St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved: September 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027

1. Our Catholic Mission

At St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child is made in the image and likeness of God, loved unconditionally and worthy of equal dignity and respect.

Our mission, Inspiring Lives, calls us to create a community in which every child feels safe, valued, respected and able to flourish.

Our Catholic understanding of the human person means that we expect everyone in our school community to treat others with dignity, kindness, compassion, forgiveness and respect.

Bullying is contrary to our Gospel values and will not be tolerated.

We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, sense of belonging, confidence, attendance and ability to learn. We therefore take all concerns seriously and respond promptly, sensitively and proportionately.

We aim not simply to stop bullying, but to build a culture in which bullying is prevented, reported, challenged and addressed.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy explains how St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School will:

- prevent bullying;
- identify bullying;
- provide clear routes for reporting concerns;
- investigate allegations fairly and sensitively;
- support pupils who experience bullying;
- support pupils whose behaviour has caused harm;
- respond to cyberbullying and online behaviour;
- address prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- respond to bullying linked to protected characteristics;
- work with parents and carers;
- identify safeguarding concerns;
- record and monitor incidents;
- use appropriate consequences and interventions; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of our approach.

The policy applies to all pupils and to bullying that takes place:

- on the school premises;
- during the school day;
- during school trips and educational visits;
- on school transport;
- during before- and after-school provision;
- online;
- outside school where there is a connection to the school or an impact on the school community; and
- in other circumstances where the school reasonably considers that action is required to protect pupils.

3. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children Act 1989;
- Education Act 2002;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff;
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children; and
- relevant safeguarding and online safety guidance.

All state schools are required to have a behaviour policy which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying. The school's approach will also reflect current Department for Education guidance on preventing and tackling bullying.

4. What is Bullying?

There is no single statutory legal definition of bullying.

At St John Henry Newman, bullying is understood as:

Unwanted behaviour that causes harm, intimidation or offence and may be repeated, or may consist of a single particularly serious incident. Bullying often involves a real or perceived imbalance of power and may be physical, verbal, emotional, social, psychological or online.

Bullying can include:

- physical aggression;
- hitting, kicking or pushing;
- threatening behaviour;
- name-calling;
- insults;
- teasing;
- intimidation;
- deliberately excluding someone;
- spreading rumours;
- humiliating someone;
- repeated unkind or hostile behaviour;
- damaging or taking belongings;
- discriminatory or prejudicial language;
- sexual harassment;
- online abuse;
- sharing humiliating images or information;
- encouraging others to target an individual; and
- behaviour designed to make someone feel unsafe, frightened or isolated.

The school recognises that bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group.

Bullying may occur face-to-face or through digital technology.

5. Bullying and Other Incidents

Not every disagreement, friendship difficulty or incident of unkind behaviour is bullying.

For example, the following may not constitute bullying:

- a one-off disagreement;
- an accidental incident;
- an isolated argument;
- a friendship falling out;
- children choosing different friends or groups;
- an inappropriate comment which is immediately addressed and does not form part of a wider pattern.

However, an incident does not have to meet a narrow definition of repeated bullying before the school will respond.

A one-off incident may require a significant response where it causes serious harm, intimidation or offence.

Staff will therefore focus on the impact, context, intent, seriousness and circumstances of the behaviour rather than simply asking whether something has happened repeatedly.

6. Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms.

6.1 Physical bullying

Including:

- hitting;
- kicking;
- pushing;
- tripping;
- spitting;
- damaging property;
- taking possessions; or
- physically intimidating another pupil.

6.2 Verbal bullying

Including:

- name-calling;

- insults;
- threats;
- mocking;
- repeated teasing;
- humiliating comments; or
- offensive or discriminatory language.

6.3 Social or relational bullying

Including:

- deliberately excluding someone;
- encouraging others not to play with someone;
- spreading rumours;
- manipulating friendships;
- public humiliation; or
- deliberately isolating another pupil.

