Happy in His
loving care

# St Augustine Webster Catholic Voluntary Academy
# Anti-Bullying Policy

| | |
|---|---|
| Date Agreed By Governors | September 26 |
| Next Review | September 27 |
| Policy Holder | Head teacher |

**Mission Statement**

We consider ourselves a big happy family that is welcoming, caring and successful. Our school is a place where we show mutual respect, understanding and tolerance of all people in the world, and where we take responsibility for our actions. It is a place where self-belief and confidence are nurtured but, most of all, a place where we live out our virtues and keep Christ at the centre of everything we do.
We are Happy in His Loving Care.

**Introduction**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another person or group physically or emotionally. It often involves an imbalance of power that makes it difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may happen face to face or online.

A one-off incident may not be bullying, but it may still be serious. All harmful, discriminatory or sexual behaviour will be addressed under the Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Child Protection Policy. Staff must not wait for behaviour to be repeated before acting on a safeguarding concern.

Bullying may relate to:

- race, religion, belief or culture
- special educational needs, disability or health conditions
- sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity
- appearance, family circumstances or perceived differences
- being adopted, looked after or previously looked after, or having caring responsibilities
- sexual harassment, sexist behaviour or harmful sexual behaviour.

There is no hierarchy of bullying. All forms will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. This policy mainly concerns bullying between pupils. Concerns about the conduct of an adult must be reported under the school safeguarding and staff conduct procedures.

**Aims and Objectives**

- to provide a safe, secure and inclusive environment for all pupils
- to make clear that bullying is wrong and is not tolerated
- to prevent bullying through education, positive relationships and early action
- to make sure pupils know how and where to report a concern
- to respond consistently, support those affected and address the behaviour of pupils who bully
- to keep suitable records and use them to improve practice.

**Preventing Bullying**

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- setting clear expectations in the Positive Behaviour Policy for conduct in school, online and outside school where it affects pupils or the school community
- teaching respectful relationships, online safety and how to seek help through the curriculum and assemblies
- training staff to recognise and respond to bullying, prejudice-based incidents and child-on-child abuse
- listening to pupils, families and staff and checking whether our measures are working
- making reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND or disabilities.

## Responsibilities

**The Academy Trust and Local Governing Body**

- will ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is in place and implemented
- will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review information about patterns and protected groups
- will ensure that the policy is available to pupils, parents and staff.

**The Headteacher**

- will implement this policy and maintain a welcoming, supportive and inclusive school ethos
- will ensure that staff understand reporting, recording and safeguarding procedures
- will ensure incidents are investigated, recorded, followed up and reported to governors or trustees in an appropriately anonymised form
- will provide suitable staff training and monitor the impact of the policy.

**All Staff**

- will take all reports and signs of bullying seriously and act promptly
- will listen calmly, reassure the pupil and record the facts without promising confidentiality
- will report bullying and safeguarding concerns through the school systems
- will challenge discriminatory language, sexual harassment and behaviour dismissed as banter
- will follow the Child Protection Policy whenever a child may be at risk of harm.

**Pupils**

- should treat others with respect and follow the Behaviour Policy
- should tell a trusted adult if they are being bullied or see someone else being bullied
- should keep relevant online evidence and avoid forwarding harmful content
- will be encouraged to contribute to anti-bullying work through pupil voice and the school council.

**Parents and Carers**

- should report concerns promptly and share relevant information with the school
- should support their child and work with the school while enquiries are completed
- may use the school Complaints Policy if they remain concerned about the school response.

**Identifying and Reporting Bullying**

A child may not feel ready or able to describe what has happened. Possible signs include reluctance to attend school, withdrawal, distress, unexplained injuries, missing possessions, damaged work, changes in friendships or online behaviour, or a decline in wellbeing or attendance. These signs do not prove bullying, but staff will remain professionally curious and follow up concerns.

A pupil may report to any member of staff. Parents may contact the class teacher, Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Reports may be made in person or through the school's usual communication channels. Staff must record and pass on concerns promptly.

## Responding to Incidents

All reported incidents will be considered promptly, fairly and with appropriate discretion. The response will be proportionate to the circumstances and the needs of the pupils involved. The procedure in Appendix A will be followed alongside the Behaviour and Child Protection policies.

## Safeguarding and Referrals

Bullying may be a safeguarding concern, particularly where it involves serious or persistent harm, sexual behaviour, violence, coercion, exploitation, threats, hate crime or a vulnerable pupil. Staff must report any safeguarding concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy without delay. The DSL will consider risk, immediate safety, early help, referral to children's social care and contact with the police or other agencies. If a child is in immediate danger, staff must contact the emergency services.

