

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School & Little Acorns Nursery



School Policy Statement for **ANTI-BULLYING** (2026/27)

The 'Anti-Bullying Policy' has been written following advice and guidance. It has been written and reviewed after consultation with staff and governors.

Written by:	Mrs Liz KENDALL
Approved by:	
Review Date:	September 2027



Statement of intent

At Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School and Little Acorns Nursery, we believe every child has the right to learn in a safe, caring and supportive environment where they feel happy, valued and free from bullying.

Our approach is guided by Catholic Social Teaching, especially the belief that every person is precious and deserves to be treated with dignity, kindness and respect. We encourage our children to love and care for one another and to help build a community based on fairness, compassion and understanding.

This reflects our school vision:

"For you are precious in my eyes." (Isaiah)

This policy explains how we respond to any incidents of bullying and the steps we take to prevent bullying from happening. Through our curriculum, collective worship and everyday school life, we help children develop respect for others, celebrate differences and understand the importance of tolerance and inclusion.

Schools have a legal duty to promote positive behaviour and prevent bullying. The measures we have in place form part of our Behaviour Policy and are shared with children, staff and parents.

Everyone in our school community has a role to play in preventing bullying. By working together, we can create a safe and positive environment where all children feel respected, supported and able to thrive. At Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, we take bullying seriously and are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe, valued and included.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The child displaying bullying behaviour means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable children are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable children may include, but are not limited to:

- Children suffering from a health problem.
- Children with caring responsibilities.
- Children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Children with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Children with SEND

- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) children.
- Children who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.

Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another child because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the child who has experienced bullying, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any children on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a CPOMS record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for children who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing relevant staff of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of child groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the child who has experienced bullyings of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a child for support.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the child who has experienced bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Children are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a child who has experienced bullying of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are child who has experienced bullyings of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other children in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall child who has experienced bullying to cyberbullying.

Statutory requirements

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, child who has experienced bullyingisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school. All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the RSE and health education curriculum, in line with the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy.

Children will learn about appropriate and respectful behaviour, including harmful sexual behaviour, why it is never acceptable, and the laws that help protect people from it.

Staff will encourage children to work together, build positive relationships and develop their social skills through group and partner activities. We promote and celebrate diversity, individuality and respect for others through lessons, assemblies and everyday school life. Children will have opportunities to make new friends and develop their teamwork and communication skills through activities such as sports events, performances, clubs and cultural celebrations.

Seating plans are carefully considered to help create positive learning environments and reduce the risk of bullying. Where needed, children will be supported to work alongside peers who demonstrate kindness and respect towards others.

Class teachers operate an open-door approach, encouraging children to talk about any worries they may have, whether they are experiencing bullying themselves or have seen it happen to someone else. We recognise that mental health and wellbeing can sometimes be linked to bullying, either as a cause or as an effect. Staff will be attentive to any concerns and ensure children receive the support they need.

Children who display bullying behaviour will also be supported appropriately. We aim to understand and address any underlying issues so that their emotional, social and educational development is not negatively affected.

Signs That a Child May Be Experiencing Bullying

Staff are always alert to signs that may suggest a child is being bullied, including:

- Being worried about travelling to or from school
- Reluctance or refusal to come to school
- Frequent absences
- Increased anxiety or a loss of confidence
- Regular complaints of feeling unwell
- Reduced engagement with learning
- Returning home with damaged clothing or belongings
- Missing possessions
- Missing lunch money
- Frequently asking for money or taking money that does not belong to them
- Unexplained cuts, bruises or injuries
- Changes in eating habits
- Avoiding the use of the internet or mobile devices
- Avoiding eye contact
- Becoming easily upset or short-tempered
- Noticeable changes in behaviour at home

These signs do not always mean a child is being bullied. They may also indicate other social, emotional or mental health concerns. However, if staff notice several of these signs, they will talk with the child and work with parents where appropriate to understand what support may be needed.

