St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

APPROVED BY: GOVERNING BODY

DATE APPROVED: NOVEMBER 2026

DATE REVIEWED:

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: NOVEMBER 2028

Rationale

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to providing a loving, inclusive and respectful environment where every child feels safe, valued and able to achieve their full potential. Inspired by our Catholic faith and Gospel values, we promote dignity, kindness, compassion and respect for all members of our school community.

We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, engagement and achievement. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We are committed to creating a culture where positive relationships flourish, diversity is celebrated and all members of the school community are treated with respect. We aim to prevent bullying through education, awareness, positive behaviour management and a strong safeguarding culture.

This policy supports our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, SEND Policy and Relationships and Health Education Policy.

Legislative Framework

St Mary's Catholic Primary School's Anti-Bullying Policy is informed by and operates in accordance with:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE Guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- Behaviour in Schools
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance
- Online Safety Act 2023

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote a safe, caring and inclusive school environment.
- Prevent bullying through a whole-school approach.
- Clearly define bullying and prejudice-based bullying.
- Ensure all members of the school community understand how concerns can be reported.
- Provide clear procedures for responding to incidents of bullying.
- Support pupils who experience bullying.
- Support pupils who display bullying behaviour to change their behaviour.
- Ensure bullying incidents are recorded, monitored and reviewed appropriately.
- Meet the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Everyone in our school community has a role to play in preventing and responding to bullying.

Our Whole School Approach

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, all members of the school community work together to prevent bullying. This includes:

- Pupils
- Parents and carers
- Staff
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- External agencies and partners

Our approach is based upon the Anti-Bullying Alliance's whole-school principles and promotes a culture where every child is listened to, respected and valued.

We Will:
Listen - We listen carefully to pupils, parents and carers and use their views to shape our anti-bullying work.
Include - We ensure all pupils, including those with SEND and additional vulnerabilities, are fully included in school life.
Respect - Staff model respectful relationships and promote positive interactions throughout the school.
Challenge - We challenge all forms of bullying, discriminatory behaviour, prejudice and derogatory language.
Celebrate Difference - We actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion and celebrate the uniqueness of every member of our community.
Understand - We educate pupils, staff and parents about bullying, discrimination and respectful relationships.
Believe - We take all concerns seriously and provide support to those impacted.
Report - We provide clear and accessible ways to report concerns.
Take Action - We respond promptly, fairly and consistently to all reports of bullying.
Review - We monitor incidents, evaluate our practice and continuously improve our provision.

What do we hope to achieve from this anti-bullying policy?

We hope that this policy, along with our behaviour policy and high-expectations of our pupils, will prevent any cases of bullying occurring in school. In the event that there is any negative, bullying behaviours displayed in school, this policy will support staff and children by providing appropriate strategies to eradicate any of these behaviours.
What aim strive for the upmost:

- Communication: to ensure that everyone is aware of what bullying behaviour is, the impact of bullying on people's lives, and what is being done to prevent it.
- Commitment: to promote the values, principles and approaches that will help eliminate bullying behaviour within our schools and learning communities.
- Consistency: to develop consistent approaches to addressing the issue of bullying across all Perth & Kinross Council schools and learning communities.
- Clarity: to ensure that everyone knows who to go to for help and support and what will happen when they do.
- Co-operation: to recognise that it is everyone's responsibility to tackle bullying behaviour. By working together, we can make our schools and communities better places to live and work.

- Capacity: to increase the capability of our schools and learning communities in their use of positive approaches through information, training and support to reduce and prevent bullying behaviour.

What do our pupils say?

The children at our school have a good understanding of our 'whole school approach' to confronting the issue of bullying and are involved in the most effective approaches to tackling bullying in school. When asked their opinion and understanding of bullying in our school, they said:

'Bullying is when you are constantly being mean/rude to people.'

'You should always tell a teacher or trusted adult of you see or are being bullied'

'Physical bullying can be anything from slapping, kicking, pushing, punching.'

'People can be mentally bullied by people saying unkind things to them.'

'I feel safe at school because we know the teachers will keep us safe.'

'Cyber bullying is when you are being mean online and hurting other people's feelings'

'We don't say unkind things to other people because this would really hurt someone's feelings.'

'Bullying is when you're doing something unkind to someone else, for a long period of time, more than once.'

'I don't see bullying here because our school is a safe environment'

Definition of Bullying

The Department for Education defines bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is often characterised by:
- Deliberate intent to cause harm
- Repeated behaviour over time
- An imbalance of power

Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group.