6.4 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may take place through:

- messaging services;
- social media;
- online games;
- group chats;
- email;
- image or video sharing;
- online platforms; or
- other digital communication.

Cyberbullying can take place outside school and still require a school response where it affects pupils or the school community.

6.5 Prejudice-based bullying

The school will take particularly seriously bullying connected to:

- race;
- ethnicity;
- nationality;
- religion or belief;
- disability or SEND;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- family circumstances;
- appearance;
- health conditions;
- caring responsibilities;
- being looked after or previously looked after; or
- any other characteristic or circumstance which makes a pupil vulnerable to discrimination or exclusion.

Such behaviour may also constitute discrimination, harassment, hate-related behaviour or a safeguarding concern.

7. Child-on-Child Abuse

Bullying can overlap with child-on-child abuse.

Where behaviour involves sexual violence, sexual harassment, coercion, exploitation, serious intimidation, threats, violence or other safeguarding concerns, staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report the concern to the DSL/DDSL.

The school will not treat serious child-on-child abuse simply as a behaviour or bullying matter.

Staff must not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

The DSL will determine the appropriate safeguarding response, including whether external agencies should be involved.

This reflects the child-centred safeguarding approach required by KCSIE 2026.

8. Our Approach to Prevention

Preventing bullying is the responsibility of the whole school community.

We will promote:

- positive relationships;
- respect;
- kindness;
- inclusion;
- empathy;
- forgiveness;
- resilience;
- emotional literacy;
- confidence;
- respect for difference;
- responsible online behaviour;
- Gospel values; and
- a strong sense of belonging.

Our approach is based on the principle that what we walk past is what we accept.

Staff are expected to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour consistently rather than allowing low-level incidents to become normalised.

9. Catholic Life and Mission

Anti-bullying work is embedded within the Catholic life of the school.

Children are taught that:

- every person has inherent dignity;
- everyone is created and loved by God;
- we have a responsibility to care for one another;
- our actions affect others;
- forgiveness and reconciliation are important;
- we should stand up for those who are vulnerable;
- differences should be respected and celebrated; and
- we have a responsibility to contribute to the common good.

Gospel values, prayer, assemblies, RE, PSHE and Catholic Social Teaching provide regular opportunities to explore these themes.

10. Curriculum and Education

Anti-bullying education will be incorporated through:

- PSHE;
- Relationships Education;
- Religious Education;
- assemblies;
- class discussions;
- prayer and reflection;
- online safety education;
- Children's Mental Health and wellbeing work;
- Anti-Bullying Week;
- pupil leadership;
- school events;
- literature and stories; and
- age-appropriate discussion of prejudice and discrimination.

Children will be taught:

- what bullying is;
- what bullying is not;
- how to recognise bullying;
- how to report concerns;
- how to support others;
- how to respond safely;
- how to use technology responsibly; and

- how their behaviour affects others.

11. Creating a Safe Environment
The school will consider the environments and times in which bullying is most likely to occur.
Staff will provide appropriate supervision during:
- arrival and dismissal;
- breaktimes;
- lunchtimes;
- transitions;
- corridors;
- playground activities;
- before- and after-school provision; and
- educational visits.

The school will consider pupil feedback, behaviour records and staff observations to identify locations or circumstances where additional supervision or intervention may be required.
Children will be encouraged to identify places where they do not feel safe.

12. Recognising Possible Signs of Bullying
Staff should remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour or presentation.
Possible indicators include:
- reluctance to attend school;
- changes in attendance;
- becoming withdrawn;
- sudden changes in mood;
- anxiety;
- loss of confidence;
- unexplained physical complaints;
- changes in friendships;
- loss or damage to belongings;
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns;
- reduced engagement with learning;
- increased emotional distress;
- reluctance to use particular areas of the school;
- increased use or avoidance of digital devices; or
- a sudden change in behaviour.

These signs may have many causes and should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of bullying.
However, staff should take concerns seriously and explore them sensitively.

