



Anti Bullying Policy

St Anne's Catholic Voluntary Academy

September 2026 – September 2027

Document Provenance

Title of policy	Anti Bullying Policy
Policy owner	Senior Leadership Team
Policy status	School Policy
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Document review and editorial updates

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures change. Named responsibilities should be checked before approval.

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

We lead our children to be like Jesus... wise, caring, honest and fair, today and every day.

At St Anne's Catholic Voluntary Academy, the dignity of the human person is at the heart of our Catholic faith and is the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching. We believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God and should be treated with dignity, compassion, respect and fairness.

We are committed to a caring, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment in which all pupils can learn, flourish and develop positive relationships. Bullying is contrary to our Catholic ethos and school values. It can harm a child's wellbeing, safety, attendance and education. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

All members of our school community help prevent bullying, challenge inappropriate behaviour and report concerns. Pupils should feel confident that they can tell a trusted adult and that concerns will be heard and acted upon promptly. We are a TELLING school: anyone who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of bullying is expected to tell a trusted adult.

This policy reflects the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and current Department for Education guidance on bullying, behaviour, suspensions and permanent exclusions. It should be read alongside the school's Behaviour, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Online Safety, SEND and Equality policies.

Persons with Responsibility

- Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead: Julia Wiggins
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Francesca Dodd
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Katie Lonsdale
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Mental Health Lead: Mrs Laura Chapman
- Anti Bullying and Behaviour Lead: Julia Wiggins
- Anti Bullying Governor: Alison Pimblett

2. WHAT IS BULLYING

The Anti Bullying Alliance describes bullying as repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It may happen face to face or online.

- Behaviour intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate or cause distress.
- Behaviour repeated over time, or with the potential to be repeated.
- An imbalance of power that makes it difficult for the child affected to defend themselves.

The imbalance may be physical, psychological or social, or relate to age, popularity, ability, SEND or access to information or technology. A one off disagreement or act of unkindness may not meet the definition of bullying, but will still be taken seriously and addressed under the Behaviour Policy.

Forms of Bullying

- Emotional or relational: deliberate exclusion, isolation, threats, humiliation, manipulation or damaging friendships.
- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, intimidation, taking belongings or damaging property.
- Verbal: name calling, insults, persistent teasing, mocking, threats or spreading rumours.
- Online: using messages, social media, games, images or videos to threaten, embarrass, exclude, harass or humiliate. Online content can be shared quickly and reach a large audience.

Prejudice Based and Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying may relate to an actual or perceived difference, including race, ethnicity, nationality, language, religion or belief; disability or SEND; sex; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy or maternity; family circumstances; appearance, health or socioeconomic circumstances. Discriminatory incidents are addressed seriously even when they are not repeated.

Sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour between children are safeguarding concerns and will be addressed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3. BULLYING AND SAFEGUARDING

Bullying can constitute child on child abuse. Staff must never dismiss concerns as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or an inevitable part of growing up. Where bullying raises a safeguarding concern, staff must report it promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy and follow safeguarding procedures. The DSL will consider whether Children’s Social Care, the police or other agencies should be involved.

4. WHY WE RESPOND

Bullying can affect mental and physical health, attendance, relationships and learning, with effects that may continue into adulthood. Every pupil has the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity. Pupils who display bullying behaviour also need appropriate intervention and support to understand its impact, take responsibility and change their behaviour.

5. OBJECTIVES

- Ensure staff, governors, pupils and parents understand bullying and how to report it.
- Investigate reports fairly, sensitively and promptly, and distinguish bullying from other conflict while addressing both.
- Support children affected by bullying and help those displaying bullying behaviour to change.
- Recognise discriminatory incidents and refer safeguarding concerns appropriately.
- Record incidents, decisions, actions and outcomes, monitor patterns and reduce recurrence.

6. POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Changes in a child’s behaviour may indicate bullying, although they may have other causes. Adults should sensitively explore concerns if a child:

- becomes reluctant to attend school or travel to school, or attendance or punctuality changes;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, tearful, less confident or unusually aggressive;
- has disturbed sleep, frequent illness, unexplained injuries or changes in eating habits;
- experiences a decline in schoolwork or engagement;

- has damaged or missing belongings or unexplained requests for money;
- is frightened to explain what is wrong or gives inconsistent explanations;
- becomes anxious about messages or stops using particular devices, apps or games;
- experiences significant changes in friendships or social groups.

