



## 1 Preamble

St Julie's Catholic High School is a Catholic learning community which strives to uphold the traditions and values of its founders, the Sisters of Notre Dame. We have incorporated these values into our own Mission Statement.

## 2 Mission Statement

We aim to be a Catholic learning community

1. which respects and embraces the diversity of all God's people
2. where opportunities allow for each individual to discover their potential and to develop and share their unique talents
3. where friendship and enjoyment are experienced by all, and a welcome is offered to those who visit
4. which provides all with a safe and secure environment
5. where faith, prayer and reflection are visible in word and in action
6. which takes good care of God's world and all who inhabit it, especially the poor and disadvantaged.
7. where fairness, care and compassion are central to life.

This mission Statement expresses the core beliefs which we strive to demonstrate in our words, actions and relationships. These beliefs strengthen us in our task of making St Julie's High School a safe, secure, happy yet challenging learning community where all are nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential.

It is our privilege to have children entrusted to our care. We take this responsibility seriously and demonstrate this by doing all we can to enable students to develop and grow into the best they can be.

## 3 Principles

The school:

- Has adopted a definition of bullying that is agreed and accepted by all members of the school community
- Has a proactive approach to preventing bullying by listening, celebrating difference, seeking to understand bullying and including all
- Will always believe that reports of bullying could be true
- Expects all staff to report any possible instance of bullying
- Priorities securing the safety of all young people affected by bullying
- Challenges all forms of bullying, including verbal
- Has a consistent approach to taking action to address any alleged bullying incidents that occur
- Seeks to prevent re-occurrence of bullying

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- Reflects on any incidences of bullying to take and share learnings
- Recognises the importance of stakeholders understanding what bullying is and that bullying can happen in any environment
- Continues to raise awareness of our approach to combatting bullying and promotes positive relationships based on mutual respect
- Seeks to involve all members of the school community in the implementation and monitoring of this policy
- Continues to promote positive action to prevent bullying through our PSHE programme, the wider curriculum and related activities
- Provides support for all members of the school community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying
- Expects staff to model exemplary conduct towards each, pupils and other stakeholders, as outlined in our Relationships Policy so that they are seen as 'trusted adults'
- Ensures fair treatment for all

## **4 Bullying and Relational Conflict**

### **4.1 Definition of Bullying**

There is no definition of 'bullying' in English law. However, following consultation with stakeholders, we have adopted the definition of bullying used by the Anti-Bullying Alliance which states that bullying is:

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online'.

### **4.2 Bullying, safeguarding and the law**

Bullying is not in and of itself automatically a child protection issue but becomes one "where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm" (Children Act 1989). The Education Act 2002 gave schools a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and includes bullying.

The Education & Inspections Act 2006 gave head teachers the responsibility for 'preventing all forms of bullying'. It empowered head teachers to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off school site and for members of school staff to impose disciplinary penalties

The DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education is also clear that 'serious bullying (including cyberbullying)' could constitute emotional abuse.

Whilst there is no specific offence of bullying in English law, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. Hate crimes (incident which the

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victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender) might also constitute criminal offences and assistance from the police may be sought in such cases. Bullying may constitute a violation of a number of rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right of children to privacy, and their right to be protected from abuse, neglect and degrading treatment.

### 4.3 Key differences between Bullying and Relational Conflict

Relational conflict between students can on occasion often lead to bullying. Relational conflict can arise through personal differences between individual students or groups of students, problems from outside school becoming interwoven with school life or from difficulties arising from the breakdown of relationships between individuals or groups of students. Relational conflict usually involves individuals and groups who are relatively similar in power and status. It is generally behaviour which happens occasionally, and offence might be accidental. In cases of relational conflict, there is also generally a willingness to make things right, to reflect on what went wrong and to try and plot a way forward.