13. Reporting Bullying
Any pupil, parent/carer, member of staff or visitor can report a bullying concern.
Pupils can speak to:
- their class teacher;
- another trusted adult;
- a member of the pastoral team;
- a member of the Senior Leadership Team;
- the Headteacher;
- the DSL/DDSL where safeguarding is involved; or
- another adult they feel comfortable approaching.

Children should be encouraged to speak up if they are experiencing bullying or believe someone else is being bullied.
Reports should always be taken seriously.
A child should never be told simply to "ignore it" or be made to feel responsible for resolving the situation themselves.

14. Responding to a Report
When a bullying concern is raised, the member of staff receiving the report will:
1. listen carefully;
2. remain calm and reassuring;

3. thank the child for speaking up;
4. establish the immediate facts;
5. consider whether there is an immediate safeguarding concern;
6. ensure the child is safe;
7. report the concern to the appropriate member of staff;
8. record the concern appropriately; and
9. ensure appropriate follow-up takes place.

Staff should avoid:

- making promises about confidentiality;
- confronting an alleged perpetrator immediately in front of others;
- dismissing the concern;
- telling pupils to retaliate;
- conducting an inappropriate investigation;
- making assumptions about what has happened; or
- requiring children to resolve serious incidents themselves.

15. Investigation

The school will investigate bullying concerns promptly, sensitively and fairly.

The response will normally include:

Step 1 – Initial information

The school will establish:

- what has been reported;
- who is involved;
- when and where incidents occurred;
- whether there have been previous concerns;
- whether there are witnesses;
- whether there is digital evidence; and
- whether there are safeguarding concerns.

Step 2 – Individual conversations

Where appropriate, the school will speak separately with:

- the pupil reporting the concern;
- witnesses;
- the pupil whose behaviour is being investigated; and
- relevant staff.

Children will normally be spoken to individually before any restorative or joint meeting is considered.

Step 3 – Evidence

Evidence may include:

- pupil accounts;
- staff observations;
- witness accounts;
- written information;
- digital evidence;
- photographs or screenshots;
- behaviour records; and
- relevant CCTV where available and appropriate.

Digital evidence should be preserved where relevant.

Step 4 – Assessment

The school will consider:

- whether the behaviour meets the school's definition of bullying;
- the seriousness of the behaviour;
- the impact on the child;
- whether there is a pattern;
- whether there is an imbalance of power;
- whether the behaviour is discriminatory or prejudicial;
- whether safeguarding concerns are present; and
- what action is required.

16. Recording

All bullying allegations and confirmed incidents will be recorded using the school's designated recording system.
At StJHN, the Behaviour Folder on Staff Teams will be used for the central bullying log.
Records should include, where appropriate:

- date and time;
- pupils involved;
- location;
- nature of the allegation;
- type of bullying;
- relevant evidence;
- witnesses;
- action taken;
- parents/carers informed;
- outcome;
- sanctions or interventions;
- support provided; and
- follow-up arrangements.

Where a concern raises a safeguarding issue, the relevant information must also be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

17. Supporting the Pupil Experiencing Bullying

The school will consider the individual needs of the pupil and may provide:

- a trusted adult;
- regular check-ins;
- pastoral support;
- emotional literacy work;
- support with friendships;
- support with confidence and resilience;
- increased supervision;
- safe spaces;
- adjustments to routines;
- support with online safety;
- parental involvement; and
- external agency support where appropriate.

Support will continue after the immediate incident has been addressed where this is necessary.
The school will monitor whether the behaviour has stopped and whether the pupil feels safe.

18. Supporting the Pupil Whose Behaviour Has Caused Harm

The school recognises that children who bully may also require support.
This does not excuse their behaviour.
Where appropriate, the school will seek to understand:

- why the behaviour occurred;
- whether there are unmet needs;
- whether there are safeguarding concerns;
- whether the child understands the impact of their actions;
- whether there are friendship or social difficulties;
- whether SEND may be relevant;
- whether additional behaviour support is required; and
- what intervention may prevent repetition.

