



**OUR LADY OF LINCOLN SCHOOL  
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Date of review – March 2023  
Next review – March 2024

**Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Primary School**  
**Mission Statement**

Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Primary School is a living and caring community, an extension of our homes and an integral part of our wider Community.

Everyone is given the opportunity for a complete educational journey, embracing their spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical needs.

Following Christ's teaching to love God and love our neighbour, our school aims to provide a living and learning experience, responsive to the individual's needs, preparing our children for further growth and development and helping them to realise their full potential.

We seek to inspire the children entrusted to us to value themselves and each other.

We do this through:

- The care and example set by all of our staff
- The delivery of a broad, rich and inspiring curriculum
- Recognising and affirming the achievements of each individual child
- Working in partnership with the home, the Parish and the wider Community
- Our policies of inclusion

Our ultimate aim is to enable our children to be good citizens here and in the kingdom of God, to sow seeds based on Christ's commandments 'to love God and love one another', providing an education that will help equip them for life, giving values which will shape their growth and development as human beings long after they leave Our Lady's School.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **1.) AIMS:**

At Our Lady's School we believe that every child has the right to an environment where they feel happy, safe and valued, free from any humiliation, oppression and abuse caused by bullying. The staff and pupils aim to create a happy caring environment by reducing as far as possible the opportunities for bullying to occur. Through an increased awareness, vigilance and appropriate intervention, the school community will deal effectively with any such instances of bullying as and when they may arise.

Bullying behaviour challenges our values and school ethos and, as such, is totally unacceptable for the following reasons:

- a. As Catholics, our understanding of Christ is based on love and we teach that all our actions should reflect some aspect of God's love for us. Actions which do not reflect this, therefore, do not have a place in our school.
- b. When pupils are bullied, their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. Over time, they are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem.
- c. The unhappiness of bullied pupils is likely to adversely affect their concentration and learning.
- d. Pupils who are being bullied may interpret the school's inaction as condoning unacceptable behaviour. They will feel badly let down by adults in authority.
- e. Parents will be reassured by a school which demonstrates both through policy and action that it will respond positively and effectively to bullying.

### **2) OBJECTIVES**

- To provide a clear definition for all involved of what we consider bullying to be.
- To raise the awareness among the pupils of what bullying is.
- To promote a caring attitude in the school community and encourage a co-operative attitude in dealing with instances of bullying.
- To reduce the number of places around school which lend themselves towards situations of bullying.
- To provide a playground environment that encourages good play activities and reduces bullying.
- To provide the children with a series of strategies that enable them to deal with bullying.
- To monitor and record all prejudice related incidents so that the school's response can ensure that children are freed from any bullying and harassment

### **3) DEFINITION**

The Lincolnshire Children's Services Anti-Bullying Strategy defines bullying as, 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'

Further to this, we recognize bullying as a wilful, conscious desire on the part of one person or group, to dominate another through direct or indirect means. Bullying can take many forms including cyber-bullying, bullying related to a special educational need, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, belief or disability.

We recognize therefore four main types of bullying:

- (i) **physical** – constant hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding belongings including money, damage to property or belongings
- (ii) **verbal** – deliberately hurtful comments, name-calling, insulting, racist remarks, threatens of violence or extortion
- (iii) **indirect** - excluding someone from social groups, intimidating others in the group to exclude the victim, looks, spreading rumours, gossiping and graffiti
- (iv) **written** – emails, text messages, cyber bullying, letters to victims threatening them or saying hurtful things about them

In summary, bullying is:

- deliberate and sustained hurtful behaviour
- repeated over a period of time
- a systematic and extended victimisation of a person or group by another or group of others
- when a child is repeatedly singled out to be 'picked on'
- when the intention is to hurt, isolate or humiliate an individual
- when the actions are unprovoked

We do not consider bullying to be:-

- Isolated incidents of unkindness, hurtful though we recognize these to be
- Fallings out
- Disagreements

This considered, we do recognize that sometimes fallings out can escalate amongst children and that if this persists over time, this may become bullying.

We see bullying as a shared problem. We encourage all members of our school community to recognise bullying, acknowledge its unacceptability and report it.