There may sometimes be misunderstanding about whether an incident is bullying 'bullying' or 'relational conflict' so it is important to define what we mean by bullying and to explore the differences between bullying and conflict. This is managed through the 'Be Safe' process, an in-school system for gathering information, guiding decisions around whether an incident is to be classed as bullying or conflict and managing communication with parents and other stakeholders. Each 'Be Safe' log is managed by the relevant Pupil Progress Leader in consultation with a member of the school safeguarding team.

<b>Relational Conflict</b>	<b>Bullying</b>
Occasional	Can be a repeated happening
Not pre-planned	Premeditated, on purpose, planned, intentional
Both parties are genuinely upset	Person being bullied is more upset
No imbalance of power	One party deliberately exercises power over another party
Both parties admit responsibility	Blame is laid on the person being bullied
There is an effort to solve the situation from both parties	No effort is made to solve the situation by the person who is doing the bullying

Not all conflict leads to bullying, but some does. Unresolved bad feelings, or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention is to cause harm or distress, and can create an imbalance of power which makes an individual or group more vulnerable.

Just because an incident doesn't have all of the elements of bullying, doesn't mean it is something to ignore. For example, a relational conflict that goes unresolved can easily turn into bullying so will be monitored. Another example would be that a one-off verbal or physical

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attack, whilst not bullying, would still need involvement from adults in the form of sanctions and/or support.

It is not necessary for all of the criteria listed under 'Bullying' to be met in order for an incident to be determined to be bullying. There will always be a need for professional judgment to be made and a 'best-fit' approach adopted.

However, imbalance of power (actual or perceived) will be present in all instances of bullying. This imbalance could be focused on individual differences relating to things such as:

- Age
- Appearance
- Gender
- Perceived ability
- Perceived level of popularity
- Perceived social status

In all instances of bullying, it is the actions of the perpetrator and not the identity or characteristics of the victim that are to blame for the bullying occurring. Bullying behaviour is never acceptable

Bullying is in most instances a group behaviour – whilst there will be one or more ring-leaders who instigate the bullying there will also be those who assist or reinforce the bullying behaviours and these roles may swap around over time.

#### **4.4 Supervision within school**

As per the teacher standards, teachers are responsible for establishing a safe environment and for following school systems and policies that promote high expectations of behaviour and build good relationships.

All staff working in schools must know and understand their duties in relation to Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, including understanding of school systems and policies for preventing and responding to bullying and understanding additional vulnerabilities that may make a pupil more at risk of harm.

At unstructured times such as break and lunch, a supervision duty rota is in place and staff on duty wear high-visibility jackets so that they can maintain high profile presence. Duty points are kept under review to ensure that all areas inside and outside of the school are covered as far as is reasonably possible and pupil voice is taken into account when identifying duty points. Members of the Leadership Team act as 'roamers' covering a range of areas.

Pupils are encouraged to be 'active bystanders' whose mindset of acceptance of all people becomes a protective factor to prevent bullying. No pupil would ever be expected to put themselves at risk by intervening directly in a dangerous or hostile situation and peer support strategies operate only as part of a wider whole-school approach.

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#### 4.5 Behaviour outside of school

As a school we recognise that bullying might occur outside of the school environment, for example on the journey to or from school or via other means such as social media. The non-statutory Department for Education guidance *'Behaviour in Schools: advice for Headteachers and school staff'* is clear that "Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable". Where possible bullying behaviour outside of school is witnessed by or reported to school staff, this will be investigated and addressed in the same way as such behaviours taking place within school. Members of the school Leadership Team regularly supervise the school gate at the start and end of the school day and also visit the local area to monitor the behaviour of and to safeguard pupils as they commence their journeys home.

#### 4.6 Prejudice Related Bullying and Language

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a public sector equality duty. All schools must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This duty covers the 'protected characteristics' which includes disability and applies to prospective pupils, pupils at the school and, in some instances, former pupils. Under the public sector equality duty, schools must act if they are aware of the use of discriminatory language or language which targets pupils or school staff because of their protected characteristics. Individuals are also protected from discrimination if they are associated with someone who has protected characteristic (e.g. a sibling or friend) or have complained about discrimination, or supported someone else's claim.

