appropriate. The safety and wellbeing of pupils and all stakeholders is the basis for this policy and work on anti-bullying conducted by the school

Preventative Strategies

The Curriculum/Ethos

We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional well-being and a community ethos

Individuals in the community:

- Value one another publicly
- Give frequent praise, encouragement and support
- Celebrate success and share problems

Proactive strategies for the school can involve:

- A high focus on our school message to always have 'Kind Hands, Kind Feet and Kind Words'
- Dedicated weeks including British Values Week and Anti-Bullying Week
- Work based on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF Rights Respecting School)
- Children's Anti-bullying statement is displayed around school.
- PSHCE lessons, incorporating Relationships and Health Education, support pupils in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging pupils to problem solve. Through PSHCE, children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and things that are worrying them.
- Peer support including playground friends and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (School Councilors)
- Restorative practice approaches (as appropriate)
- Resilience building, nurture group, emotional literacy groups
- Involving parents and professionals in being proactive.
- Any child considered to be at risk is supported appropriately and resolutions put into place
- Bullying is talked about openly.
- Fact and fiction books on bullying raise awareness and deepen understanding.
- Problem solving activities are employed effectively in many areas of the curriculum and children work together.
- Collective worship/Assembly time
- Useful information in the form of posters placed at child-friendly heights
- School Council/Anti-bullying Ambassadors used as a voice of the child.
- Bullying information is sent to parents via letter/school spider or via Twitter at relevant times e.g. Anti-bullying week.

Supervision

We ensure that key areas of the school are adequately supervised and staff are vigilant. Children are given opportunities to take responsibilities and demonstrate initiative (anti-bullying ambassadors, school council).

Training

We as a school recognise and ensure that staff and Governors receive the latest appropriate training and guidance on behaviour and anti-bullying legislation, responsibilities and strategies. In addition, case studies with a particular focus on vulnerable groups are available and used to support the training of staff and Governors.

Communication

We as a school are aware of the need for open communication between stakeholders. All sections of the school organisation must understand its role and responsibilities. We understand the need to ensure this policy is a living document, known and understood by all.

Our school council's annual safety questionnaires, United Against Bullying questionnaires and opportunities to gain pupil voice can be used to proactively combat bullying by encouraging pupils to problem solve and support each other.

A regular focus on Kind Hands, Kind Feet and Kind Words supports the children to know how important it is to be respectful of others.

Parents/carers are made aware of the school's policy through documentation, including this Policy and any relevant updates which are posted on the school website. Regular bulletins about what bullying is, how to communicate with staff, recognising early intervention is crucial.

Our Home/School agreement seeks to establish an active partnership between parents, staff and governors. Parents know that the School acts to prevent bullying and not just deal with bullying incidents. The views of parents, carers and other stakeholders are regularly recorded and taken into consideration in the rollout of school strategies.

We have an Induction Policy for pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that children transfer with ease and are comfortable in their new surroundings and are clear about how to communicate any concerns.

New intakes are reassured that bullying is not permitted and it is a warning to potential bullies that such behaviour is unacceptable from the outset (age appropriate).

Our staff do not wait for bullying to be proved before it is acted against. A positive, caring ethos demands a Prevention of Bullying Policy in operation throughout the school.

We have an annual school council questionnaire that asks children about how safe the children feel at school and the Anti-bullying Ambassadors have produced a statement for the children which is posted around the school and is included on the school website.

At St Bede's Infant School we recognise the importance of NOT:

- Keeping concerns, allegations, disclosures or your own worries to yourself.
- Speculating
- Asking leading questions
- Stopping someone who is freely recalling a significant event
- Making promises you can't keep (eg This won't happen again)
- Passing on information (confidentiality)

If the person is in immediate danger we as a school will follow the safeguarding procedures
If any bullying incidents occur these are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis through the head teacher's report.

Hate Crime

A hate crime is any incident that constitutes a criminal offence that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. It could involve physical attack, threat of attack or verbal abuse or insult around issues such as race, faith, homophobia, transphobia or disability.

A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence but is perceived by the victim, or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate.

If an incident appears to be a hate crime or incident, we as a school recognise the need for this to be reported to the police if appropriate or contact made with the Local Authority.

Appendix 1 – Useful Information Current at time of publication)

We as a school follow the latest information, advice, legislation and guidance in all our work around bullying.

A. Legislation

- Education Act 2002 ('Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare')
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 ('measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils')
- Equality Act 2010 (Covers 9 protected characteristics. Schools as public bodies have a duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations)

B. Advice and Guidance

- Department for Education (DfE) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies'
- DfE 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance'
- DfE 'Research Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools'
- DfE 'Reducing Bullying Amongst the Worst Affected'
- Ofsted Survey of Pupils' Experiences of Bullying
- Ofsted Good Practice Examples – Homophobic Bullying
- Anti-Bullying Alliance
    - Website - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
    - United Against Bullying award
- NSPCC School Anti-Bullying
- https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/kids.html

C. Key Ofsted Documents
Including

- Frameworks for School Inspection

Appendix 2 - School Incident Report Form

See Incident Referral File.

The School Incident Report Form should include details of:
Nature of incident(s) – outline of what happened, where, when, type
Name of those involved – those bullying, those being bullied, bystanders
Analysis of seriousness – severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy (remorse)
Action(s) taken
Monitoring – feedback from those involved

Incidents are recorded on CPOMS. Any relevant data will provide evidence for the School Self-Evaluation Form, National Healthy Schools Status and any Accreditation process.

Bullying Incident Records can be used to:
Manage bullying incidents including ability to reference previous behaviour and monitor effectiveness of actions taken.
Analyse for patterns, e.g. identifying people/groups, places and times.
Monitor effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies
Address complaints made.
Identify 'vulnerable pupils' and provide information to help determine nature of support needed, including engagement of external support agencies.
Provide reports to governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils and local authorities.

Appendix 3 – Advice and Guidance for Parents relating to Bullying Behaviour

- Watch for signs of distress in your child, e.g.
    - unwillingness to attend school
    - pattern of headaches or stomach aches
    - equipment that has gone missing
    - request for extra pocket money
    - damaged clothing
    - bruising
- Take an active interest in your child's social life-discuss friendships, how playtime is spent and the journey to and from school.
- If you think your child is being bullied in School inform staff immediately and ask for a meeting with your child's class teacher.
- When discussing the problem with your son or daughter follow the advice given for victims.
- Keep a written record if the bullying persists. It will be painful but it will provide supportive evidence regarding Who, What, Where and When.
- With the class teacher, devise strategies that will help your child and provide him/her with support.
- If you require further assistance, make arrangements to meet with the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature and contrary to the ethos of the school.
- If you are still not satisfied, arrange for a meeting with the Chair of Governors.

Appendix 4 – Advice for Children relating to Bullying Behaviour

- If you think or feel that you are being bullied by another person tell an adult that you can trust, perhaps your parent or teacher. In school everything is handled sensitively and discretely.
- If someone else is being bullied or distressed, take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying. Tell an adult.
- Never try to 'buy the bully off' with sweets or other 'presents', and do not give them money. Say "No" to the bully.
- Work out a plan of action with an adult that you trust.

IF YOU THINK OR FEEL THAT YOU ARE BEING BULLIED, TELL SOMEONE THAT YOU CAN TRUST, KEEP TELLING UNTIL SOMEONE HELPS

Appendix 5 – Key Bullying Helplines/Websites for more Information

Family Hubs – Halton Local Offer https://localoffer.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-home
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
https://www.kidscape.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying

Appendix 6 – Halton Hate Crime Information can be found at:
https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/hatecrime.aspx