



## Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is designed to protect the pupils at St Philomena's School. It applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy.

Every member of St Philomena's School has a right to be safe from bullying.

### Aims

- To create, throughout the school, an ethos which ensures that bullying is seen as unacceptable.
- To provide children with skills and attitudes which help them recognise bullying in themselves and others and therefore help prevent it.
- To provide procedures for all those involved in the school community when instances of bullying arise.

### Definition

Bullying is defined as behaviour that intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. The behaviour may be repeated over a period of time. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or online via social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, videos and email.

Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim.

Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

The main types of bullying are:

	Examples
<b>Physical</b>	Hitting, kicking, theft, initiation/hazing type violence, sexual assaults, gender based violence.
<b>Verbal</b>	Name calling, racism, sexism, sarcasm, rumour mongering, inappropriate teasing, homophobic remarks, or remarks based on religious grounds or the fact that a child is maybe adopted or a carer.
<b>Emotional</b>	Behaviour which is intentionally hurtful to the emotions of another.
<b>Excluding</b>	Deliberately excluding people from friendship groups with bad intent.
<b>Hurtful behaviour</b> based on: racism; sexual behaviour; disability; culture; homophobia; special educational needs	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, unwanted physical contact, abusive comments based on the cultural differences or sexual orientation of a person. Such behaviour can be physical, mental or emotional.
<b>Electronic/Cyber Bullying</b>	The sending of hurtful text messages, photographs, video recordings and emails. Encouraging the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

### **Seriousness**

St Philomena's School acknowledges the potential seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and sometimes physical harm (whether inflicted or self-inflicted). Staff must be clear that abuse is wrong and should never be tolerated or dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

### **Procedures**

Any school member, whether a child or an adult, has the right not to be bullied (including online and bullying outside school) and are actively encouraged to tell someone who will be in a position to end the bullying.

For a child that person might be their class teacher or any teacher they prefer, a Prefect, a trusted friend, the Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher. They are also encouraged to tell their parents and/or family. A parent or family member should inform the school of accusations of bullying behaviour so that the school can investigate.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering (or likely to suffer) significant harm from the behaviour of another child or children, then this situation will be treated as a child protection concern and reported to local agencies. All the children involved, both perpetrator and victim, may be treated as being 'at risk'.

Any adult experiencing bullying is encouraged to tell a colleague, line manager or Governor or any member of the school community who might be in a position to help.

### **Investigation and Record Keeping**

Where bullying is reported, an accurate written record of events and facts is kept, and recorded in the Incident File. This file is maintained by the Headteacher so patterns can be identified. The school will interview all parties concerned to establish the facts and action against a bully will only be taken when they are established. Teachers, teaching assistants or staff members recording incidents will take contemporaneous notes, quote verbatim where possible and finally write up a report. This record includes the pupil's name and year group, the nature and date of the incident and any sanctions imposed.

### **Support and Sanctions**

As a Catholic School our ethos is to grow and learn together in an environment where care and respect is shown to everyone. We have a Code of Conduct to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. This is available to view on the School website.

The school will employ a range of strategies to ensure that the victim is supported and protected in the future and that the bully/bullies fully understand the hurtful and damaging nature of their actions. The school may require the bully to sign a behaviour contract. Sanctions may be applied and these will reflect the seriousness of the incident and convey a deterrent effect. Strong sanctions such as temporary or permanent exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

We involve parents and make sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

If bullying occurs, parents of the victim and bully/bullies will always be informed and the school will work with the families to ensure that bullying behaviour is not repeated.

### **Promoting an Anti-Bullying Ethos**

The school promotes its Anti-Bullying Policy through teacher and pupil-led assemblies, through its published Behaviour Policy, through schemes of work in PSHE, through class teachers, the School Council Form VI prefects, and by precedent.

Bullying and conflict often arise from 'play fighting' and verbal abuse disguised as banter; both these forms of behaviour are not allowed at St Philomena's School.

Pupils are taught how to prevent bullying and what to do if they witness it.

### **Online Bullying**

With increasing availability to children of electronic devices that give unrestricted access to the internet, we include online safety as part of both our safeguarding and anti-bullying arrangements. We are active in our management of hardware, software and connectivity within school and encourage teachers and parents to be vigilant when children are online.

All pupils are taught how to stay safe online, including how to report online abuse.

We actively seek individuals and organisations to visit the school and talk to pupils about staying safe online, cyber-bullying and how to report concerns. Visitors include:

- The local PCSO who visits the school throughout the year to talk to each class from Reception to Year 6 about staying safe online and how to report any concerns.
- The NSPCC who visit each year to talk to all pupils from Reception to Year 6 as part of their 'Speak Out Stay Safe' programme.
- The local PCSO who holds a workshop every year with Year 6 pupils to discuss the transition from primary to secondary school, including online bullying and cyber-bullying.

We also attend relevant events, when available. These include:

- 'Crucial Crew', a multi-agency event for Year 6 pupils that aims to deliver a series of important messages in regard to Personal Safety, including online safety and bullying.
- The 'Walk Online' Roadshow, an evening event for pupils and parents from Years 3 to 6 which covers online safety and cyber-bullying.

### **Raising Awareness of Staff Through Training**

Staff awareness of bullying is raised through in-house staff training and meetings at which children's pastoral welfare is discussed and incidents shared.

All staff are required to remain constantly alert to bullying and the need to reduce the risk of it arising. They pay particular attention to times and locations where bullying might be more prevalent, such as break times and trips. Staff failing to deal with an incident appropriately will be required to undergo further training.

### **Review**

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.