Support may include:

- restorative work;
- behaviour support;
- social and emotional support;
- individual intervention;
- pastoral support;
- parental involvement;
- SEND assessment or review; and

- external agency involvement.

The school will address the behaviour, while maintaining the dignity of the child.

19. Consequences and Sanctions

Bullying is unacceptable and may result in sanctions under the school's Behaviour Policy.

The response will be proportionate to:

- the seriousness of the behaviour;
- the impact on others;
- the age and understanding of the pupil;
- the circumstances;
- whether the behaviour was deliberate;
- whether there is a pattern of behaviour;
- previous interventions; and
- any relevant SEND or safeguarding considerations.

Possible responses include:

- restorative work;
- apology or reparation;
- loss of privileges;
- behaviour intervention;
- parental involvement;
- individual behaviour plans;
- pastoral intervention;
- sanctions under the Behaviour Policy;
- suspension; or
- permanent exclusion in the most serious circumstances.

Bullying will not automatically result in suspension or exclusion. Equally, the school will not avoid significant sanctions simply because behaviour has been labelled as "bullying".

20. Restorative Practice

Restorative approaches may be used where they are appropriate and safe.

A restorative conversation may help pupils:

- understand the impact of their actions;
- listen to others;
- accept responsibility;
- repair relationships;
- make amends; and
- identify how behaviour can change.

Restorative practice will not be used where it would place a victim at further risk or pressure a child to meet with someone they do not feel safe meeting.

A pupil experiencing bullying will never be required to participate in a restorative meeting simply to resolve the school's concern.

21. Cyberbullying

Where cyberbullying is reported, the school will:

- act promptly;
- support the pupil affected;
- establish what has happened;
- encourage appropriate preservation of evidence;
- consider screenshots or other digital evidence;
- identify those involved where possible;
- consider whether school devices or systems are involved;
- follow the school's searching and confiscation procedures where relevant;
- work with parents/carers;
- consider whether an online platform should be contacted;
- consider police involvement where a criminal offence may have occurred;
- apply appropriate school sanctions where the behaviour falls within the school's disciplinary jurisdiction; and
- provide online safety education and support.

Children will be encouraged not to retaliate online.
The school may respond to online behaviour occurring outside school where it has an impact on pupils, staff or the orderly operation of the school.

22. Prejudice-Based Bullying
The school will respond firmly to behaviour involving prejudice or discrimination.
Particular care will be taken where bullying relates to:

- race;
- ethnicity;
- nationality;
- religion or belief;
- disability;
- SEND;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- family circumstances; or
- other characteristics protected by law.

The school will consider whether the incident should also be recorded as a safeguarding, equality or discriminatory incident.
Staff will challenge discriminatory language, including language described as "banter", where it conflicts with the school's values and expectations.

23. SEND and Vulnerable Pupils
The school recognises that some pupils may be particularly vulnerable to bullying.
This may include pupils who:

- have SEND;
- have an EHCP;
- have social, emotional or mental health needs;
- are disabled;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- have a social worker;
- are young carers;
- have experienced trauma;
- are new to the school;
- have English as an additional language; or
- experience other circumstances which may increase vulnerability.

The school will consider whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required.
Where behaviour involving a pupil with SEND is being investigated, the school will consider whether the pupil's needs have affected their ability to understand or respond to the situation.

24. Parents and Carers
Parents and carers are important partners in preventing and addressing bullying.
Parents are encouraged to:

- talk regularly with their child;
- listen carefully to concerns;
- encourage children to report bullying;
- contact the school promptly where concerns arise;
- avoid encouraging retaliation;
- preserve relevant online evidence;
- work constructively with the school; and
- reinforce positive relationships and behaviour at home.