Age and being married or in a civil partnership are not protected characteristics for the schools' provisions under the Equality Act 2010.

In line with the principles set out in the Equality Act 2010, where bullying is found to be based on prejudices related to protected characteristics this will be treated as an aggravating factor and may result in more serious sanctions being issued. Such bullying would typically falls into categories such as:

- Homophobic
- Sexist
- Racist
- Transphobic

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- Disablist
- Targeted at faith

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning need or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as 'banter' is not helpful as even if these terms are not actually intended to refer to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language after fair warning has been given will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

#### **4.7 At risk groups**

Some groups of children and young people are more at risk of bullying because they may identify as, or are perceived to be, 'different' from their peers including being targeted because of their identity or protected characteristic. It should never be implied to children that they are bullied because of who they are. Bullying takes place because of external factors, attitudes of others, group dynamics and systems in which children live and learn. These factors are sometimes based in prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes and/or discrimination towards particular groups.

The individual characteristics that marks someone out as 'different' may vary and change over time but the below groups are indicative. They may also intersect and some children and young people may be even more at risk because they fall into more than one, or multiple, at-risk groups. One of the strongest protective factors against being bullied is having strong friendship networks and as a school we strive to ensure that this is true of all pupils including those in the groups identified below.

##### **i. SEND including disablist bullying**

Disabled young people and those with SEN (SEND), are significantly more likely to report that they experience bullying - including online bullying - than their peers. Children who have learning disabilities and autism are particularly at risk.

As we school we aim to ensure that children and young people with SEND are supported to take the lead in anti-bullying initiatives and are consulted with about their experiences of disablism, including the use of disablist language and/or stereotypes, and bullying in school and online.

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School will make available appropriate additional support and reasonable adjustment, as needed, to avoid pupils with SEND being placed at substantial disadvantage - including in their learning about bullying and staying safe online. The law allows for disabled pupils to be treated more favourably than pupils without a disability to ensure equal opportunity for participation.. At the time, we seek to ensure that our core offer is sufficiently accessible and inclusive for all so as to minimise the extent to which individual adjustments may create a stigmatisation of 'difference' or may impact adversely on young people's or others' expectations of their own life chances.

We will also seek to challenge the misconceptions about SEND that may lead some to display bullying behaviours and to avoid creating a sense that a young person's SEND is their defining characteristic over and above their status as a young person.

**ii. LGBT+**

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying is bullying directed at someone who is or is perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans (LGBT).

As a school we seek to celebrate difference in all its many forms on a daily basis within schools. The school curriculum contributes to preventing all forms of bullying and gender stereotypes as well as discriminatory and derogatory language are challenged.

Where applicable, we link with local services that are available for LGBT young people and young people who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity

**iii. Race and faith**

Race and faith-targeted bullying is bullying that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be racist or bullying that targets a person's faith.

Under the The Equality Act 2010 the protected characteristic of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. It is also unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their religion or belief, or because of a lack of a religion or belief.

Any reports of racist behaviour will be taken extremely seriously and this includes activity on social media platforms. School will never dismiss reports of racism or bullying – those reporting such bullying will have their feelings acknowledged, be listened to and be involved in our response.

We keep records of levels of race and faith targeted bullying and action taken to address it, including any instances where we report racist incidents/faith targeted incidents as hate crimes to the police.

**iv. Appearance related**

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Appearance related bullying is bullying that targets an aspect of a person's appearance and is often verbal and/or emotional. Like other forms of bullying, it can happen online or face-to-face. It can often be linked with other types of bullying such as racist bullying, disablist bullying, sexist bullying and bullying of LGBT young people. National research shows that it is one of the most common reasons for children experiencing bullying and has clear impact on self-image. Children and young people with a visible difference are more likely to experience appearance targeted bullying. UK charity Changing Faces describes 'visible difference' as a scar, mark or condition on your face or body that makes you look different.