#### **4) PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES**

School will use both direct and indirect methods to help prevent bullying occurring. They will include the following:-

- a) Children taught strategies to deal with potential bullying situations and will be given clear instructions regarding procedures to follow if they are being bullied or see bullying occurring.
- b) Through R.E., P.S.H.E., Collective Worship and Assemblies, children will learn about, discuss and evaluate the issues surrounding bullying.
- c) Focus weeks such as Anti-Bullying Week will also address issues in more depth
- d) School and Class Council discussion
- e) The pupils will be taught how to recognise bullying through their improved awareness via the curriculum mentioned in '(b)'
- f) School Rules are reviewed at the beginning of the school year along with the School's Mission Statement to emphasise the school's ethos and expectations of behaviours
- g) Class rules are established at the beginning of the school year which promote positive behaviour and agree class expectations. These rules are regularly referred to throughout the year
- h) Cyber-bullying is discouraged through our Internet Safety policy. E-Safety is addressed via the PSHE curriculum and children have clear messages about how to keep themselves safe online, such as via the use of CEOP material, Internet Safety and Child Safety Week
- i) Children are not allowed to be in possession of mobile phones during the school day
- j) All staff will be made aware, via the policy and policy review, of bullying and be able to identify potential bullying at the earliest stage possible in order to prevent it from progressing.
- k) Staff will follow the procedures outlined in Section 5 to ensure that the policy is working and that the needs of the victim and bully are met. They must carry out their duties diligently, including areas such as toilets and those not in direct view. Staff are asked to watch out for lone pupils and try to integrate them into the play activities of other children.
- l) Staff will respond to good behaviour - rewarding exemplary instances would demonstrate fair-mindedness and emphasise the importance we attach to it. Moreover, children who misbehave as a way of getting attention from an adult can be encouraged to be well-behaved as an alternative and more attractive way of receiving this attention.

The promotion of the non-bullying ethos of the school should be addressed at every opportunity and, while Assemblies and R.E. lessons naturally lend themselves to this, direct references to incidents in History, Current Affairs or fiction can, and should, be made.

## **5) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES**

- a) All staff, teaching and non teaching, through the increased awareness and understanding of what is meant by bullying and of the procedures contained within the policy, will be responsible for ensuring that all suspected reported cases of bullying are followed up properly.
- b) An Education in Personal Relationships programme of study deals with relationships and bullying, and is built into the RE and PSHE curriculum (refer to EPR policy)
- c) There will be a periodic review of the Anti-Bullying Policy by the Staff regarding whether:
  - the policy itself is being consistently followed throughout the school
  - the policy being followed has resulted in any success in the reduction of bullying

## **6. Responding to incidents**

**All prejudice related incidents will be reported on the BULLYING/PREJUDICE RELATED INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Every report of an incident must be thoroughly investigated, fairly and impartially, and responded to in an appropriate manner using the following guidelines, which is followed by all staff. All incidents will be recorded and monitored. (Refer to the school's Complaint's Policy for further detail)

Children involved in such incidents may feel quite justified in their actions, and may be reluctant to admit to them. Some children may even make false allegations of bullying against a fellow pupil to get them into trouble. In some cases, therefore, it can be difficult for staff to build an accurate picture of events or to be sure of who is telling the truth. However, staff will build upon their relationships with individual pupils to encourage honest and direct discussion; and will invest time in getting to the root of the problem in order to ensure that the matter is dealt with effectively. All children are made aware that as a school, we have high expectations of behaviour and that our expectation is always to tell the truth the first time.

The nature and degree of the incident will determine which stage of response is considered appropriate. The school recognizes the following categories which help determine at which stage the response is required. Upon investigating the incident, the member of staff involved, in dialogue with other staff members if appropriate will decide which category the incident falls into and then which course of action to take as a result:

**Category A:** No offence was intended or taken (*See Minor Incidents Stage 1- this is NOT recorded as Bullying*)

**Category B:** Hurt or distress was caused, but the offending behaviour is unlikely to be repeated. This is likely to be the first report that the school has received regarding the incident, concerning the same child/group of children. (*See Minor Incidents Stage 1- this is NOT recorded as Bullying*)

**Category C:** Hurt or distress was caused, on more than one occasion by the same person/ group of people. The child/ren involved are given a formal warning that if the behaviour continues, more serious consequences will follow, as detailed in Stage 2 below. This is likely to be seen when fallings out escalate on a number of occasions. *(This stage may be recorded as Bullying, and will depend upon the nature of the incident/s and the set of circumstances involved. See Stage 1 and 2 if appropriate)*

**Category D:** Hurt or distress was caused intentionally, and the pupil(s) responsible had previously been warned that as above that their behaviour was unacceptable. Despite this warning the behaviour had been repeated. *(See Stage 2/3 Serious/ Repeated Incidents – this is recorded as Bullying)*

**Category E:** Substantial hurt or distress was caused, and/or the behaviour was based on substantial hostility and prejudice, and/or the behaviour was repeated, or continues to be repeated despite actions already implemented at Stage 2. *(See Stage 3/4 Serious Incidents of Bullying/Exclusion)*

### **Minor Incidents (Stage 1)**

These are generally one off incidents which do not result in actual physical or mental harm, and/or incidents which do not form part of a consistent pattern. These will be dealt with verbally and either a verbal or written apology will be required. Sanctions will be implemented in line with the Behaviour Management policy, where appropriate.