## Online and Off Site Bullying

The school will investigate online or off-site bullying when it affects pupils, their safety, the orderly running of the school or the school community. Relevant evidence should be preserved. The Headteacher will consider action under the Behaviour Policy and whether the police, local authority or another service should be informed. Sanctions for off-site behaviour will be imposed only where it is reasonable and lawful to do so.

## Supporting Pupils

Support for a pupil who has been bullied will reflect their needs and may include a trusted adult, a safe space, pastoral or inclusion support, changes to routines, help from an external service and a safety plan. The school will also help a pupil who has bullied to understand and change their behaviour and will consider any underlying needs. Support does not replace a suitable sanction where one is required.

## Sanctions and Restorative Work

Sanctions will be applied under the Behaviour Policy and may include loss of privileges, detention, removal from a lesson or peer group, internal removal, suspension or permanent exclusion. Decisions will be reasonable and proportionate and will take account of age, SEND, disability, vulnerability and any reasonable adjustments.

A meeting between pupils will take place only when it is safe, suitable and freely agreed by the pupil who has been harmed. It will not be used for sexual violence, coercive behaviour or where a safeguarding risk makes it inappropriate. An apology or restorative meeting will never be the only response to serious behaviour.

## Parents and Confidentiality

The school will normally inform the parents or carers of the pupils directly involved and explain the action being taken. Information about another child will remain confidential. The DSL may decide that contacting a parent should be delayed or handled differently where this could increase risk, prejudice an investigation or conflict with advice from children's social care or the police. The reason for that decision will be recorded.

## Recording and Monitoring

Bullying incidents and their outcomes will be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible. The record will include what was reported, relevant evidence, action taken, safeguarding decisions, communication with parents and follow-up. Records will be stored and shared in line with the school's data protection and safeguarding arrangements.

Leaders will review records regularly to identify recurrence, locations, types of bullying and any disproportionate impact on pupils who share protected characteristics or have additional vulnerabilities. Governors or trustees will receive suitable anonymised information so that they can monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

## Raising Awareness and Review

We will make this policy available on the school website and explain it through staff induction, pupil learning and communication with families. It will be reviewed yearly and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, school experience or monitoring shows that a change is needed.

## Appendix A Procedure for Dealing with Bullying

**1. Report and safeguard.** The member of staff will listen, reassure the pupil, establish any immediate safety needs and record the concern. Safeguarding concerns must be passed to the DSL or deputy without delay.

**2. Assess the concern.** A senior member of staff or the DSL will consider whether the behaviour is bullying, another behaviour incident, child-on-child abuse or a possible criminal offence. A one-off incident will still be addressed.

**3. Investigate fairly.** The pupils involved and relevant witnesses will normally be spoken to separately. Available evidence, including online material, will be considered. Staff will not promise confidentiality and will share information only with those who need it.

**4. Assess risk and refer.** The DSL will consider immediate protection, a written risk or safety plan, early help, children's social care, police involvement and advice from other agencies. The Child Protection Policy takes priority where there is a safeguarding concern.

**5. Inform parents.** Parents or carers will normally be informed. Contact may be delayed or adapted if the DSL considers that it may place a child at risk or interfere with an external investigation. The decision and reason will be recorded.

**6. Act and support.** The school will provide suitable support, apply proportionate action under the Behaviour Policy and address any underlying needs. Restorative work will be voluntary and used only when safe and appropriate.

**7. Record.** The incident, decisions, evidence, action, communication and planned review will be recorded on CPOMS promptly.

**8. Follow up.** A named member of staff will check that the behaviour has stopped, review safety and support, and record the outcome. Further action will be taken if concerns continue.

**9. Escalation.** Parents who remain dissatisfied may use the school Complaints Policy. Concerns about an adult must be managed under the safeguarding allegations and staff conduct procedures.

## Policy Revisions Since September 2025

- Clarified that one-off harmful, discriminatory or sexual incidents must still be addressed and may require safeguarding action.
- Added clear routes for referral to the DSL, children's social care, police and other agencies where appropriate.
- Updated coverage of protected characteristics, online and off-site bullying, reasonable adjustments and the term suspension.
- Made restorative meetings voluntary and added safeguarding exceptions to normal parent notification.
- Strengthened CPOMS recording, follow-up, trend monitoring, governor oversight and the complaints route.