St Anne Line Catholic Infant School

part of the wider Christus Trust, Multi Academy Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy

Love Learn Pray

Ratified by Governors: November 2026, review date: November 2027

Date of policy	November 2026
Review date	November 2027

1. Purpose

At St Anne Line Catholic Infant School and Nursery, we are committed to providing a safe, happy, welcoming and inclusive environment in which every child and adult is valued, respected and able to flourish. Guided by our Catholic mission, "With Jesus, we love, we learn, we pray, together we grow our school each day", we recognise the dignity and uniqueness of every person.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The safety, welfare and well-being of our children and staff are central to our work. We take all concerns seriously and work together as a whole school community to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

We promote the Gospel values of love, respect, compassion, forgiveness and justice. We celebrate the diversity of our community and help children to understand that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and deserves to be treated with kindness and dignity. Our school expectations — Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Ready — underpin our approach.

We regularly monitor, review and evaluate our preventative work and our response to incidents. This policy should be read alongside the Behaviour and Relationships Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Equality Policy, PSHE/RSHE Policy, Online Safety Policy and relevant trust policies.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is deliberately hurtful, repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power, making it difficult for the person being targeted to defend themselves. It may be carried out by an individual or a group. The STOP acronym can help children and adults recognise bullying: Several Times On Purpose.

A single incident of unkind behaviour is not necessarily bullying, but it is still unacceptable and will be addressed. Repeated behaviour will be monitored carefully, including where individual incidents may appear minor when considered in isolation.

Bullying may take different forms:

- Physical — hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, intimidating someone or unwanted physical contact.
- Verbal — name-calling, teasing, threats, insults or using hurtful or derogatory language.
- Social or emotional — deliberately excluding, ignoring, humiliating or spreading rumours about someone.
- Damage to or interference with property — taking, hiding or damaging another person's belongings.
- Cyberbullying — using digital technology, messaging, games or online platforms to send or share hurtful content or to target someone.

Bullying may be related to a person's race, ethnicity, culture, religion or belief, sex, disability or special educational needs, appearance, health, family circumstances, or another aspect of their identity or perceived difference. Any prejudice-based behaviour is taken seriously.

3. Child-on-child abuse

We recognise that children can harm or bully other children, including through physical, verbal, emotional and online behaviour. Child-on-child abuse is not tolerated. We take a whole-school approach to prevention, early identification and appropriate response.

Where a concern indicates possible child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour, staff will follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider the needs and safety of all children involved, take a contextual approach and seek advice or make referrals where appropriate. Support will be provided to children who have been affected, and concerns will not be dismissed as 'banter' or simply part of growing up.

4. Preventing bullying and building positive relationships

Prevention is a shared responsibility. We aim to create a culture in which children feel safe to speak up, adults notice changes in behaviour and everyone understands how to treat others.

- Our Catholic ethos and daily life promote love of neighbour, dignity, inclusion, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- The school expectations — Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Ready — are explicitly taught, modelled and reinforced.
- The PSHE and RSHE curriculum, including Ten Ten's Life to the Full, provides age-appropriate opportunities to explore friendships, feelings, respect, difference, boundaries, seeking help and resolving disagreements.
- Class worship, prayer, assemblies and the wider Catholic life of the school reinforce our responsibility to care for one another and stand up for what is right.
- Anti-Bullying Week and other relevant awareness events are used to develop children's understanding through stories, discussion, role-play and practical activities.
- Books, displays, resources and learning experiences reflect and celebrate the diversity of our school community and challenge stereotypes.
- Online safety is taught through the Computing curriculum and reinforced through age-appropriate reminders about safe and respectful use of technology.
- Staff promote inclusive play, support children to develop friendships and help children who may be lonely, vulnerable or finding social situations difficult.
- Children are taught how to seek help from a trusted adult and are reminded that telling an adult is the right thing to do.

5. Recognising and reporting bullying

Children are encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they are being hurt, frightened, repeatedly left out or worried about someone else. They should not retaliate. Adults will listen, reassure them and take their concern seriously.

Children may speak to their class teacher, another teacher, a teaching assistant, a lunchtime member of staff, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or another trusted adult in school. Parents and carers can also share concerns with the class teacher or contact the School Office.

As many of our children are in the Early Years and infant age range, staff recognise that children may not have the language or confidence to explain what is happening. Adults will pay attention to changes in behaviour, play patterns, friendships, emotional presentation and attendance, and will use age-appropriate ways to help children communicate worries.

Parents and carers are encouraged to report concerns promptly, sharing what their child has said or what they have noticed. The school will listen, gather information and explain the next steps. Parents and carers should encourage children not to retaliate and reassure them that adults will help.

All staff, including teaching staff, support staff, lunchtime staff, volunteers and visitors, have a responsibility to be vigilant, respond to concerns and pass information to the appropriate member of staff. Staff must not promise confidentiality where a safeguarding concern may need to be shared.