**v. Children Looked After (CLA)**

NSPCC defines a looked after child (CLA) as a child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours. CLA are also often referred to as children in care, a term which many children and young people prefer. The Office of National Statistics conducted a survey of the mental health of CLA aged 5-17 in Great Britain. They found 45% of looked after children aged 5-17 had a mental health disorder, compared to 10% of the general population. They also more likely to report feelings of loneliness and are 50% less likely than the general population to state that they have a 'good friend'. CLA can face barriers to forming friendships due to issues such as not being able to stay over at friends' houses without police checks being done on parents, meaning that they are missing out on strong protective factor against potential bullying.

National research demonstrates that children in care are among the groups who are most vulnerable to bullying and there is strong evidence to suggest that the correlation between looked after children and bullying increases with age, with CLA in secondary schools 4 times more likely to report bullying than other children in secondary years.

As a school, we aim at ensuring that staff understand the reasons why young people might be in care, the additional challenges they experience and how this might affect them. Staff are expected to be aware of actions that could make care-experienced young people feel different and ensure that all activities are inclusive and that issues are handled sensitively with the care-experienced young person leading decisions made about what is shared with other pupils. We seek to talk about diverse families throughout the curriculum and school life.

A restorative approach might work for care-experienced young people who are involved in bullying. It can support them to feel empowered and more confident.

**vi. Young carers**

Young carers are children and young people under 18 years old who provide regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances (ADASS, ADCS and The Children's Society, 2012). It is estimated that there may be on average as many as 6 young carers for every 30 Secondary School pupils.

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National research has shown that young carers are a vulnerable group and are up to 5 times more likely to be bullied. Young carers have a range of responsibilities which might include caring for a sick relative or friend. This can have a significant impact on their lives which can leave them feeling different or isolated from their peers. They may miss out on social opportunities and are more likely to be bullied or harassed (Carers Trust, 2016). A young person's caring role may lead to them being late or tired or worried and consideration should be given helping them to access support discreetly without being seen as different or singled out.

School will always seek to work with a young carer's family in a way that enables them to participate – for example, some parents may have difficulty with taking phone calls or attending meetings. Email or text may be better options.

#### **vii. Mental health**

Mental health is defined as “a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH: CONCEPTS, EMERGING EVIDENCE PRACTICE - World Health Organisation 2005)

National research demonstrates that there is a strong link between mental health and bullying - young people who have experienced or perpetrated bullying are more likely to experience mental health issues and those who have mental health issues are more likely to be bullied, with the impact often lasting until adulthood.

The mental health of a child can be severely damaged by the experience of being bullied and it is necessary that this is taken into account when dealing with an incident. Putting in place pastoral care, both adult and peer, and working with the parents, will be a key part of the school's response to bullying in order to help the children to feel supported and listened to.

We are mindful that disruptive behaviour can be an expression of difficulties or distress and that there needs to be recognition and support for the emotional needs of children and young people who are being bullied and who bully others. Some of the signs that bullying might be impacting on a young person's mental health include:

- Changes in school performance or engagement
- Increased isolation
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Changes in behaviour

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- Change in weight
- Signs of injury

**viii. Sexual and sexist**

For the purposes of this policy, sexism is defined as prejudice or discrimination based upon the idea that a person or a group of persons is inferior because of their sex, including maintaining and reinforcing sexist stereotypes, and perpetrated at the individual, institutional and structural levels (adapted from the Council of Europe's definition, 'Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on preventing and combating sexism' 2019).

