The Holy Family
Catholic School
a voluntary academy

Policy:
Anti-Bullying Strategy

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At The Holy Family Catholic School, our policies and the actions arising from them are always founded in spirit and in letter in our Catholic faith, especially our mission statement and nine core virtues:

Awakening Minds

Our faith, the teachings of Christ, is at our heart. We devote ourselves fully to our spiritual growth, striving for excellence in all that we do each day.

Achieving Dreams

Our work blends inspirational teaching and confident study in a stimulating environment. We learn wholeheartedly, turning our ambitions into reality with every opportunity.

Serving Others

Our spirit leads us to take a positive role in our community. We show love, care and respect for one another and for everyone in our world today.

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Introduction

At The Holy Family Catholic School we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere which is focussed on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. Our policies and procedures are based on our core virtues of 'Awakening Minds, Achieving Dreas and Serving Others'. We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

At The Holy Family Catholic School we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2024) .

This policy is available:

- Online on the school website

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Policy development and review

- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness

- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents

- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate

- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

What is bullying and how does it differ to relationship conflict?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

"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".

Bullying is not when children have the odd argument, fall out or engage in a one off tussle. Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and self-worth; it is the responsibility of all staff to actively support children who are being bullied and to act in a supportive and confidential manner if a child approaches them with an allegation of bullying.

There are four key elements to this definition:

- hurtful
- repetition
- power imbalance (difficult for victims to defend themselves against)
- intentional

Bullying will be treated as a safeguarding/child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The School will then follow the Safeguarding policy.

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relationship conflicts' or falling out. Relationship conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relationship conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relationship conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relationship conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relationship conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relationship conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and

that <u>all</u> pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

What does bullying behaviour look like?

We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- **Physical bullying** - Unprovoked assault on a person or group which can range from a 'prod', pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc. to grievous bodily harm
- **Psychological/emotional -** Reduction of a person's self-esteem or confidence through threatening behaviour, isolating others, tormenting, hiding/taking possessions, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, appearance, or any other feature of their lives which can be used to wound them.
- **Social –** being ostracised or exclusion from peer groups.
- **Verbal** - The use of language in a derogatory or offensive manner, such as swearing, racist or sexist abuse, homophobic abuse, sexual innuendo, spreading rumours, name calling, sarcasm, insulting, threats, teasing, belittling etc.
- **Online /cyber** - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- **Discriminatory Bullying: Homophobic bullying or gender bullying** - Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay, bisexuals or transgender individuals or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Who experiences homophobic or gender bullying?

This can affect anyone, regardless of whether they are gay, bisexual or trans. It can affect:

- children or young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
- children or young people who are thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
- children or young people who do not fit a perceived gender stereotype or seem different.
- children or young people who have parents, carers, friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
- teachers and other school staff who are, or are thought to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Discriminatory Bullying: Race, disability or faith. Any hostile or offensive action because of their race, their disability or their faith.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Cyberbullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click (*From DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017*)

> More than the well-established forms of bullying, it can significantly add to victims' sense of insecurity. Victims can be contacted anonymously in places and at times which they once thought safe, particularly through social networking sites and messaging services. (LBTH. 2011)

> Cyberbullying has similarities to traditional bullying and much of the guidance and advice in relation to bullying applies. However, there are some differences which can be summarised as follows:

- Bullying can happen 24/7 making it difficult to escape.
- The audience for bullying is potentially much larger increasing the impact.
- Cyberbullying incidents can quickly escalate making them difficult to contain.
- Anonymity and being one step removed makes it easier for the bystander to join in.
- Anonymity also increases the impact on those being bullied as they can't be sure who is responsible.
- There is a general lack of awareness that behaviour is cyberbullying and young people tend to underestimate the impact of their behaviour.
- Unlike traditional forms of bullying, evidence is readily available and should be preserved.

How we support our staff and students in understanding cyberbullying:

1) Staff will receive training in Online Safety, identifying cyberbullying and understanding their responsibilities in promoting Online Safety. Staff will be helped to keep up to date with the technologies that children are using and being aware of the reporting tools on different sites and services, to support students in making a report.

