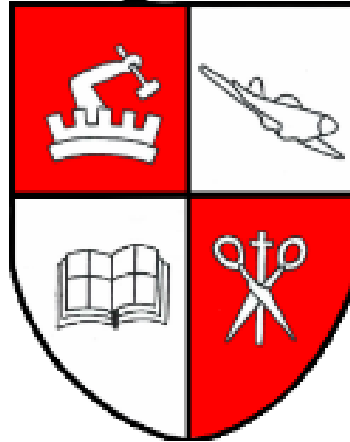


St Gerard's Catholic Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy 2023-2025

*“With Christ at our side, and St Gerard as our guide,
we live love, learn and pray together.”*



‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ Mark 12:31

Reviewed: October 2023

St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

'With Christ at our side, and St. Gerard as our guide - we live, love, learn and pray together'

At St Gerard's, we are mindful that pupils will be nurtured through the Catholic ethos that permeates our school. However, we recognise that pupils may be bullied in our school and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils and as a result, this will strengthen the ethos in our school. In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, 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; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We aim to promote an inclusive and proactive approach to diversity, where pupils are encouraged to celebrate people's differences. We recognise the importance of teaching our children and students the careful use of language, challenging 'banter' and racist language and instilling a collective understanding of the power of words which can cause harm to others if used in the wrong way.

This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy, our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, our school Code of Conduct and the school's Vision, Aims and Values. If parents consider that we deal with a concern inadequately, they should refer to our Complaints Policy, available upon request.

Objectives of this Policy

Our Catholic belief is that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and as such, should all be treated justly. "The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her creation in the image and likeness of God." **Catechism of the Catholic Church**

1. To provide a secure, safe and positive Catholic environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour, where children and adults can grow and develop.
2. To create and deepen an ethos across our communities of faith, in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
3. To produce a consistent whole school response to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying that may occur.
4. To work with all members of the school community (staff, children, parents/carers, parish and governors) to foster productive partnerships which help maintain a bullying-free environment.
5. To celebrate diversity and the uniqueness of individuals.

What is bullying?

As defined by the Anti-bullying alliance, bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber/online All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities
- Indirect using others to carrying out harmful acts.

• The policy is an active whole school policy and forms part of a Behaviour and Discipline system.

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- The Governing Body to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: Governors, Headteacher, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

Signs and Symptoms

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 frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures

“Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” Proverbs 31: 8-9

St Gerard’s Catholic Primary school has a zero tolerance to bullying, in the case that bullying is suspected, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision- making, as appropriate.
- The Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns. Action will be taken accordingly.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children’s social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school’s behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school on the CPOMS portal in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support.

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or support from Compass or Father Hudson's.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

*“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as God forgave you” **Ephesians 42***

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help or Compass.

Prevention

Curriculum teaching, School Council work, prayer time, assemblies focusing on our mission and a consistent vigilant presence by staff will support our measures to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring. There are planned opportunities for teaching our pupils about bullying through our safeguarding curriculum, in particular within our RHE scheme of work.

Sanctions

If the Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and be warned that there must be no further incidents. The Headteacher informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. Loss of time on the playground and further sanctions such as internal exclusions, if the bullying continues. In the most extreme cases, children may face and exclusion from school, all together. The bullying pupil is made to realise that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour. Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidences and what action is being taken.

Conclusion

The aim is to foster an attitude of care between the children, staff and the wider community, and to develop effective relationships built on trust and understanding, where respect for the individual is paramount.

Policy Reviewed: October 2025