Schools have a legal duty to create an environment where sexism is not tolerated; where personal space of students and staff is respected; where sexist language and comments are challenged; and where students and staff feel empowered to say no to any unwanted touch

A national OFSTED review into sexist and sexual bullying found that girls report that they experience the following behaviours 'a lot' or 'sometimes':

- rumours about their sexual activity
- unwanted or inappropriate comments of a sexual nature
- being sent pictures or videos they did not want to see
- being put under pressure to provide sexual images of themselves
- having pictures or videos that they sent being shared more widely without their knowledge or consent
- feeling pressured to do sexual things that they did not want to

Bullying and sexual and sexist behaviours overlap and it is possible that behaviours can be sexual bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment. For example, sexual bullying taking place may also be a sign that there is heightened risk of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual exploitation and/or sexual violence. This behaviour can be between children and young people of any gender and/or sexual orientation, and between children and adults. National research suggests that sexual and sexist bullying have a disproportionate impact on girls, though girls can also be perpetrators of this kind of bullying, including against other girls.

Whilst recognising that sexist bullying may be of a lower level than sexual bullying, we will always treat the 'lower level' incidents seriously in order to prevent them from escalating. Sexual harassment can never be accepted as 'banter' or as a 'normal' part of growing-up. Such an attitude risks creating an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a

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culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

We know that disabled children, those with SEND and young people who identify as LGBT can be particularly vulnerable to sexist and sexual bullying.

In addressing incidences of sexist and sexual bullying we are also mindful of the harmful 'adultification bias' which has contributed nationally to a situation whereby minoritised ethnic groups face significant overrepresentation in exclusions for sexual misconduct (as well as exclusions overall). Left unchallenged, these biases and pre-conceived ideas can be particularly damaging for children and young people and as a school we seek to raise awareness of this so that stakeholders check for any biases in the systems, policy and practice.

The pathways for addressing instances of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment are found with the school Safeguarding Policy and we recognise that some sexual bullying (such as upskirting and creating or share nude and semi-nude images of children under 18, even if the person doing it is a child) are specifically prohibited in law. School also has a right and duty to act on incidents that occur outside of school where necessary and appropriate to do so.

**ix. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people**

Travelling communities are often referred to as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller in the UK but there are several distinct groups of Travelling and nomadic peoples including Romany Gypsy, Irish Traveller, English Traveller, Scottish Gypsy Traveller, Welsh Traveller, Showmen, Liveaboard Boaters and New Travellers. In Europe, the preferred term to describe people with Romani descent is 'Roma'. Gypsy, Roma and some Traveller people are protected against discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 in England, Wales and Scotland and under the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 in Northern Ireland.

Nationally, there is evidence that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils are significantly less likely to self-identify than pupils in other minority groups for fear of being discriminated against. This means that at any one time, the actual number of young people in school who belong to one of these communities may be higher than the data held by school suggests.

In 2018, the Equality and Human Rights Commission found that out of 1,903 adults in Britain, over 40% expressed 'very negative' attitudes towards these three communities, which was by far the most of any protected characteristic group in the study.

Nationally, the level of discrimination reported by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people is also very high. In 2017, The Traveller Movement found that 70% (138 out of 199 interviewed) of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people had experienced discrimination in some form in education. In a survey conducted by Friends, Families and Travellers in 2019, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people were asked what the biggest challenge in school they

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faced was; 86% of pupils reported the biggest challenge at school being bullying. They report feeling that there is a lack of understanding of their culture and histories and that they are often judged, subjected to racist and offensive language, suffer from negative stereotypes about their attitude to learning or academic ability and are not believed or are unsupported when they report bullying.

As a school we seek to adopt the key supportive strategies that young people from these communities have identified:

- Inclusive teaching approaches that take account of possible language and that focus on the fostering of positive relationship
- Challenging racist language and promoting positive images
- Raising awareness amongst staff that Gypsies are a race
- Raising awareness and celebrating Gypsy, Roma and Traveller ethnicities and cultures
- Listening to and believing reports of bullying against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Recording any such bullying as a racist incident
- Involving young people in finding the solutions to bullying

#### **4.8 Forms of bullying**

There are various forms of bullying which include:

- Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings.
- Verbal – e.g. name calling, insulting, racist remarks.
- Psychological – e.g. belittling, manipulating or ‘gaslighting’
- Indirect – e.g. spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups, family feuds brought into school.
- Cyber – e.g. use of email, social networking sites, mobile phone messaging or image sharing (including AI generated images) to spread rumours, make malicious comments.

