

SACRED HEART  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



LIVE LEARN LOVE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

APPROVED BY  
THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
DECEMBER 2024 – DECEMBER 2026

REVIEW DATE – DECEMBER 2026



## Statement of Intent

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere, which is firmly rooted in Gospel values. *Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.* (Definition from Anti-Bullying Alliance) Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

This policy was developed from consultation with staff and governors and is written in line with the DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, staff and Governing Bodies' July 2011 (Revised July 2017) and with advice and support from the Leicestershire Anti-Bullying Team.

This policy is supported by the following school policies: Behaviour, Safeguarding, Whistleblowing, Single Equalities and Acceptable use of ICT.

## Objectives of this Policy

The objectives of this policy are:

- To set out what bullying is and how we respond to bullying;
- To explain how we create a positive and anti-bullying culture and ethos;
- To reduce the instances of bullying throughout the school;
- To promote the acceptance, tolerance and respect of individual differences;
- To ensure that instances of bullying are reported so they can be investigated and recorded in line with this policy;
- To take steps to prevent (as far as possible) and deal effectively with any behaviour deemed as bullying.

## What Is Bullying?

Bullying can be largely defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. This is also known as **Several Times On Purpose – STOP**. Friends can, periodically, fall out and as such can be mean to one another. This should not happen, but it is not bullying.

We recognise the following kinds of bullying behaviours:

- Physical – pushing, hitting, kicking, punching or any other forms of violence; taking, hiding or damaging someone else's belongings
- Verbal – name-calling, threats, insulting, abusive remarks, nasty teasing
- Psychological / Emotional – spreading rumours, exclusion from games tormenting, humiliating, excluding from social groups, gesturing, body language
- Cyber – use of electrical devices, including mobile phones, gaming devices, apps, AI and social networking sites on the internet to deliberately upset someone

For this reason, our school's policy is that pupils should not have mobile phones in school. If, for any reason, a parent specifically requests that a child should be allowed a mobile phone, an assurance must be made that the phone will not be used during the school day. Parents are informed about this policy at the beginning of a new school year.

As detailed in the Equality Act 2010, we recognise the protected characteristics & will not tolerate the alleged victiming of individuals or groups because of:

- age
- disability or SEN
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race or culture
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

We also acknowledge that staff can be bullied. We will not accept the bullying of a member of staff by any child, parent or other member of staff. If incidents do occur, they should be reported to the headteacher. In the case of an allegation against the headteacher it should be reported to Neil Lockyer, the CEO of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (see Whistleblowing Policy).

### **Definitions of Types of Bullying**

Bullying based on sex (**sexist**) – is where the motivation for bullying is based on sexist language, attitudes and behaviours that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender.

### **Definitions for other forms of bullying**

Bullying based on **appearance** or **health conditions** – is where the motivation for bullying relates to the alleged victim's physical appearance (e.g. hair colour, body shape, or clothing), or a health condition (e.g. a disfigurement, a traumatic injury, or severe skin condition).

Bullying based on **home circumstance** – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the alleged victim's living arrangements (e.g. being a young carer or a child in care), geographic locality (i.e. where they live), their class background, whether they are from a low-income family or in receipt of free school meals.

Bullying based on race or ethnicity (**racist**) - is where the motivation for bullying is based on the alleged victims skin colour, culture, language, ethnicity or national origin.

Bullying based on religion or belief – is where the motivation for bullying relates to the alleged victim's beliefs, faith, or identity. It may also be because of a perception or assumption about religion, belief or lack of belief (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with an individual or group of a particular religion or belief.

Bullying based on disability (**disablist**) – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the alleged victim's real or perceived disability, special need, gifted or talented or health conditions or association with someone in those categories or association with someone with a disability/special need.

Bullying based on sexual orientation (**homophobic** or **biphobic**) – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the alleged victim's sexual orientation, or perceived orientation, or that of their family/friends and/or homophobic/biphobic abuse and language used. Bisexual people may experience homophobic bullying, but they are also likely to experience biphobic bullying.

Bullying based on gender reassignment (**transphobic**) – is when the motivation for bullying relates to the alleged victim being trans, or perceived to be trans, or their gender or gender identity being seen as different to typical gender norms. A person could also be alleged victimised because they have a trans family member.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults working with children should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child is exhibiting them. See Appendix.

## **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be an alleged victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to responding promptly and effectively to any issues of bullying. Pupils are strongly encouraged to report bullying in school.

## **Responsibilities**

The Governing Body of the school is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation. The lead staff in Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy are the Senior Leadership Team and our ELSA (Lucy Gunton, Rebecca Dowsett, Kathryn Doyle, Lisa Genco-Billington).

## **Reporting and Responding to bullying (Role of the Pupils)**

This is what we tell children to do if they are being bullied.  
We are a 'TELLING' school, so...

### **Tell someone about it!**

'Several Times On Purpose' – S.T.O.P

'Speak To Other People' – S.T.O.P

This is what we mean by a 'TELLING' school. Children can speak to a trusted school adult or they can share using a 'Worry Box' or teachers may see evidence of how a child is feeling within their work.

All adults at school take reports of bullying seriously and will act upon them. Children can also tell a trusted friend who will inform a school adult.

We expect bystanders (children, school staff and parents/ carers) to tell an adult in school where they witness bullying behaviours.

These messages are regularly reinforced during initiatives supported by the school including Anti-Bullying week.