The school recognises that some serious incidents, including prejudice-based incidents, sexual harassment, online abuse or hate-related behaviour, may warrant immediate intervention even where the behaviour has not been repeated.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can include:
Physical Bullying
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Punching
- Pushing

- Damaging property
- Threatening physical harm

Verbal Bullying

- Name-calling
- Insults
- Teasing
- Threats
- Intimidation
- Offensive language

Emotional or Relational Bullying

- Deliberately excluding others
- Spreading rumours
- Humiliation
- Manipulation of friendships
- Public embarrassment

Online (Cyber) Bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through technology or online platforms including:

- Social media
- Messaging services
- Gaming platforms
- Video sharing platforms
- Websites and forums
- Artificial intelligence generated content

Online bullying may include:

- Sharing unwanted images
- Sending threatening messages
- Creating fake accounts
- Excluding others online
- Posting harmful content
- Spreading rumours online

The school will investigate incidents occurring outside school where they affect the wellbeing, safety or education of pupils or adversely impact the school community.

Prejudice-Based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying occurs when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice, discrimination or negative attitudes towards a person's actual or perceived characteristics.

This includes bullying related to:

- Race, ethnicity or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- SEND
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Family circumstances
- Looked-after or previously looked-after status
- Young carers
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Socio-economic disadvantage

- Appearance or body image
- Health conditions

All incidents of prejudice-based bullying will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and recorded appropriately.

Sexual Harassment and Child-on-Child Abuse

Some behaviour may go beyond bullying and constitute a safeguarding concern.

This includes:
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Misogynistic behaviour
- Sharing nude or semi-nude images
- Online sexual abuse
- Upskirting
- Hate incidents

Such concerns will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Prevention

Our aim is to create a culture and community where bullying, in any form, is completely unacceptable. We can achieve this by ensuring that positive relationships are built between all members of our school community and that these relationships are underpinned by preventative strategies.

Effective preventative strategies must involve all members of a community in building a culture where everyone feels safe, secure and nurtured. Adults should be aware of their responsibility to be role models for children and young people and should support others in the wider community to do the same. It is essential that we recognise that everyone matters and should be valued for who they are; it is acceptable to be different. Learning opportunities are proactive in developing approaches to celebrate diversity, change attitudes and behaviour by promoting an ethos and culture of inclusion. Understanding the impact of bullying behaviours on our health and wellbeing and on our learning and development will help us take action to prevent and manage incidents.

The school will:
- Promote a culture of inclusion, dignity and respect.
- Embed anti-bullying education throughout the curriculum.
- Teach online safety and responsible digital behaviour.
- Deliver age-appropriate Relationships and Health Education.
- Celebrate diversity and promote equality.
- Encourage pupil voice and participation.
- Provide opportunities for restorative approaches where appropriate.
- Ensure staff receive regular training.
- Maintain effective supervision during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Participate in national anti-bullying campaigns and awareness events where appropriate.

Reporting Concerns

Pupils, parents, carers and staff are encouraged to report concerns as soon as possible.

Reports can be made through:

- A class teacher
- Any trusted member of staff
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Headteacher

All concerns will be listened to carefully and taken seriously.

Responding to Bullying

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and therefore, nobody deserves to be a victim of bulling. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. If bullying, or cyber-bullying does occur, all pupils should feel empowered to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

When bullying is reported or suspected, the school will:

1. Take all concerns seriously.
2. Ensure any child is safe from immediate harm.
3. Investigate the concern promptly and fairly.
4. Listen to all parties involved.
5. Inform parents or carers where appropriate.
6. Provide support for pupils affected.
7. Implement appropriate educational or disciplinary consequences.
8. Record the incident.
9. Monitor outcomes and review progress.

Responses may include:

- Restorative conversations
- Educational interventions
- Behaviour support plans
- Pastoral support
- Parental involvement
- Sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy

Where behaviour constitutes a safeguarding concern or criminal offence, appropriate external agencies may be contacted.

Recording and Monitoring

All bullying incidents will be recorded in accordance with the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

School leaders will regularly review records to identify:

- Patterns
- Trends
- Repeat incidents
- Vulnerable groups
- Locations of concern

This information will be used to strengthen preventative measures and improve practice.

Responsibilities

Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.
- Ensuring statutory responsibilities are met.
- Holding leaders to account for implementation.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training.
- Monitoring incidents and outcomes.
- Reporting trends to governors.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Modelling respectful behaviour.
- Identifying bullying concerns.
- Responding promptly and appropriately.
- Recording incidents.
- Supporting pupils.

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- Treating others respectfully.
- Reporting concerns.
- Supporting a positive school culture.
- Not standing by when bullying occurs.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Discuss concerns promptly with school.
- Support school procedures.
- Promote respectful behaviour at home.