By the definition stated above, this does not amount to bullying and will not be reported officially as such; however, all such incidents will be logged for future reference in either the class incident book or lunchtime incident book, as we recognize that this may amount to bullying in future if it does recur. These incident books will be monitored regularly by class teachers or midday staff in order to pick up on any emerging patterns which could potentially lead to bullying if not addressed.

When such incidents as these occur, each pupil will be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion will focus on finding a solution and stopping the incidents from recurring. If applicable, the adult will aim to help the pupils find their own solution to their personal disagreement, and also discuss with them how their proposals will be put into action. Where possible, P.S.H.E. should be used in group situations to help prevent the situation from repeating.

A Parental Notification of Outcome form will be completed if a parent has brought this incident to the attention of the school. If not, an incident form may be completed, to inform the parents, if deemed appropriate.

**For Category A incidents:** An incident report may be issued to the child's parents to inform them that an incident has taken place, if deemed appropriate.

**For Category B incidents:** A Behaviour or Incident Report may be issued depending on the nature and severity of the incident and / or another suitable sanction if deemed appropriate, in line with the Behaviour Management Policy. A copy of all forms should be forwarded to the Head Teacher for signing and logging for future reference.

**For Category C incidents/fallings out which have escalated:** the child will receive a formal warning that the behaviour will be logged, reported to Governors and if repeated in future, will be held on their permanent record and more serious consequences will follow. Parents will be involved at this stage. Strategies will be discussed with the child/ren involved as to how to prevent future incidents. All staff concerned will be alerted to the situation, so as to remain even more vigilant.

**Repeated Incidents/Bullying (Stage 2)** If a child starts to show a *pattern* of repeated incidents, the school recognizes this as Bullying.

Parental involvement and support from the bully's family will be expected at this stage, who will be contacted via a Behaviour Report and either a face to face discussion or a telephone call by either the class teacher or if appropriate, the Head Teacher.

Targeted support and sanctions will be used to ensure that the bullying does not re-occur, and parents will be informed of the next stage of the policy as below. The bully will receive sanctions in line with the Behaviour Management policy and this policy. This may involve exclusion for a fixed period from the playground or classroom, wherever the incidents of bullying have taken place. Governors may also be involved at this stage if appropriate

The incident will be logged officially as bullying and held permanently on the child's file. Parents of the bullied child will be alerted to the problem, if they have not already been in dialogue with the school and informed of the school's action, via an Incident Form. They will be invited into the school to discuss the situation, the support that their child is receiving and the sanctions in place for the bully. The victim and the victim's family will be given reassurance and support, that the school is taking the matter seriously and making a swift response to address the problem.

**Serious and repeated Incidents of Bullying (Stage 3)** Bullying incidents which continue to occur despite action taken above will be dealt with at this stage, along with any incidents of bullying which may result in serious injury to a person, or in damage to personal property. These incidents will be permanently placed in the pupil's file as above.

The Headteacher will contact the parents of the bully directly informing them of their child's behaviour and requesting a dialogue with them to discuss the incident and plan for the future. In instances such as this, parents will be informed of the possible use of Exclusion if bullying recurs. (see Stage 4 below)

The bully will receive further sanctions in line with the Behaviour Management policy and this policy. This will involve further exclusions for a fixed period from the playground or classroom, wherever the incidents of bullying have taken place. Governors may also be involved at this stage if appropriate.

The parents of the bullied child will also be invited into the school to discuss the situation and the support that their child is receiving, along with the sanctions in place for the bully. The victim and the victim's family will be given reassurance and



support, that the school is taking the matter seriously and making a swift response to address the problem.

**Exclusion (Stage 4)** Exclusion (Fixed term or Permanent) will be used if the child continues to behave in a bullying manner. Parents of the bullied child will be kept informed of all activities relating to their child and how the situation is being dealt with. (refer to the school's Exclusion Policy)

These stages are progressive if appropriate, however, each incident will be taken individually and will be dealt at whichever stage is necessary depending upon the severity of the situation.

### **Recording of Incidents**

ALL incidents should be recorded in the class Incident Books, and where appropriate on either a Parent Notification Form or an Incident Form. Where incidents have been dealt with under Stage 2 onwards, as above, the incident should be logged formally as 'Bullying' and held in the School's Main Bullying Incident Log which is held in the school office in the Safeguarding folder. These incidents will be reported to the Governing Body via the Head Teacher's report to Governors. All school personnel will also be informed.

### **Children who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an adult of their choice who listens and takes the situation seriously
- Reassuring the child
- Offering continuous tailored support as appropriate
- Restoring self esteem and confidence
- Implementing suitable strategies which help to protect the child in future
- Support from external agencies may be sought if appropriate

### **Children who have displayed bullying behaviour will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened and why they became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and their need to change
- Identify available support
- Informing and supporting parents or carers to help change attitudes
- Maintain ongoing communication with parents or carers
- Support from external agencies may be sought if appropriate

This policy will be reviewed annually by governors and staff