



St Laurence's CE Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: November 2024

Ratified by full Governors:

To be reviewed: November 2025

Belief Statement

St Laurence's are committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. Our aim is to create a school in which pupils grow up happily, free to pursue their own interests but with consideration for others, and free from fear. As a school we wish to foster an environment in which individuality can flourish and be admired. We are committed to every person and our ethos is positive and inclusive. We respect everybody regardless of gender, race, sexuality or disability. It is acceptance rather than tolerance that underpins our way of life and all pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate diversity. We take bullying very seriously at St Laurence's, across the whole school community, and will not tolerate bullying in any form. We aim to eliminate bullying through the positive involvement and ongoing education of pupils, staff and parents. It is the belief of the St Laurence's school community that pupils are not inherently bullies but rather that bullying is a learned behaviour and the behaviours of the bully, the bullied, and the bystanders can be changed.

We aim to help our students to identify bullying when it happens and to speak up to trusted adults about it after it occurs. We must give students the tools to combat bullying, including standing up for themselves, de-escalating situations, and seeking adult support. We pledge to give support to victims of bullying and give guidance to those who bully. We reject all forms of bullying and will act swiftly and decisively if and when such cases emerge. We make it clear that bullying is anti-social and contrary to our Christian principles. **It is wrong and will not be tolerated.**

We will follow up all concerns expressed by children, staff or parents and make sure that we feed back the results of any investigation. Sometimes what is seen as bullying is simply unacceptable behaviour and we address this differently. As outlined in our Safeguarding Policy, prevention of bullying or child-on-child abuse and swift response to any allegations is everyone's responsibility and is taken extremely seriously. We take a whole school approach and everybody has their part to play.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. It involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying is an action that hurts, frightens, upsets or demeans someone else. It can be committed by a group or an individual and may involve repeated and systematic harassment and attacks or a single incident of inappropriate conduct designed to harass or intimidate a victim. Bullying can take many forms, none of which are acceptable, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

N.B Bullying is not the same as falling out with friends

Bullying can take many forms and the list below is designed to highlight some of these:

Physical Bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, scratching
- Pushing, shoving, spitting
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something that belongs to them
- Damage to personal property
- Making someone do something they don't want to do

Verbal Bullying:

- Persistent name calling
- Teasing, insults, put-downs, verbal abuse
- Threatening of any kind
- Making offensive remarks about someone's appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background
- Persistently humiliating others by making them the subject of jokes and comments

Indirect Bullying:

- Excluding others from the activity or the group, ignoring or alienating others
- Spreading untrue stories about others
- Making inappropriate gestures
- Taking, hiding or damaging something which belongs to someone else
- Acting as a go-between to incite fights or arguments

Cyber-bullying:

The advent of social media has created numerous challenges for parents/carers and schools. Cyber-bullying is reported as being on the increase outside of school and is occurring due to accessibility of mobile phones and the internet. Very often harassment via social media takes place out of school. If serious threats are made against your child, parents/carers should inform the police in the first instance. The school is aware that often incidents will start outside of school but then come into school. In all instances, the school will do what it can to support parents/carers and pupils and advise on courses of action to take.

Some of the platforms for potential cyber-bullying are listed below:

- Social networking
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- Telephone communications
- Internet Blogs
- Chat Rooms

Bullying outside of school

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or antisocial behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

Rather than telling an adult, children may indicate by signs and symptoms that they are the victims of bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be taken to the school
- Changes the usual routine
- Is unwilling to come to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in their school work
- Comes home with clothes or possessions damaged
- Starts stealing money
- Has dinner or other money 'lost' frequently
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Comes home starving [more so than is usual]
- Becomes aggressive or unreasonable
- Is bullying siblings or other children
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is afraid to use the mobile phone [or internet]

These signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members of St Laurence's community

All members of the St Laurence's community have a responsibility to promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity and actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur.

St Laurence's has the responsibility to:

- Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour;
- Provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour and consequences of inappropriate behaviour;
- Follow up complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Pupils have a responsibility to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity;
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated;

- Refrain from bullying others;
- Assist someone who is being bullied and not play the role of a spectator
- Inform St Laurence's school staff if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school. Trusting adults with information and trusting them to take appropriate action.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the school's anti bullying policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour;
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying
- Support the staff in their implementation of the anti-bullying policy
- Model appropriate behaviour, respecting individual differences and diversity;
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated;
- Instruct their children to tell the appropriate authorities if they are bullied;
- Watch for signs that their child may be bullied;
- Speak to the school if they become aware or suspect that bullying is taking place

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the St Laurence's anti bullying policy;
- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning.
- Model appropriate behaviour, respecting individual differences and diversity;
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated;
- Treat seriously all reports or observed incidences of bullying;
- Report incidences of bullying
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying;
- Ensure that students are actively supervised at all times.

Bystanders have a responsibility to:

- Do the right thing
- Don't be a silent witness. You would want someone to have your back if you were the one getting bullied.
- Don't watch and laugh. That's even worse than doing nothing.
- If it's too hard to speak out, send an anonymous note to school staff
- Be assertive, not aggressive. Fighting doesn't help anyone.