2) Students will be educated about cyberbullying through a variety of means, including Computing lessons, PSHE lessons, assemblies, Anti-bullying Week, Safer Internet Day and other projects.

3) We will be proactive in discussing cyberbullying with students, including how and why it occurs and the consequences of such behaviour. Teaching students what is considered morally right and wrong offline 'in the real world' must also be thought of in the same way online.

4) Students will sign an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) as they begin a new school year, before they are allowed to use school computer equipment and the internet in school. This will involve discussions about keeping personal information safe and appropriate use of the internet. *This can be shared with parents to discuss its contents with their children.*

5) Parents will be provided with information and advice about Online Safety and cyberbullying via the website, leaflets, and workshops

6) Students and staff will be involved in evaluating and improving policies and procedures.

Procedures when responding to cyberbullying incidents:

1) All incidents should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure the person being bullied is supported and take responsibility for investigating and managing the incident.
2) The incident will be reported to other people/organisations where relevant i.e. parents/carers, internet or mobile providers, local authority, and, in some cases, the police.
3) All efforts will be made to try to contain the incident when content has been circulated to other people.
4) The DSL will investigate and record all incidents of cyberbullying, in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying policy.

   NB: The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teacher's stronger powers to tackle cyberbullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

5) Staff and students should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse e.g. save phone messages; record/screenshot/print instant messenger conversations or social network pages; print, save and forward whole email messages to staff.
   NB: If images are involved, it will be determined whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so, the DSL will be contacted, who may involve the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), the local police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content, or CEOP http://ceop.police.uk
6) The person responsible for bullying will be identified. The school will work with them to make them aware of the consequences of their actions and try to change their behaviour - take into account anyone who passed on emails or texts or posted responses online.
7) Disciplinary sanctions will be applied as outlined in the school's Behaviour Policy. Consider whether a restorative approach to resolving the matter might be appropriate.
8) Consider whether the matter should be reported to the police – the age of criminal responsibility is 10. (See laws that may have been broken)
9) Confiscate any device(s) if appropriate.

Responding to Incidents of Bullying

Where does bullying take place?

We understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

How to report bullying concerns

We want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems, and the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

Procedures When Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, a TA, the Head teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on CPOMS, and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relationship conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Parents/carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's Year Manager (in person/via telephone call/via email/) to explain their concerns. They will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for

more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the Year Manager will make a formal record of the bullying report on CPOMS and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers contact the school directly with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

We remain committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relationship conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relationship conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School staff

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told and record this on CPOMS.

Visitors

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to (the member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit e.g., supply teacher, governor, external agency etc.).

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.

How our school will respond to reports of bullying

All reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relationship conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and affected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on our school's CPOMS recording system. These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's preventative work.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some of our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses

- Talk to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)

- Implement appropriate sanctions in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These sanctions will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable

- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate

- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, Local Authority etc.)

- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.)

- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate

- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – a DSL may then refer to Bradford CFT.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

Strategies for preventing bullying

We are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)

- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)

- Robust RSHE curriculum for all year groups

- Robust PSHE curriculum for all year groups

- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying

- Themed assemblies to promote equality and tackle prejudice

- End of term / end of academic year celebration events

- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.

- Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs etc.

- Lego therapy / anxiety gremlins/ counselling for identified students

- Specific interventions for identified individuals or groups

- Regular staff training and development for all staff

- All staff model expected behaviour

Breaches / Complaints

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website, and on request from the school office.

Links with other policies

You may find it helpful to read this Anti-Bullying policy alongside the other following school policies:

Policy	How it may link
Child-on-child Abuse, Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy	Includes links to bullying – specifically sexualised bullying and exploitation
Behaviour Policy	Includes details about the rewards and sanctions for pupils
Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy	Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding
Online Safety / E-Safety / Acceptable Use Policies	Includes information about children's online behaviour and details about online bullying/cyberbullying
Equalities Policy	Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics
RSHE / PSHE Policy	Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying
Complaints Policy	Includes information about how to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the school's response

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.