Where a bullying concern is investigated, parents/carers will normally be informed of the outcome and any actions relevant to their child.
The school will respect confidentiality and will not disclose personal information about another child.

25. If Parents Are Concerned

Parents/carers should normally:

1. contact the child's class teacher;
2. explain the concern clearly;
3. provide any relevant information or evidence;
4. allow the school an appropriate opportunity to investigate; and
5. contact a member of SLT or the Headteacher if they remain concerned following the initial response.

Where a parent remains dissatisfied with the school's response, the school's Complaints Policy provides the appropriate route for raising concerns about how the school has handled a matter.

26. Safeguarding

Bullying concerns will be considered alongside the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

The DSL/DDSL must be informed where bullying involves:

- threats of serious harm;
- violence;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;
- coercion;
- exploitation;
- abuse;
- serious intimidation;
- discriminatory abuse;
- self-harm concerns;
- significant emotional distress;
- online exploitation;
- criminal behaviour; or
- any other safeguarding concern.

The school will follow its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and will make referrals to external agencies where required.

27. The Role of Staff

All staff have responsibility for preventing and responding to bullying.

Staff will:

- model respectful behaviour;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- challenge unkind and discriminatory behaviour;
- listen to pupils;
- take reports seriously;
- record concerns;
- report safeguarding concerns;
- follow this policy;
- support affected pupils;
- use behaviour procedures consistently; and
- contribute to a positive school culture.

Staff must not ignore behaviour because it appears to be "just banter", "children being children" or a "friendship issue".

28. The Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and SLT will:

- oversee implementation of this policy;
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities;
- ensure concerns are investigated appropriately;
- monitor bullying incidents;
- identify patterns;
- ensure parents are informed appropriately;
- liaise with the DSL;
- ensure appropriate sanctions and interventions are used;

- provide support to staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of preventative measures; and
- report relevant information to governors.

A member of SLT will have designated responsibility for overseeing the school's bullying records and monitoring arrangements.

29. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- provide safeguarding advice where required;
- ensure relevant concerns are recorded on CPOMS;
- identify patterns or links with wider safeguarding concerns;
- make referrals to external agencies where appropriate;
- support staff in distinguishing bullying from other safeguarding concerns;
- contribute to risk assessment and safety planning; and
- ensure child-on-child abuse concerns are managed through safeguarding procedures.

30. The Role of Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- treat others with dignity and respect;
- follow the school's behaviour expectations;
- speak up when they experience or witness bullying;
- tell a trusted adult;
- support others appropriately;
- avoid joining in with bullying;
- avoid sharing harmful online content;
- report harmful online behaviour; and
- contribute to a kind and inclusive school community.

Pupils will be encouraged to understand that being a bystander can contribute to bullying continuing.

31. Pupil Voice and Leadership

The school will provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to contribute to anti-bullying work through:

- Pupil Voice;
- school leadership roles;
- class discussions;
- assemblies;
- pupil questionnaires;
- school council activities;
- Anti-Bullying Week;
- playground and lunchtime leadership; and
- other pupil-led initiatives.

The school will use pupil feedback to identify concerns about safety, relationships and bullying.

32. Staff Training

Staff will receive appropriate information and training to:

- recognise bullying;
- understand different forms of bullying;
- identify prejudice-based bullying;
- recognise cyberbullying;
- understand child-on-child abuse;
- respond appropriately to disclosures;
- record concerns;
- use restorative approaches appropriately;
- understand safeguarding responsibilities; and
- implement the school's Behaviour Policy consistently.

Training will include teaching, pastoral, administrative, lunchtime and other staff as appropriate.

33. Monitoring and Evaluation
The school will maintain a central record of bullying concerns.
The SLT will review the bullying log termly to identify:

- patterns;
- repeat incidents;
- locations;
- times of day;
- year groups;
- types of bullying;
- pupils repeatedly involved;
- prejudice-related incidents;
- cyberbullying;
- safeguarding links;
- effectiveness of interventions; and
- any emerging concerns.