7. EMPOWERING OUR PUPILS

Pupils learn what bullying is, how it differs from ordinary disagreements and what to do if they experience or witness it. Our Catholic ethos, Religious Education, Catholic Social Teaching, assemblies and collective worship reinforce dignity, respect, compassion and fairness. Anti Bullying Week gives dedicated time to reinforce that we are a TELLING school.

Through PSHE, relationships, sex and health education, safeguarding education and the wider curriculum, pupils learn about respectful relationships, prejudice, personal boundaries, online safety, reporting concerns and sources of support. Children are encouraged to identify trusted adults. Online safety is taught throughout the year, including around Safer Internet Day.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

School Staff

All staff promote respectful relationships, model appropriate behaviour, remain alert to bullying, intervene, listen sensitively, take reports seriously, challenge discriminatory language, record relevant incidents and maintain appropriate confidentiality. Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately in line with school procedures.

Minor disagreements may be addressed by the class teacher or another appropriate member of staff under the Behaviour Policy. Potential bullying should be referred to the Senior Leadership Team or Anti Bullying Lead. The investigation should be proportionate and may involve separate conversations with pupils and witnesses and a review of available evidence. Parents and carers will normally be informed when bullying is substantiated or their involvement is needed. All relevant incidents, decisions, actions and outcomes will be recorded on the appropriate school system.

Pupils

- Treat others with dignity and respect and avoid deliberately isolating anyone.
- Tell a trusted adult if they experience or witness bullying; reporting is responsible behaviour.
- Challenge bullying safely where they feel able and do not join in or forward harmful content.
- Support pupils who feel isolated and be honest when staff investigate concerns.

Parents and Carers

- Report concerns promptly and encourage their child to speak openly.
- Work with the school to resolve concerns and avoid encouraging retaliation.
- Monitor online activity where appropriate and retain relevant evidence safely.
- Share circumstances that may affect their child and reinforce respectful behaviour at home.

9. RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF BULLYING

1. Listen to the child, reassure them and establish the facts through a proportionate investigation.
2. Consider the views and needs of all pupils, whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying, and any safeguarding risk.
3. Record evidence, actions, decisions and outcomes and inform parents or carers where appropriate.
4. Provide support for the child affected and address the behaviour of those responsible.

5. Apply proportionate consequences under the Behaviour Policy, monitor the situation and consider further intervention or external support.

The school will seek to understand the circumstances while remaining clear that bullying is unacceptable.

10. OUTCOMES AND CONSEQUENCES

Actions depend on the nature, severity, frequency and circumstances of the behaviour. They may include restorative conversations where safe and suitable, apologies, loss of privileges, supervised break or lunchtime arrangements, removal from the classroom, pastoral or targeted behaviour support, parent meetings, individual plans, continued monitoring, safeguarding or external referrals, suspension or, in the most serious circumstances, permanent exclusion in line with statutory guidance.

Mediation or restorative approaches are not suitable in every case, particularly where there is a significant imbalance of power or a safeguarding concern. Consequences will be fair and proportionate under the Behaviour Policy.

11. SUPPORTING PUPILS

Support for children affected and children displaying bullying behaviour may include a named trusted adult, regular check ins, pastoral or SEND support, adjustments to reduce risk, help with friendships, social and emotional interventions, mental health support, parent communication or referral to external services. The school will continue monitoring after the immediate incident is resolved.

12. RECORDING AND MONITORING

Records should include the concern, pupils involved, relevant evidence, actions, reasons for decisions, communication with parents, support, consequences, referrals, outcomes and follow up. The Anti Bullying and Behaviour Lead and Senior Leadership Team will review incidents for repeated behaviour, vulnerable pupils, locations, times and emerging safeguarding or equality concerns. Governors may receive anonymised information for strategic oversight.

13. BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Bullying may occur outside school, including online. Where it affects pupils' wellbeing, relationships or the orderly running of the school, the school may investigate and respond under its Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures. The school may involve parents, police, Children's Social Care or other relevant agencies where appropriate.

14. HELP AND SUPPORT

- Childline: 0800 1111 — confidential support for children and young people.
- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 — advice on safeguarding concerns.
- Anti Bullying Alliance and Kidscape — bullying information and support.
- CEOP — reporting online sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Internet Matters — online safety advice for families.

15. POLICY REVIEW

Reviewed: September 2026. Next review: September 2027. Approved by: Senior leadership Team. Date approved: 29.09.2026.