Staff will be aware of factors that may make it more likely that a child could show bullying behaviour. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Experiencing emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties which may affect how they respond to situations.
- Having experienced abuse or other difficult experiences.
- Showing signs of stress, worry or frustration, including a decline in their school work or engagement.

If staff become aware of any concerns that may increase the risk of bullying behaviour, they will share this information, monitor the situation and provide appropriate support.

We encourage all children to speak to a trusted adult if they are worried about themselves or someone else. Children are regularly reminded that there is always someone who will listen and help. Any concerns shared with staff will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

Staff Responsibilities

At our school, preventing bullying is a key part of creating a safe, happy and inclusive environment. We encourage positive relationships where all children and staff treat one another with kindness, respect and compassion. This reflects Catholic Social Teaching and our belief that every person is made in the image of God and should be valued and respected.

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously. Staff will never ignore concerns or signs that a child may be experiencing bullying. When bullying or unkind behaviour is identified, staff will act promptly to address it and provide support. Any behaviour that causes harm or distress to another child will always be challenged.

Staff will respect childrens' privacy and will only share information about bullying incidents when necessary. Information will be shared where consent has been given or where there are safeguarding concerns. If a member of staff believes that a child may be at risk of harm, they will report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In keeping with our Catholic values of forgiveness, responsibility and reconciliation, support will be provided for both the child who has experienced bullying and the child displaying bullying behaviour. Follow-up support will help to ensure that the bullying has stopped, relationships can be repaired where appropriate, and children can learn from the experience and move forward positively.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Through our curriculum, assemblies, collective worship and PSHE lessons, children will learn about respectful relationships, keeping themselves safe, recognising inappropriate behaviour and speaking to a trusted adult if they have worries or concerns.

All staff will:

- Understand that children of any age or gender can harm or abuse their peers.
- Recognise that child-on-child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school.
- Be aware that some incidents may go unreported and will remain vigilant to signs of concern.
- Take all reports and concerns seriously, regardless of who is involved.
- Respond quickly and appropriately to protect and support all children involved.
- Never dismiss harmful behaviour as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- Never excuse behaviour with phrases such as "boys will be boys". Such attitudes can minimise the impact on those affected and may create an environment where inappropriate behaviour becomes accepted.

Staff understand that child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual assault.
- Sharing sexual images or messages.
- Bullying, intimidation or initiation-type behaviour.
- Any behaviour that causes harm, distress or humiliation to another child.

Any unwanted physical behaviour of a sexual nature, such as inappropriate touching, will always be challenged and addressed. It is important that children learn clear boundaries and understand that everyone has the right to feel safe and respected.

Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Making inappropriate comments or jokes of a sexual nature.
- Using sexual language to upset, embarrass or intimidate another person.
- Calling someone inappropriate or sexualised names.

Children are taught how to raise concerns, seek help and report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. They are also encouraged to speak up if they are worried about a friend or another child. All concerns will be listened to carefully and taken seriously.

Where a child has been harmed, is at immediate risk of harm, or may be at risk of significant harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may make a referral to Children's Social Care and, where appropriate, the police.

Staff recognise that children may find it difficult to talk about abuse. They may feel frightened, embarrassed, confused or worried about what will happen if they tell someone. For this reason, staff will listen carefully, respond sensitively and provide reassurance and support.

Further information about how the school prevents, identifies and responds to child-on-child abuse can be found in the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through technology. It can happen at any time, including outside school hours, and can have a significant impact on a child's wellbeing. Because online activity can take place anywhere, cyberbullying can feel difficult for a child to escape and may involve a wide audience.

Cyberbullying can affect children, staff and members of the wider community. It may happen at school, at home, while travelling, or through online platforms and devices. Sometimes other people may become involved by sharing, commenting on or encouraging harmful content.

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Sending threatening, upsetting or intimidating messages
- Sharing embarrassing or hurtful photographs or videos
- Sharing private images or videos without consent
- Making silent, abusive or repeated unwanted phone calls
- Using another person's account or device to send hurtful messages
- Sending bullying or threatening emails
- Posting unkind, offensive or defamatory comments online
- Sending unpleasant messages through instant messaging or gaming platforms
- Creating or sharing content on websites, blogs or social media that causes distress to others

This list is not exhaustive. Technology changes rapidly and cyberbullying can take many different forms. Whatever form it takes, the school will respond promptly to concerns and work with children, families and external agencies where appropriate to keep children safe online.