Sexual bullying, including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence, is addressed separately within the schools Safeguarding Policy under the category of child-on-child abuse.

#### **4.9 Cyberbullying and inappropriate online behaviour**

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The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims – so-called ‘cyberbullying’. Most cyberbullying is an extension of bullying behaviour that is happening face to face. National research shows that girls and children with SEND are statistically more likely to

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school, we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:

- Hacking into someone’s accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice /hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

We will provide opportunities for children to learn safe ways to use the internet (see our e-Safety and Acceptable Use policy) and encourage good online behaviour. Telling people to simply not use the internet is not a realistic or appropriate response and risks placing the blame on the person being bullied.

We also ask that parents take reasonable steps to support good online behaviours by for example:

- Not allowing their children to use age-restricted apps until they have reached the appropriate age (13 for most of the popular social media platforms)
- Regularly monitoring their child’s online activity
- Not allowing their child to keep their phone overnight/past an agreed ‘curfew’
- Ensuring that their child’s privacy settings are robust and appropriate and that they do not share passwords
- Encouraging their child to block and report harmful content (this can be done via the ‘Report’ button school website)
- Advising their children to only invite or accept genuine friends
- Retaining screenshots of offensive messages (screenshots **must not** be taken of possible illegal content such as nude images and school would not ask to view or make copies of such content)
- Promoting a ‘Think you before you share’ mindset and considering whether they would repeat their online behaviour in face-face situations

Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the protection from Harassment Act 1997

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and there have been some instances of such prosecutions in the UK. 'Liking' or adding offensive comments to bullying content initiated by others can itself be classed as bullying.

The Education Act 2011 gives additional powers to schools – screening, searching and confiscation, including electronic devices [in certain circumstances]. This even includes the power to delete certain content and to search without consent if there is reason to believe that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.

## 5 Impact of bullying:

The lives of students who are bullied are made miserable; they may suffer injury, they may attend erratically, they may lose self-confidence, they are likely to underachieve educationally and socially and their school attendance may suffer. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as:

- non accidental injuries (including self-harm)
- low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety.

If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students than themselves. Bullying can and frequently does have long term effects on victims which may affect their adult lives. This is why St. Julie's Catholic High School has a rigorous and robust procedure for dealing effectively with allegations of bullying

## 6 Responding to reports/allegations of bullying

Our approach to bullying is based around the three key principles of Communication, Prevention and Response

### Communication

Our stance on bullying and mental health:

- is communicated to **all members** of the school community
- presented in formats that can be clearly **understood by parents, pupils and staff**
- includes **teaching about mental and emotional health in the school curriculum**, increasing awareness and challenging the stigma that surrounds it, ensuring pupils are able to recognise and talk about issues, and making sure that those who experience mental health problems feel supported and confident that the appropriate steps and strategies will be put in place
- involves **listening to pupils** and making sure pupils feel comfortable talking to them about bullying and issues of mental health

### Prevention:

We seek to establish a positive, open environment which supports good mental health, and outlines a clear approach towards supporting the mental health needs of those who are

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involved in bullying. Amongst staff, greater awareness of the warning signs associated with bullying and mental health problems can ensure children at risk are identified early, and the appropriate measures are put in place should they require support.

**Response:**

We seek to encourage all incidents of bullying to be reported and recorded. In addition to this:

- Relevant Pastoral staff are identified and available for pupils to speak with privately and confidentially.
- We form strategic partnerships with specialist external services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- For staff, responses to bullying and mental health issues should be carried out sensitively, and not rushed into.

By using the additional support network, strategies and techniques can be developed and implemented that will help children and young people deal with the situation they are in, and hopefully assist them in improving their mental and emotional wellbeing.