### **What should parents/ carers do if they feel their child is being bullied? (Role of the Parents)**

Contact the school.

The first point of contact is the child's class teacher. It is important that parents feel confident to talk to staff about their concerns.

*The class teacher will:*

1. Clearly explain school policy and reassure the parent that the allegation will be followed up promptly
2. Agree a timescale to speak to the parent after investigations have been made
3. Inform the Headteacher or Assistant Headteachers of the incident and outcomes
4. Feedback to the parent and reassure that appropriate measures are being taken to ensure the well-being of their child in school

### **School staff will respond to reported incidents by taking the following actions:**

1. Class teacher/Head/ Assistant Headteachers will meet with the alleged victim and encourage them to talk about the incidents, issues and feelings
2. Arrange an appropriate programme of support to monitor and restore a child's well-being
3. Inform the alleged victim's parents
4. Collect information from other children if appropriate
5. Class teacher/Head/ Assistant Headteachers meet with the person displaying bullying behaviours and listen to their perception and perspective of the incidents and any motivation for the behaviour
6. If bullying has taken place, encourage the child displaying bullying behaviour to reflect on the unacceptable behaviour and understand that it must stop.
7. The Head/ Assistant Headteachers will decide at what point it is appropriate to make contact with the parent of the child displaying bullying behaviour

The following graduated sanctions may be used as part of the school behaviour procedures in line with the behaviour policy– these will be in relation to the severity of any incident:

- Reflection and restoration time during playtimes
- Apologise to the victim verbally at an appropriate time
- Parents invited into school to discuss incident and consequences
- Daily or weekly behaviour monitoring report
- Temporary removal to another class
- Withdrawal from participation in school visits or club activities that are not part of the statutory curriculum
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion if bullying persists
- Police notified if a criminal offence committed

**What will happen next?**

The Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers, ELSA and/or Class teacher will follow-up with the child(ren) concerned over the course of the first few weeks after a bullying incident and will monitor after that.

**How will we support the alleged victim?**

We will reassure the alleged victim of the bullying, and help them discuss how it made them feel and what they need to help support them, such as:

- Peer support/buddy
- Support from a trusted school adult, such as when they feel anxious or under pressure
- A phased return to school
- Things to do at break and lunchtime, supported by staff, so they are not alone (including use of the Peer Mediators) – this is available to all children, not just those who have been an alleged victim of bullying (Peer Mediators are children who have applied for this role and are trained by staff to assist their peers who are struggling). This may include activities/games with selected peers and have adults monitoring
- Use of ELSA room
- Helping to work towards reconciliation between the alleged victim and the child displaying bullying behaviour

**How will we work with the person displaying bullying behaviour to change their behaviour?**

We will support them by:

- Making sure they understand how to follow the school rules and the consequences if they break them
- Helping them learn empathy – learn the effects their behaviour choices have on others
- Working towards restoration and reconciliation with the alleged victim

**Bullying Outside School Premises**

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. Bullying will not be tolerated and the Headteacher has a statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises.

**Recording of incidents**

Incidents and allegations of bullying will be recorded on the CPOMS system – flagged as bullying. All academic members of staff can add an incident, and incidents can be shared with staff.

Reports will be run half-termly on CPOMS (to be shared and discussed with Governors) regarding bullying in an effort to spot patterns of behaviour which can then be addressed.

**Strategies we use to prevent bullying**

- We are proactive – as a Catholic School we promote tolerance, equality, respect and reconciliation and use restorative justice.
- We keep anti-bullying high profile through PSHE, Religious Education, RSHE and Computing lessons and other relevant subject areas and assemblies. (See SMSC grid)
- School rules and Catholic virtues are prominently displayed around the school

- We use praise and the school reward system (see School Behaviour Policy) to reinforce positive behaviour
- We have an anti-bullying week every year to highlight and promote the school's Anti-bullying Policy
- We regularly conduct a Pupil Attitude Survey which includes questions about bullying which is analysed and shared with all stakeholders.
- Difference and diversity is promoted and celebrated whenever possible as part of the taught curriculum
- Anti-bullying is a regular agenda item for School Parliament meetings and the Senior Leadership Team meetings.
- The whole school community is encouraged to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.
- Annual whole school safeguarding training which includes anti-bullying.
- We have a named Governor (Mrs Kathryn Gatward) responsible for monitoring bullying

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

### **If you think your concerns are not being addressed**

See school's complaints procedure.

### **HELP ORGANISATIONS:**

<a href="#">Advisory Centre for Education</a> (ACE)	0300 0115 142
<a href="#">Coram Children's Legal Centre</a>	0300 330 5485
<a href="#">KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline</a> (Mon-Tues, 9:30-2:30)	0300 102 4481
<a href="#">Family Lives</a>	0808 800 2222
<a href="#">Youth Access</a>	
<a href="#">Anti-bullying alliance</a>	

There are also a number of very useful and informative websites which deal with the issue of bullying. The Local Authorities website is particularly good.

[www.beyondbullying.com](http://www.beyondbullying.com)

In terms of E-Safety please visit the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection command) page

[www.thinkyouknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk)

Signed by

Head Teacher

B. Monaghan

Chair of Governors

Review Date      December 2026

Appendix:

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is unwilling to come to school
- Begins to truant
- Feels ill in the morning or before a particular lesson, or claims to feel ill
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Stops eating
- Suddenly starts getting low marks
- Becomes very emotional and tearful
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received