

Holy Cross School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date: January 2026

To be reviewed: January 2027

Chair of Governors Gavin Chambers

Responsible for policy: Mrs Catherine Murphy (Head Teacher)

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead:**
Miss Michelle Breeze (Head of School)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Mrs Catherine Murphy (Executive Head)
- Mrs Susan Smith (SLT)
- Mrs Katrina Dolan (SLT)
- Mrs Nichola Ward (ELSA Lead)
- Mr Phillip Saxton (SENDco)

Named Governor with lead responsibility: Chris Davies

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education”

1) Policy objectives:

- This policy outlines what Holy Cross School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community.
- Holy Cross School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

We are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is against all the values and principles that we work and live by and the teachings of the Catholic Church. All members of our school community have the right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can to protecting and maintaining this environment.

We believe it is important that:

- Pupils have the right to learn without being frightened or intimidated
- Bullying is not tolerated in our school
- Everyone is listened to
- If someone is being bullied, they will be taken seriously
- Reported incidents will be thoroughly investigated

2. Links with other policies and practices:

- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Curriculum policies such as RE, RSE, Personal Development and computing
- Mobile phone policy
- Social media expectations for parents and carers
- Parents code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct

3. Links to legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

4. Responsibilities

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.
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, 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.

5. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

- Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and telling untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

We say: Several Times On Purpose (STOP)

Bullying is not one off acts of aggression or unkindness; this is also not tolerated and will be tackled through our behaviour policy. It is not about unintentional acts, even though these can be hurtful. Bullying is repeated and deliberate.

6. Forms of bullying covered in this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including those within the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual bullying
- Bullying related to gender identity
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying

7. School Ethos

Holy Cross’ community recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our schools can help to create safe, disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our Community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8. Responding to bullying

Please also see the flow-chart which accompanies this policy. It outlines what happens when an allegation of bullying is made.

Children are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying or any other behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable or upset to any adult in school or at home. Children are frequently reminded about who they can talk to. Parents can report events to their child's class teacher in the first instance.

All behaviour events, including those linked to bullying are reported using Arbor

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 or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The designated safeguarding lead(s) will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate.
- Sanctions (as identified within the school behaviour policy) and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- 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 takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken. This is recorded on Arbor.

Cyberbullying

School will work with parents and carers to support children as usually this form of bullying takes place out of school. The school is aware that computer generated images may form cyberbullying.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified and contact parents/carers.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to try to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Providing support and advice for parents.
- Encourage the person being bullied (or their parent/carer) to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation, including dates, times and URLs (website address bar). However, staff need to be aware that it is a criminal offense to view indecent images of children.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and also the school searching and confiscation policy (part of the school's behaviour policy)
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of this person, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting pupils

We encourage pupils to tell an adult in school if they feel that they are being bullied. This could be an adult in their class such as the teacher or teaching assistant, or any adult in school such as a midday supervisor or a key stage leader. All adults have been trained and will know what to do.

- *Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:*
 - Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous 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.

- o Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, support from The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and engaging with parents and carers.
 - o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance e.g. Early Help, Specialist Children’s Services or other mental health services as appropriate.
- *Pupils who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:*
 - o Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
 - o Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
 - o Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
 - o If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
 - o Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
 - o 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 e.g. Early Help, Specialist Children’s Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

Supporting adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

- *Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:*
 - o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school’s behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be encouraged to:

- Discuss what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to
- establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting
- to the school’s official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

9. Preventing bullying

Environment

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all. All members of the school community should report bullying if they are aware of it (this is known as bystander behaviour)
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people (including the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics).
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns and where appropriate, suitable risk assessments can be put in place for preventing or following up on an incident of bullying.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour, (at least every two years)
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school’s attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.
- Regularly review how bullying is recorded
- Use information gathered during recording of bullying to identify patterns or trends and/or to target any areas of need

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school’s policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents). Students and volunteers will be made aware of this policy during their induction.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.

- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

10) Involvement of pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they have to play to prevent bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

11) Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

12) Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.
- We will regularly review how bullying is recorded
- We will use information gathered during recording of bullying to identify patterns or trends and/or to target any areas of need

Appendix 1

Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- www.beyondbullying.com Leicestershire County Council
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis **Race, religion and nationality**

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBT

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org

- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide for Schools: www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related

Note: Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Appendix 2

Flow Chart