**6.1 Roles and responsibilities**

Bullying is not someone else's problem. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to act if bullying is apparent and to promote a culture within the school which helps students develop positive relationships and choose not to bully or discriminate.

- Governors

The Safeguarding Link Governor is also the Governor responsible for monitoring the school's response to allegations of bullying and this forms part of the termly report to Governors submitted by the Safeguarding Team.

- The Headteacher

The Head Teacher is ultimately responsible for the wellbeing of all students and staff. All staff, students, parents and governors should be made aware of the policy alongside awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying in schools.

- The Safeguarding Team

The Designated Safeguarding Lead coordinates the whole school approach to addressing bullying and conflict.

The Heads of School, who also sit on the Safeguarding Team, have been designated to oversee the safeguarding and wellbeing of students within their Key Stage. Their role includes the following responsibilities:

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- To liaise with the Head Teacher and Safeguarding Team on all matters regarding the safeguarding of children.
  - To ensure all staff are aware of the contents of the Anti-Bullying Policy and that its procedures are adhered to
  - To liaise with appropriate staff to ensure the implementation of whole school initiatives to highlight aspects of bullying, including Anti-Bullying Week.
  - To ensure that the Progress Leaders in their Key Stage monitor and record all reports of incidents or allegations of bullying using the agreed recording format(s).
  - To raise the issue of alleged bullying events within each Year group with the relevant Progress Leader and record the outcome at regular KIT meetings ensuring that minutes are taken and shared.
  - To ensure the appropriate Progress Leader monitors students involved in bullying and allegations of bullying and keeps the parents/carers informed.
  - To liaise with the police as necessary.
  - To quality assure the record keeping of incident(s) in a Be Safe log in accordance with school procedures.
  - To provide feedback and updates to Progress Leaders on Be Safe processes
  - To embed a pro-active culture of vigilance where staff are alert to indicators of possible non-reported incidences of bullying e.g. decline in attendance
- **Progress Leaders**

Progress Leaders have responsibility for:

- Clarifying the facts through thorough investigation and taking written accounts from the alleged bully, any victims and witnesses using the school standard forms for this purpose.
  - Informing all parents / carers of the incident and whether it has been deemed to be bullying or conflict (determined in consultation with the relevant Head of School), along with a clear rationale for this decision
  - Recording the incident using the agreed Be Safe format, to include details around the nature of the bullying (e.g. physical; verbal; online), any aggravating factors, actions taken, outcomes and review dates
  - Liaising with the Head of School with responsibility for the Key Stage regarding the sanction.
  - Maintaining the records of the incident(s) in accordance with school procedures.
  - Quality assuring the delivery of the school's PSHE/RSE curricula, including the extent to which pupils are provided with opportunities to celebrate difference and diversity and to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact
- **The Administration Team**

The Administration Team have responsibility for:

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- Scanning and saving documentation passed to them by Progress Leaders and/or the Safeguarding Team, in timely fashion
- Preparing printed copies of Be Safe logs and supporting documentation as requested by the Safeguarding Team

## 6.2 Reporting suspected bullying

Staff should be alert to any potential incident of bullying, intervene when instances are noticed, inform the Progress Leader and provide a written account as required. Staff should be mindful of the “Acceptable Use Policy” for the school network and should report any infringements to the Network Manager. Students who violate the rules included in the “Acceptable Use policy” will be sanctioned. All staff are responsible for the day-to-day management of minor incidents between children.

All pupils should inform a member of staff if they believe that bullying is happening. Whilst reports of alleged bullying should normally be made to the Progress Leader of the person suffering from the alleged bullying, pupils can make reports face-to-face to any member of staff and the staff member will then be responsible for notifying other relevant colleagues.