The school will consider whether changes to:

- supervision;
- staffing;
- curriculum;
- behaviour systems;
- pastoral provision;
- safeguarding arrangements; or
- physical environments

are required as a result.
The Governing Body will receive an appropriate summary of bullying data and trends at least annually.

34. Confidentiality and Information Sharing
The school will handle information about bullying sensitively.
However, staff cannot promise complete confidentiality where information indicates that a child may be at risk of harm.
Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding, data protection and information-sharing requirements.
Parents will be informed about matters relating to their own child but will not normally be provided with confidential information about another pupil.

35. Bullying Beyond the School Gate
The school may take action where bullying occurs outside the school premises or outside school hours if:

- it involves pupils from StJHN;
- it affects the safety or wellbeing of pupils;
- it has a significant impact on school life;
- it takes place on school transport;
- it occurs during an educational visit;
- it occurs through online communication; or
- it otherwise affects the orderly operation of the school.

This includes cyberbullying.
The school's Behaviour Policy will be used alongside this policy where disciplinary action is appropriate.

36. Bullying of Staff
Bullying, harassment, intimidation or threatening behaviour towards school staff is unacceptable.
Concerns involving parents, pupils or other members of the community should be addressed through the appropriate school procedures.
Where concerns involve a pupil, the school will consider whether the behaviour constitutes a safeguarding, behaviour or disciplinary matter.
Where concerns involve an adult, the school will follow relevant employment, safeguarding, complaints or premises-management procedures as appropriate.
The school will have regard to current DfE guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff.

37. External Support

Where appropriate, the school may seek advice or support from:

- the Local Authority;
- safeguarding partners;
- police;
- social care;
- SEND services;
- educational psychology;
- health professionals;
- specialist organisations;
- the Anti-Bullying Alliance;
- NSPCC;
- Childline; and
- other relevant agencies.

External support will be considered according to the needs and circumstances of the individual case.

38. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy;
- RSE Policy;
- PSHE Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy; and
- Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy.

Appendix 1 – Quick Response Guide for Staff

If a child reports bullying:

1. Listen.

Take the concern seriously.

2. Reassure.

Thank the child for speaking to you.

3. Establish the immediate facts.

Do not interrogate or conduct a full investigation.

4. Check safety.

Is the child safe now? Is anyone at immediate risk?

5. Report.

Inform the appropriate teacher/SLT member/DSL.

6. Record.

Use the school's agreed recording system.

7. Investigate.

Relevant pupils and witnesses should normally be spoken to separately.

8. Act.

Use appropriate behaviour, pastoral and/or safeguarding procedures.

9. Inform.

Keep parents/carers appropriately informed.

10. Follow up.

Check that the behaviour has stopped and that the pupil feels safe.

Appendix 2 – Questions to Consider When Investigating

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What was said or done?
- When and where did it happen?
- Has it happened before?
- What was the impact?
- Was there an imbalance of power?
- Was the behaviour deliberate?
- Could the behaviour be prejudice-related?
- Could this be child-on-child abuse?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?
- Is there digital evidence?
- Are there witnesses?
- Does SEND or disability need to be considered?
- What support does the affected pupil need?
- What support or intervention does the other pupil need?
- What consequence is proportionate?
- What follow-up is required?

Appendix 3 – Child-Friendly Message

At StJHN, we want everyone to feel safe, valued and included.

Bullying is not OK.

If someone is hurting you, frightening you, leaving you out on purpose, saying unkind things repeatedly, threatening you or hurting you online:

Tell someone.

You can speak to:

- your teacher;
- another adult in school;
- a member of the pastoral team;
- a member of SLT;
- the Headteacher; or
- another adult you trust.

You can also tell an adult if you see someone else being bullied.

You will be listened to.

You will be taken seriously.

You do not have to deal with bullying on your own.

At StJHN, we love, learn and serve by treating one another with dignity, kindness and respect.