Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School
A Voluntary Academy

School Mission Statement

Our mission is to deliver outstanding and distinctive Catholic education with Christ at the centre of all that we do. We welcome and recognise God's Grace in all and celebrate the diverse community we serve.

The Our Lady family learn together through the virtues and values of the Gospels which encourages us to become respectful modern global citizens. Opportunities are given for the children to live out Catholic social teaching principles, working together with local and worldwide charities.

Through mutual support and partnership with our parish and families, we recognise and guide the unique talents of each individual and nurture every child to be the best they can be.

We Love, Live and Learn in the Light of Christ

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and those pupils who can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities at the school.

- We do not tolerate bullying of any kind at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy.
- Any incident of apparent bullying is investigated.
- Bullying is something that happens more than once to the same person.
- It could be a prejudice related incident (an attack on someone as a representative of a community or group)
- Something that happens once may be mean and hurtful but it is not necessarily bullying.
- All members of the school community will be listened to respectfully and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- Young people should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

Why is an Anti-Bullying Policy necessary?

The school believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organized, it can minimize the occurrence of bullying. The school also has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is WRONG and will not be tolerated. It is important therefore that the school has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where

both pupils and parents/carers are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.
In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Those who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. (www.stopbullying.gov)

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

a) PHYSICAL - A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
b) VERBAL - Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief, race, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.
c) EXCLUSION - A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
d) DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT - Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.
e) PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL - This involves spreading rumours, exclusion from games and chats, tormenting, humiliating, excluding from social groups, gesturing, body language
f) CYBER - This involves the use of electrical devices, including mobile phones, and social net-working sites on the internet to deliberately upset someone

Forms of bullying

Racial, religious, cultural; SEN and disabilities; appearance or health conditions; related to home circumstance; homophobic; biphobic; transphobic and sexual.

At Our Lady's we also take seriously any form of prejudice related bullying, the definition for this being:
Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice-related by the victim or the other person.

These could be instances that are linked to any of the above forms. Not only does this affect a young person's self-esteem, emotional health and wellbeing but it also can have an effect on their attendance at school and their attainment.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.

a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is WRONG.
b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
f) Fighting back may make things worse.
g) Talk to a teacher or parent/carer first. Take a friend with you if you feel scared.
g) Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

If you experience bullying by mobile phone text messages or e-mail

- Tell a friend, parent or teacher.
- Be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to.
- Make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent and save the evidence.

If you know someone is being bullied

a) TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

As a Parent or Carer

a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent, etc.
c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school

IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened.
d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
e) Tell your son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying and that they must not be afraid to ask for help.

When talking with teachers about bullying

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that the teacher may not be aware of the incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved as well as how often it has happened.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

As a school

a) Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
b) Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. "Come and See" - our Religious Education Programme, a RSHE and PSHE Programme (Statements to live By), whole-school assemblies, key-stage assemblies, class assemblies.
c) Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints involving parents where necessary.
d) Review the School Policy and its degree of success.
e) The school staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.
f) Not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any protected characteristics.
g) Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
h) Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect (e.g. Heart of Gold Award).
I) We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.

Action to be taken when bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and

any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken: - Help, support and counselling will be given as appropriate to both the victim and the bullies.

We support the victim in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose using the restorative justice procedures.
- informing the victim's parents/carers.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- arrange for them to be escorted to and from the school premises
- by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We also discipline, yet try to help the bully in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened to discover why they became involved using the restorative justice procedures
- informing the bully's parents/carers.
- by continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

Disciplinary Steps

1. They will be warned officially to stop offending and action will be taken through the school's restorative justice procedures.
2. Incidents will be recorded using CPOMS where SLT will be informed.
3. Informing parents/carers.
4. They may be excluded from break and/or lunchtimes.
5. We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the school premises.
6. If they do not stop bullying, they will be excluded for a minor fixed period (one or two days).
7. If they then carry on they will be recommended for exclusion for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period.
8. If they do not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion

.

Recording bullying and evaluating the policy (Information for parents)
How bullying is recorded

- All bullying incidents are recorded on CPOMS – an online reporting tool.
- The incidents recorded on CPOPMS will be monitored regularly and any patterns/trends etc. identified will be reported to governors and used to inform the school's practice.

Strategies for preventing bullying

- Anti-bullying week assemblies and activities
- ELSA support
- Restorative Justice
- Staff CPD

If you are not satisfied with how we handled your situation

- Check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.
- If still dissatisfied, please follow the Complaints Procedures a copy of which will be provided by the school.

If your child exhibits bullying behaviour

- Talk with your child and explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Try to role model the behaviour that you expect from your child so that they can learn from this outside school.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/ her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/ she is cooperative or kind to other people.

Reviewed: September 2026
Review Date: September 2028