To help keep children safe, all staff receive regular training so they can recognise the signs of cyberbullying and respond appropriately. Many of the signs of cyberbullying are similar to those associated with other forms of bullying. However, staff will also look out for signs such as:

- Reluctance to use devices or go online
- Spending an unusually large amount of time on a phone or other device
- Becoming upset, anxious or distressed after receiving messages or notifications

Staff will also be aware of behaviours that may suggest a child is involved in cyberbullying others, including:

- Being secretive about their online activity
- Quickly closing screens or hiding devices when others approach
- Spending excessive amounts of time online without a clear purpose
- Becoming angry or defensive when asked about their online activity or when devices are removed

When learning takes place remotely, the school will continue to work closely with families to help children stay safe online. Parents and carers will be supported to understand online safety, including the school's filtering and monitoring systems and how they help to protect children.

Cyberbullying can sometimes be different from other forms of bullying because:

- It can happen across several different platforms and reach a much wider audience.
- It can take place at any time of the day or night, meaning that children may feel they cannot escape it.
- The person responsible may hide their identity, making it difficult for the child who has experienced bullying to know who is involved.

- Children may not always realise that their online behaviour is causing harm to someone else.
- There may be evidence available, such as messages, images, posts or screenshots, which can help when investigating concerns.

Children and staff will be encouraged not to respond to or retaliate against cyberbullying. Instead, any evidence should be saved where possible, for example by taking screenshots or keeping copies of messages.

Children should report concerns to a trusted member of staff, and staff should follow the school's reporting procedures so that incidents can be investigated promptly and appropriate support can be put in place.

If harmful or offensive content about a child or member of staff is shared online, the school will support the individual in reporting the content to the relevant website, app or social media platform and requesting that it is removed. Where necessary, the school may also work with parents, carers, external agencies or the police to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved.

Procedures

Any concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Staff will listen carefully to all children involved and work to understand what has happened before deciding on the most appropriate next steps.

Where a bullying incident is reported:

- The child who has experienced the bullying, the child whose behaviour has caused concern, and any witnesses will be spoken to individually.
- Staff will ensure that all children can share their views calmly, safely and without interruption.
- Discussions will take place in a quiet and private space where children feel comfortable talking.
- Children may be asked to explain what happened verbally, through writing, drawing or another age-appropriate method.
- In cases involving online behaviour, staff may gather evidence such as screenshots, messages or emails to help establish the facts.
- Staff will listen carefully to all accounts and avoid making assumptions before all the information has been gathered.
- All children involved will be reminded not to discuss the incident with others while it is being looked into.
- Parents and carers will be informed as appropriate and kept updated about any actions taken.

Where a child has been hurt or there are concerns about their safety or wellbeing, appropriate medical attention and support will be provided immediately.

Staff will always consider whether a bullying incident may also involve a safeguarding concern. Where this is the case, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Responding to Bullying Behaviour

When bullying has been identified, the school will take action to ensure the behaviour stops and that all children involved receive the support they need.

The child displaying bullying behaviour will be helped to understand the impact of their actions and encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour. Appropriate consequences will be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where appropriate, we will use a restorative approach to help children repair relationships, reflect on their actions and learn from the experience. This may include:

- A genuine apology, either spoken or written.
- Restorative conversations supported by a member of staff.
- Opportunities to rebuild positive relationships.
- Additional support to help pupils develop positive social and emotional skills.

Any restorative meeting will only take place if all parties feel comfortable and willing to participate. No child will ever be pressured into meeting with another child.

Parents and carers will be informed of bullying incidents and will be involved in supporting positive outcomes for their child. The school believes that support and consequences work together. While bullying behaviour will always be challenged, we are also committed to helping children learn from their mistakes, make better choices and develop positive relationships with others.

