

**Sacred Heart Catholic
Primary School**



**FRIENDSHIP &
ANTI-BULLYING
POLICY**

FRIENDSHIP AND ANTI-BULLYING

Our Aims

At Sacred Heart School we take all forms of conflict, friendship problems and bullying behaviour seriously. Our aims are:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all children in our care.
- To create a happy atmosphere in which both parents and staff work together for the welfare of the students.
- Everyone is mutually valued and respected regardless of gender, race, age, beliefs and ability.
- To encourage children to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of self-discipline and to take responsibility for their own actions.

Definition of Bullying Behaviour

We acknowledge that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both students disagree and find it difficult to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group – usually repeated over time – that intentionally hurts another individual or group'.

Bullying can take many forms:

Physical bullying (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking or taking property)

Verbal bullying (name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, name calling, excessive criticism or sarcasm.)

Indirect bullying (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection.)

Cyber bullying sending nasty phone calls, text messages or e-mails/chat rooms. Linked to schools Acceptable Use Policy (ICT).

Some bullying is done because a child is deemed to belong to a certain group. This has been labelled 'prejudice based bullying', and includes homophobic bullying, racist bullying, sexual or gender bullying and bullying of students with learning or other disabilities. (See also Equalities Policy.)

Strategies for Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Whole School Approach

- Issues surrounding friendships and bullying behaviour are taught through the Personal, Social & Health Education Curriculum, Citizenship Curriculum and R.E. Children are taught to explore some of the ups and downs of relationships, including the positive aspects and benefits of friendships and the negative aspects of relational conflict
- Whole School Assemblies, Friendship Weeks are also used to discuss bullying and raise children's awareness of what bullying looks like and how they can respond.
- Circle Time, R.E. sessions provide opportunities for more detailed discussions and role play activities to explore the nature of bullying.

- Class discussions and School Council provide a forum for discussing any bullying issues and for the children to decide ways of preventing it and supporting those who are bullied.
- Positive play leaders are used to reduce potential conflict during breaktime and lunchtime.
- All staff will monitor behaviour and intervene if it becomes inappropriate in order to prevent bullying to develop. Staff on playground duty will inform class teachers of any incidents and report on CPOMS.
- All teachers and teaching assistants and office staff should use CPOMS to report bullying incidents.

Strategies for Responding to Bullying Behaviour

Where bullying does occur this will be followed by an immediate and appropriate response, including the use of disciplinary sanctions where necessary.

Early identification is the most effective way in minimising bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. We also acknowledge that the person doing the bullying needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. They may also need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying, as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

Children are encouraged to report any negative behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They can do this through:

- Speaking to their teacher/TA or any member of staff
- Speaking to a parent/other adult who then may contact the school in any of the ways listed
- Speaking to their School Council Representative or a friend.

When Bullying is Known to have Happened or be Ongoing

The class teacher will discuss the incident(s) with the child being bullied. It is important that they are listened to and believed. The incident will then be discussed with the child engaging in bullying behaviour. Information will be gathered from witnesses to explain what they saw. The class teacher and/or Headteacher will be informed.

Sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy will be used where appropriate. These might include:

- official warnings to cease offending or withdrawal of certain school privileges
- loss of playtime or restricted playtime activities
- involvement of the Neighbourhood Schools officer (the Police)
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion
- involve School Council – ask children what they think they should have done
- parents of those involved will be informed of any action taken
- records will be kept on students' files.

Where a student or group of students deny involvement in bullying behaviour the children concerned will be observed and monitored. The student being bullied may be asked to record and report any incidents which cause them concern.

This policy will refer to 'bullying behaviour' and 'the person bullying' and 'the person bullied' rather than 'bully' and 'victim', both of which can be defined as negative labelling.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This document will be monitored and evaluated regularly and updated to take account of new Government and local guidance and the views of the whole school community.

Complaints

The Governing Body has established a formal complaints procedure and this may be used by a parent/carer if necessary.

The Equality Act 2010

Sacred Heart School complies with the new Equality Act 2010. The aims being to:

- eliminate 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
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.