Reports can also be made from their school email address, stating their name and Year Group, and should always include an overview of:

- who they are concerned about, specifying the names of anyone they believe to be suffering from or carrying out bullying
- what the concerns are
- when and where any they have witnessed these concerns
- whether anyone else witnessed these concerns

These emails should be sent to [safeguarding@stjulies.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stjulies.org.uk)

The name of individuals raising concerns about bullying will not be shared with alleged victims or perpetrators but it is important that school are aware of who has raised the concern in order to allow for proper follow-up and, where necessary, further information to be gained. It may not be possible for proper follow-up to take place if concerns are raised completely anonymously.

Students also have the following options

- Ensuring that previous victims of bullying are not isolated from groups of friends.
- Encouraging the victim to join in activities and groups.
- Discuss bullying issues in PSHE lessons and Tutor time.

Pupils may intervene when someone is being bullied and make it clear to the bully that their actions are disapproved of, in accordance with the following principles:

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- **Safe:** Keep yourself and others safe. Assess the risk of direct intervention. If you are concerned for the safety of yourself or others, you can choose a more indirect form of being an active bystander. If you get involved in a situation that starts to feel unsafe, try and get out of it and then reassess your options. Don't be aggressive or violent. The purpose is to challenge unacceptable behaviour with acceptable behaviour.
- **Active:** Do something. Focus on what you can do. Don't talk yourself out of action by saying things like 'what's the point, it won't change anything' or 'someone else will do something about it'. Believe that you can influence others. Think about the most appropriate action to take.
- **Calm:** Always stay calm and try to calm others. The less agitated people are the less likely things are to get out of control

### **6.3 Strategies which may be used if bullying is confirmed**

Bullying is a serious offence in the schools Behaviour for Learning Policy and following appropriate investigation and considering the circumstances and history, any of these strategies can be applied:

Restorative approaches – promotes understanding of the possible impact of bullying and allows children's voices to be heard whilst reinforcing school's expectations:

- Mediation, if all parties agree
- Referral for counselling / victim support
- Written or verbal apology
- Parent/carer interview with Progress Leader and Head of School leading to parental assistance in applying support or strategies or deterrents as necessary
- Continued monitoring of victim/bully individually

Sanctions – send a clear message that bullying is not acceptable and help to prevent it from occurring:

- Internal seclusion, during break and lunchtime
- Detention
- Loss of privileges
- Fixed term suspension
- Referral to Governors Behaviour Panel
- Permanent exclusion

The above lists do not necessarily reflect the order in which strategies would be implemented. Any aggravating factors (for example bullying related to protected characteristics) would always be taken into account, alongside any mitigating factors.

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The focus should always be on changing the behaviour of the person who has been bullying and not the person who has been bullied. The immediate aim is to protect the victim; the short-term aim is to stop the bullying behaviour; the medium-term aim is to address any underlying attitudes or beliefs that contribute to the behaviour; the long-term aim is to prevent the behaviours from re-occurring.

Where there is reason to believe that bullying has caused or is likely to cause significant harm then locally agreed Safeguarding Levels of Needs would be used to determine next steps. School may then work with other agencies including Children's Services, police, SEND support and health as required in order to support victims of bullying.

## **7 Staff development and training**

The anti-bullying policy is provided to new staff as part of their induction documentation, alongside training in safeguarding and behaviour for learning.

The school's definition of bullying is shared with and understood by all staff.

Regular anti-bullying updates are provided to staff.

## **8 Evaluation and Monitoring**

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.

Monitoring of the policy will involve consideration of the following;

- The extent to which the policy is reflective of a whole-school approach to addressing bullying
- Feedback from regular pupil voice in relation to well-being
- Opportunities for parents to develop understanding of bullying and how school responds
- any reduction in the number of incidents referred for attention;
- monitoring individual victims/bullies with a view to improved circumstances;
- positive feedback from parents, students and staff;
- monitoring of the willingness in students to report instances of concern;
- gathering of data broken down by protected characteristics to understand what type of bullying is taking place, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010

The results of the monitoring exercise will form part of the Safeguarding Report to Governors on a termly basis

## **Appendix**

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Appendix 1: Anti-Cyberbullying Code

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