- Invite the person being targeted to leave the situation with you
- Encourage the target to get help from someone, like a teacher, or other adult who can help.

Governors have a responsibility to:

- Be fully aware of the school policy and support staff in the implementation of the policy •
Play an active role in the review and monitoring of the policy

What we do to prevent bullying

Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We are proactive in using our Christian Values in conjunction with our Behaviour for Learning Policy and Safeguarding Policy to ensure all pupils at St Laurence's know what is expected of them at all times. We are committed to celebrating diversity amongst our school community and promoting mutual respect for one another. We give our pupils opportunities to discuss issues which might provoke conflict and teach them strategies to manage their feelings. We log issues or concerns between pupils which are monitored and have developed strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

We prevent bullying through:

- All staff complete safeguarding training at the start of each academic year (see Safeguarding Policy)
- Having a Behaviour for Learning Policy which is consistently followed throughout the school.
- Listening to children's views so that they know all accusations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated.
- Ensuring our pupils have a clear understanding of the school values and know how their actions which do not support the values can affect others.
- Talking to pupils about issues of difference in daily worship, PSHE (Jigsaw) lessons and class debates/forums.
- Raising awareness of bullying through the wider community e.g. Police, Clergy, Educational Psychologist, Anti-bullying organisations.
- Providing quality time for the Attendance and Well-being Lead to work closely with pupils who may be at risk of being bullied, struggling with relationships or at risk of becoming a bully.
- Rewarding positive behaviour – e.g. House Points and weekly awards given out during Celebration Assemblies.

- Using the ICONs Team to provide opportunities for children to raise issues of bullying generally.
- Consulting children regularly about school and any concerns they may have through questionnaires, informal discussions with members of the Senior Leadership Team and governors during visits.
- Responding to regular feedback from parent questionnaires, meetings and informal discussions with parents.
- Training all our staff on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) to ensure any concerns are communicated quickly to the relevant staff.

Protocols and Procedures for tackling bullying

It is difficult to draw up a set of procedures which will fit every circumstance. The principles are clear however and the following is a set of general guidance that should be followed.

On receiving a report staff must:

- Listen very carefully to the child making the report, gathering as many details as possible, making notes on what was happening prior to the incident, who else was there, what was said, what was done, what happened then. In listening, staff will be supportive, but will not make judgmental comments; staff will try to separate the facts from the pupil's opinions and views.
- Remember a child can use the word bullying to describe how they feel rather than what has happened e.g. a one off incident, rough play, involvement in a game they did not want to play, a child who feels intimidated by other perhaps more boisterous and/or naughty children although no actual incident has occurred.
- Investigate the accusations. It is important that staff, in trying to get to the bottom of the issue, will be mindful not to put additional emotional stress on top of emotional stress.

Where the outcomes of your enquiries are clear that bullying has taken place then the following action should be taken:

1. The incident will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team.
2. The incident will be logged onto CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) under the 'bullying' category.

3. Parents of all children will be invited into school (separately) and the issue discussed.
4. Appropriate monitoring procedures will be put in place for all the children involved in the incident.
5. Appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be implemented in line with the school Behaviour Policy so that others see bullying is unacceptable.
6. After an agreed period of monitoring staff should meet again with parents to exchange information and decide if any further action is required.

Where the incident is less clear the handling of a situation is more delicate. In these circumstances staff should:

1. Ensure that all staff (including supply teachers) who deal with the child have been alerted.
2. Establish clear monitoring systems for the child.
3. Provide a support member of staff that the child can go to.
4. Involve the child in reviewing their day with a designated member of staff.
5. Establish regular conversations with the child.
6. Keep a record of the child's reports and time in school.
7. Parents should be informed early in the process and kept involved as the monitoring proceeds.

Pupils who are bullied, or who feel they are bullied, are in need of support as are the bullies. Our goal must be to remove the bullying where it is occurring but to also put in place behavioural modification systems that:

1. Make the bully less likely to bully again.
2. Give the bullied child a range of strategies to deal in a more confident way with bullying behaviour which empowers them.
3. To help a pupil who perceives bullying, with strategies to enhance their self-esteem, and read situations in a more accurate way.

Our key objective in all this work is for the bullied child, the child who thinks they are being bullied, and the bully, is to provide the emotional support to see them through the experience and to provide systems that make the individual less likely in the future to be back where they are now.

The roles of the Christian values of forgiveness and reconciliation have a significant role to play, particularly where bullying has been identified and recognised and owned by the parties involved and there is a desire to break the cycle. We understand that sometimes this isn't always possible and at times can only be limited, e.g. serious, ongoing bullying where it remains a current issue

We need to support all parties move on from the hidden and/or public shame or label of being known as a bully or being bullied, into a space of freedom where parties are making different guided choices by their own free-will, relationships are restored, and stories of transformation change the narrative of how that person is understood: 'I used to do this, now I do this'.

Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DFE guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying. At the date of this policy shown below, the guidance issued in July 2017 may be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

The school follows the principles and recommendations set out in this guidance.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Name of Organisation	Telephone Number	Website
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	www.bullying.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number)	www.kidscape.org.uk
	08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.beyondbullying.com
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk

Parentline Plus

0808 800 2222

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

The Children's Legal
Centre

0800 783 2187

www.childrenslegalcentre.com