6. Roles and responsibilities

All staff

- Model respectful, inclusive behaviour and consistently reinforce the school expectations.
- Remain alert to signs of bullying, exclusion, intimidation and prejudice-based behaviour.
- Listen to children, reassure them and take all reports seriously.
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour immediately and report concerns to the class teacher and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

- Record incidents and actions in line with the school's recording and safeguarding procedures.

Senior Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently and that staff understand their responsibilities.
- Oversee the response to reported bullying and safeguarding concerns, ensuring appropriate records are maintained.
- Monitor patterns, repeat incidents, locations, groups and possible prejudice-related factors.
- Ensure support and follow-up actions are appropriate and that parents and carers are involved when necessary.
- Review the effectiveness of preventative work and arrange staff guidance or training.

Parents and carers

- Encourage children to speak to a trusted adult rather than retaliate.
- Share concerns with the school promptly and provide relevant information.
- Work in partnership with the school to support children and reinforce respectful behaviour.

Children

- Follow the school expectations: Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Ready.
- Tell an adult if they are worried, being hurt or see someone else being treated unkindly.
- Avoid joining in, encouraging or sharing hurtful behaviour.
- Where it is safe to do so, include others and help someone find a trusted adult.

7. Responding to reports of bullying

Every report will be taken seriously. Staff will establish what has happened, speak to the children involved in an age-appropriate and sensitive way, consider any witnesses and review whether there is a pattern of repeated behaviour. Staff will distinguish between bullying, one-off incidents of unkind behaviour, friendship difficulties and safeguarding concerns, while ensuring that all harmful behaviour is addressed.

The school will normally take the following steps:

- Listen to the child or adult reporting the concern, reassure them and take immediate steps to ensure safety.
- Record the concern, relevant information and actions taken using the school's designated recording system and/or safeguarding procedures. Where the concern meets the threshold for a safeguarding record, it will be referred to the DSL.
- Gather information from the children and adults involved. This may include checking whether there have been previous incidents or concerns.
- Provide support to the child who has been targeted, agree practical steps to help them feel safe and identify a trusted adult they can approach.
- Work with the child displaying the behaviour to help them understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility and learn more appropriate ways to behave. Any underlying needs will be considered.
- Inform parents and carers where appropriate and work with them on a plan to address the behaviour and support the children.
- Agree proportionate actions, which may include increased supervision, restorative or relationship-based work where appropriate, targeted teaching, behaviour support or sanctions in line with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy.
- Review the situation to check that the behaviour has stopped and that the children involved feel safe. Further action will be taken if concerns continue.
- Consider whether advice or involvement from external agencies, the Local Authority or the police is required.

Restorative approaches may be used when appropriate and safe, but children who have experienced bullying will never be required to meet, reconcile with or accept an apology from another child. The school will not treat mediation as a substitute for safeguarding action.

8. Bullying outside school

Bullying may occur on the journey to and from school, outside school hours, during weekends or holidays, in the local community or online. The school will consider concerns about behaviour outside the school gates where it affects the welfare or safety of pupils, the school community or the orderly running of the school. The school will respond in line with its statutory responsibilities and relevant policies, involving other agencies where appropriate.

9. Derogatory language and prejudice-based incidents

Derogatory, discriminatory or offensive language is unacceptable, even where a child says it was intended as a joke or did not understand its meaning. Staff will challenge it, explain why it is harmful and record and follow up the incident in line with school procedures.

A prejudice-based incident may be a one-off incident of hurtful behaviour motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes towards a protected characteristic or a particular group. Such incidents are taken seriously, recorded and monitored. They provide an opportunity for appropriate support, education and intervention and may indicate a wider pattern that needs further investigation.

10. Monitoring, recording and evaluation

The school will maintain appropriate records of reported bullying, prejudice-based incidents, actions taken and follow-up. Records will be held securely in the school's designated systems, with safeguarding concerns managed through the school's safeguarding procedures.

The Senior Leadership Team will review records to identify repeat incidents, patterns, locations, times, groups or possible underlying causes. This information will inform supervision, curriculum teaching, staff guidance and targeted support. The school will also consider feedback from children, parents and staff when evaluating the effectiveness of this policy.

11. Staff training

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that staff receive appropriate guidance and training on recognising, preventing and responding to bullying, prejudice-based incidents and child-on-child abuse. This includes teaching staff, support staff and lunchtime staff. Relevant updates will be shared when procedures or guidance change.

12. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. Governors and the Trust will provide oversight in accordance with their roles and responsibilities. The policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner where there are changes in legislation, statutory guidance or school practice. Consultation with staff, parents and carers, children and governors will inform the review.

Useful contacts

Children and parents/carers should normally raise concerns with the class teacher, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the School Office. For safeguarding concerns, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL should be contacted.

Childline: 0800 1111 (free and confidential support for children).

School-specific implementation

This policy is written for an infant school and nursery setting. Responses will be developmentally appropriate for children aged two to seven, taking account of children's communication, language, social and emotional development, SEND and individual circumstances. Staff will use observation, play-based discussion, visual supports and close communication with families where these help children explain their experiences.