Support for Children

The wellbeing of all children involved is a priority. In line with our Catholic values of kindness, compassion and respect, the school will provide support to ensure that children feel safe, listened to and valued.

Children who have experienced bullying will be offered support that may include:

- Emotional support and reassurance from a trusted member of staff
- Reassurance that they were right to speak up and that their concerns have been taken seriously.
- Regular opportunities to talk about any worries and receive ongoing support.
- Working closely with parents and carers to ensure a joined-up approach between home and school.
- Guidance on what to do if further incidents occur, including the importance of telling a trusted adult.
- Support with online safety where cyberbullying has occurred, including advice on blocking, reporting and staying safe online.
- Help to rebuild confidence, self-esteem and positive friendships.

Where appropriate, staff will encourage children to take part in clubs, activities and social opportunities that help them build friendships and feel connected to the wider school community.

The Headteacher and other staff will carefully consider the needs of all children involved when responding to bullying incidents. This may include making temporary changes to routines, seating arrangements, classes or access to shared spaces to help children feel safe and supported while issues are resolved.

Staff, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), will work closely with children who have experienced bullying to help them regain confidence, develop resilience and

feel secure in school. Additional emotional or therapeutic support may be offered where appropriate.

The school also recognises that children who display bullying behaviour may need support. Bullying can sometimes be linked to difficulties with emotional wellbeing, relationships or other challenges in a child's life. Where needed, staff will work with the child and their family to identify appropriate support and guidance.

In keeping with our Catholic values of responsibility, forgiveness and reconciliation, children who have displayed bullying behaviour will be helped to understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility for their choices and develop more positive ways of interacting with others. The aim is always to support children in learning from their mistakes, repairing relationships where appropriate and making positive changes for the future.

Record Keeping

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure that clear and accurate records are kept of all bullying concerns and incidents. This includes recording what happened, any actions taken, support provided, outcomes reached and any decisions made.

Keeping detailed records helps the school to:

- Identify patterns of behaviour or recurring concerns that may require additional support or intervention.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the actions taken and ensure that bullying has stopped.
- Reflect on how incidents have been managed and identify ways to improve future practice.
- Recognise any wider issues within the school community that may need to be addressed.
- Review whether additional preventative work or education is needed.
- Respond appropriately to any questions, concerns or complaints about how incidents have been handled.

The Headteacher and DSL will regularly review records to ensure that children receive the support they need and that the school's approach to preventing and responding to bullying remains effective.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure it remains effective and reflects current guidance and best practice.

Any updates to the policy will be shared with staff, governors, parents and carers, as appropriate. Regular review helps us to maintain a school community where every child feels safe, respected, included and loved, enabling them to flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL & LITTLE ACORNS NURSERY



Alleged Bullying Incident Form

(i.e. significant / repeated / or serious one-off incident)

	Name (s)	Gender	Class/Room
Complainant(s)			
Alleged child (children who has been bullied (if different from above))			
Alleged child (children) who has displayed bullying behaviour			

Date of incident:

Location of incident:

Type of incident: Please tick/circle appropriate types

☐ **Physical Bullying** (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property (stealing, damaging, intruding upon it) punching/kicking, any other physical contact which may include hair pulling, spitting or use of 'weapon', extortion, writing/drawing offensive notes.)

☐ **Verbal Bullying** (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading malicious rumours, ridicule of another's appearance/disability/personal mannerisms/way of speaking, humiliating another publicly, mocking, sarcasm, intimidation)

☐ **Emotional Bullying** (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, mobbing the individual, belittling another's abilities, or achievements, menacing looks, stares or rude gestures)

☐ **Cyber Bullying** (please specify) _____

Details of Incident

Action/support for child(ren) who has/have been bullied i.e. on-going support / monitoring from staff (including time frame of follow up action required)

Parental involvement (please specify e.g. dates and details of information received)

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER(S) INVOLVED

Date: _____

NOTE: This form MUST be scanned and added to CPOMS and then passed to a member of SLT.