

Mission Statement Motto: *Building relationships with God and each other, we work hard in faith and hope to give our best in everything*

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed: Spring 2024
Next review: Spring 2026

Core Values: *Respect, Honesty, Tolerance, Justice, Forgiveness*

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Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

Mission Statement

Holy Cross is a Catholic School. Its religious dimension lies at its heart and is fundamental to its existence. Its ethos is based around Christian values as laid down by the person of Jesus Christ, and exemplified in His teaching.

‘Building relationships with God and each other, working hard in faith and hope to give our best in all things.’

Our Mission Statement expresses this clearly:

Holy Cross is a Catholic school which seeks to build a closer partnership with parents, the parish and the wider community. We work hard to provide an environment which is secure, stimulating and happy and where everyone is appreciated and enabled to give of their best. We encourage all to have respect for each individual, to be honest, tolerant, just and forgiving and to develop a closer relationship with each other and through this, a closer relationship with God.

We recognise Jean Baptiste Debrabant’s vision that:

“A Christian based education is a sure hope for the future of religion and society.”

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, e.g. learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school’s curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school’s response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school’s Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

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- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- OnLine Safety policy
- Remote Education Policy

Introduction

It is a legal requirement, under Section 89 of the Schools and Inspections Act 2006, that all maintained schools must have in place measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, and that these should be part of the school's behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

The Department for Education guidance for schools entitled Don't Suffer in Silence and Bullying – A Charter for Action, has been followed by Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies (2011). This policy reflects this guidance and the principles enshrined therein. DfE guidance defines bullying as: "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally".

The guidance goes on to say that, "Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities". Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or excluded from social interaction).

WHAT IS BULLYING?

At Holy Cross school we see bullying as:-

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A systematic and extended victimisation of a person or group by another or group of others
When a child is repeatedly singled out to be 'picked on' either physically or verbally
Where the actions are deliberate and regular over a period of time
When the focus is on one child
When the intention is to hurt, isolate or humiliate an individual
When the actions are designed to be kept secret
When the actions are unprovoked We do not consider bullying to be:-
An isolated incident
A falling out
A 'one off' disagreement
Disruptive behaviour.

We see bullying as a shared problem. We encourage all members of our school community to recognise bullying, acknowledge its unacceptability and report it.

Bullying can be:

Racist; racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Homophobic; because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality

Emotional; being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Physical; pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence including damage to personal belongings

Verbal; name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threats, insults

Cyber; all areas of the internet, such as email, instant messaging & internet social networking misuse. Mobile technology, such as threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, such as cameras, video facilities and gaming consoles.

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour.

Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

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Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school

Statutory requirements

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

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PREVENTION – Stopping bullying happening

It is the responsibility of all within the school to maintain the ethos and behaviour rules which have been agreed. **Pupils need good models from adults**, from which they may develop their own self-discipline. We are committed to:

- Focusing on what is going well,
- Giving plenty of praise (but avoid overdoing this – it needs to keep its value),
- Making clear that it is the behaviour we do not want – not the child,
- Drawing attention to good behaviour,
- Giving clear and regular reminders of what is expected,
- Teaching good behaviour / manners through own conduct,
- Setting an example ourselves, in dress, manner, courtesy and care.

Similarly, we expect all adults to treat one another with respect so that appropriate models of behaviour are recognised by the children. If an adult feels bullied by another: parent, staff member, governor or member of the wider Trust, this should be immediately reported to the Headteacher, or if in relation to the Headteacher – the Chair of Governors.

Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Relationships and Health Education Policy.

The curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise abusive relationships and coercive control.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

A safe place, supervised by a teacher, will be available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. The teacher supervising the area will speak to

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pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's form tutor, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

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Strategies for preventing bullying include:

- All staff will make pupils aware of the problems that can be caused by bullying.

This is to be achieved through:

- whole class discussion,
- group discussions and,
- talking to individuals.

The theme of bullying is integrated into the PSHE and RE Curriculum.

A regular themed week takes place each year to highlight the effects of bullying (Anti-Bully Week).

All accessible areas of the school, such as cloakrooms, are supervised at the start and end of each day and at the start and end of break times so as to minimise the possibility of bullying occurring.

Class rules are established at the beginning of the school year which promote positive behaviour and agree class expectations. These rules are regularly referred to throughout the year.

Cyber-bullying is discouraged through e-safety training and our e-safety policies. Children are not allowed to be in possession of mobile phones during the school day.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING – Keeping Children Safe

It should be remembered that the whole purpose of any action taken by staff against bullies is to enable all pupils to come to school, feel safe and enjoy a happy and secure environment. Parents, pupils and staff should be left in no doubt that bullying, in all its forms, will not be tolerated.

All staff watch out for early signs of distress, which may include deterioration of work, unexplained illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults and erratic attendance. Staff understand that whilst these behaviours may be symptomatic of other problems, they may be early signs of bullying.

If bullying does occur:

Pupils are encouraged to find the help of an adult they trust and to stay where there are plenty of other pupils about and where an adult can see them.

In the first instance, staff will deal with incidents of bullying in the classroom and then report instances of bullying to the Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher who will take action where deemed necessary. This may include discussing with the whole staff or an

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individual teacher, establishing additional strategies to overcome the difficulties caused by bullying and discussing with those pupils involved within a peer group support approach.

Pupils who are bullying will be made aware that their actions are making other pupils unhappy in coming to school and that this goes against our school's mission and the school rules.

Pupils who have bullied need to know that these actions are not tolerated and should find ways to make amends through negotiation and discussion with the staff of the school.

If bullying persists:

The bully, or groups of bullies, will be withdrawn from the playground or classroom for a period of time and their parents will be informed of the action that has been taken.

Parents of the child being bullied will be informed.

Their behaviour will be monitored for a period of time so as to enable the school and home to work together to overcome problems.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

If bullying persists, further sanctions will incur, and support and prevention strategies will be put into place.

Ultimately, an exclusion from school may be given if the bullying behaviour does not stop – in line with the school's exclusions policy.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

The governing body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Head Teacher 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.

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The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying (in line with the school's complaints procedure). In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying policy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of it and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments, for example within school assemblies and collective worship.

The Head Teacher ensures that all staff receives sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Head Teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF

Adults in school attempt to support all children in their classes and strive to always establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

Adults must be careful not to label a child as a 'bully' because of disruptive or behavioural difficulties. Incidents such as these should be dealt with through the school's behaviour policy.

All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.

If adults witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied then after consultation with the Head Teacher, the class teacher informs the child's parents.

If adults become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, they deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying through the peer support group approach, and sanctions for the child who has been carrying out the bullying.

We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.

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If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying a child, the Head Teacher is informed. The child's parents are invited into school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Head Teacher may need to contact external support agencies.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Parents do not have the right to request that a bully be excluded from the school.

MONITORING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The number and types of bullying referrals, and questionnaires will be analysed. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed bi-annually, more if necessary and updated if required.

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