



# Our Lady Star of the Sea

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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<b>Approved by the</b>	The Governing Body
<b>Date to Review</b>	Autumn 2024

Mission Statement "You are precious in my eyes" - Isaiah 43

- Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is committed to the widest and fullest education of all pupils in a partnership between home, school, parish and community.
- Our school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure, valued and respect each other.
- Our school aims to be a positive force within the Catholic church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospels

At Our Lady Star of the Sea we continuously strive to live our school mission statement through all actions, thoughts and words. We place Christ firmly at the foundation of the entire learning process. Underpinning this is the recognition that each person is unique and should be valued and respected.

**The school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure and valued.**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

## What Is Bullying?

Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms, making it extremely difficult to define. Bullying can be instigated by all members of a community, children and adults alike. As a result of this the definition of bullying can become very confusing.

At Our Lady Star of the Sea we understand bullying to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (sometimes aggressive).
- Repeated over a period of time.
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against causing pain and distress.

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, and taking belongings.
- **Verbal** – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks.
- **Indirect** – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones or putting information on social networking sites.

National statistics demonstrate that name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but children can also be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability.

## Why we respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and recognise that they are '**precious in His eyes**'.

Children who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and recognise that their present behaviour is unacceptable.

## Policy Aims

In our school bullying will not be tolerated. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported because as a school we take bullying seriously.

This policy aims to provide children, staff, parents and governors with a clear understanding of what bullying is and to ensure that all members of our community are respected and valued:

### We aim:

- To clearly state that bullying will not be tolerated in our school and will always be taken seriously and dealt with immediately.
- To involve and work alongside all members of the community in the practice of this policy.
- To implement our positive behaviour policy and follow strategies outlined in an attempt to provide no opportunities for bullying to take place.
- To provide a safe environment, this encourages all children to expose any form of bullying, with confidence.
- To ensure that children, staff and parents know what to do if bullying arises.
- To contribute to the Personal and Social Development of all children.

## What are the signs and symptoms of bullying?

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that s/he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to make little progress in school work
- has possessions go "missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (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

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

## Policy into Practice:

At Our Lady Star of the Sea we are continuously attempting to create an open, listening school where all children can discuss their opinions and feelings in many different ways. We believe that openness encourages honesty and provides a safer environment where bullying is more difficult.

## To support this:

- Issues surrounding bullying are covered within the curriculum, with the intention of deepening every child's understanding of their significance.
- Learning through our HRSE lessons challenges children to consider their relationships with others and how their interactions can impact on others.
- The school and class councils enable general issues to be discussed, often giving individuals more confidence to step forward and ask for help.
- Circle time provides both teachers and children with the opportunity to raise concerns.
- Children are taught how constructively to manage their relationships with others.

- Children are taught how to solve problems through conflict resolution.
- Online safety learning provides children with the tools to know what to do when they feel unsafe online.
- Through actions and words, staff clearly demonstrate that bullying is unacceptable.

#### Parents are asked to help by:

- Supporting the school in sharing its vision, ethos and Mission Statement.
- Supporting the implementation of this policy through working in partnership with children and staff.
- Reinforcing our school policies and expected behaviour to ensure that we are working together and not confusing children with mixed messages.
- Supporting children at home as they use the online environment.
- Ensuring that the word bullying is used appropriately and not used to describe one off incidents.
- Recognising that our school seeks to help all children, including those children who bully others. We seek to bring all children to an understanding that they are '**precious in his eyes**'.

#### Procedures for dealing with bullying:

- When reported or witnessed all incidents of suspected bullying will be dealt with promptly.
- The incident will be investigated fully to establish all facts, taking into account possible reasons for bullying, parties involved and share of responsibility.
- Incidents which are assessed as examples of unacceptable behaviour and not bullying will then be dealt with following procedures outlined in the schools behaviour policy.
- Incidents of bullying will immediately result in further action:
  1. The victim will be reassured that they are safe, that the matter is being dealt with very seriously and that no further bullying will now take place. Parents of the victim will be informed of the situation and be told how the school has dealt with the incident. Parents will be asked to discuss the situation with their child and inform the school if any further incidents occur or if any change in behaviour would suggest that bullying has reoccurred. Monitoring will be put in place to ensure that no further bullying takes place. All staff will be alerted to the situation and will be asked to report any signs of bullying. Formal records on CPOMS will be started and any future incidents will be added.
  2. The bully/ies will be asked to take responsibility for their actions and will hopefully wish to apologize for impinging upon another person's safety and freedom. Parents of the bully/ies will be informed and will be asked to work alongside the school to ensure that such behaviour does not reoccur.
- All incidents of bullying will be treated individually and punishments will be appropriate to the situation. In all incidents we will attempt to reconcile children and offer all a chance to make a fresh start. We recognise that bullies also need help and support if they are to become responsible members of our community.

- Where other strategies do not resolve the problem, or where the bullying is of a very serious, persistent nature, particularly where violence is involved, exclusion will be justified. In some extreme cases the exclusion may be a permanent one. In such cases Lancashire's exclusion policy will be followed.

### As we deal with incidents on a daily basis we will follow five key points:

1. Suspected incidents of bullying will always be investigated and never ignored.
2. Premature assumptions will not be made – all incidents will be thoroughly investigated.
3. All accounts will be listened to carefully – we recognise that several pupils saying the same thing does not necessarily mean that they are telling the truth.
4. A problem-solving approach will always be adopted which moves children on from justifying themselves and their actions.
5. Incidents of bullying will be followed-up repeatedly to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

### Unacceptable strategies to use:

At Our Lady Star of the Sea we value and respect all members of our community and therefore our policy is one of forgiveness and new starts. When investigating or dealing with bullying we do not:

- Make assumptions based on prior behaviour trends.
- Arrive at conclusions based on hearsay or false witness.
- Shout loudly at children without giving them chance to explain the reasons for their behaviour.
- Respond in a negative way to a child, instead of dealing with the behaviour.
- Treat children unfairly, or with little continuity.

In cases involving children with EHCP or behaviour plans it is important to follow procedures outlined in their individual plans. All members of staff will need to be aware of any children who follow such plans to ensure that there is continuity in their implementation. Strategies to use must be clearly communicated to all staff and the class teacher should be informed of any incidents which occur outside the classroom to ensure that CPOMS is updated.

We aim always to create a supportive culture where all teachers are able to support any individual teacher who is responsible for implementing behaviour plans in their own classrooms. As a school we recognise that behaviour difficulties need a team approach.

We recognise that some children are unable to conform to common rules and it is our responsibility to differentiate our structure to ensure that such children are offered every possible chance to succeed without endangering the health and safety of others.

It is our aim; through the implementation of this policy, that all members of our school community may come to know the quality of relationships has the potential to speak of God's loving care for each individual. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to contribute to the creation of this desired ethos and its reflection in all areas of school life.

The whole staff will monitor this policy and practice and the outcomes will be reported to the Governing body.

This policy is presently being reviewed (Autumn 2024) in light of changes to “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024” and the Trauma/ Metacognition reading undertaken by staff.

Related documentation:

Behaviour Policy

Learning and Teaching Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Anti-Racist Policy