



**The Diocese of Coventry
Multi Academy Trust**

Together, pursuing life in all its fullness



Let Your Light Shine

Anti-bullying policy

Policy date: November 2024

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Policy Review Date: November 2025

1. Legislation and guidance

This policy is informed by the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and its advice for schools on:

- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(2017\)](#)
- [Cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(2014\)](#)
- [Teaching online safety in schools \(2019\)](#)

This policy is also informed by professional guidance to support effective strategies to prevent bullying in schools:

- Childnet International, [Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond, Guidance for Schools](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance resources](#)
- [NSPCC](#) Anti-bullying guidance.
- National Children's Bureau, [Change Starts with Us](#) (2019)
- [Childline](#)

The policy also reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum PSHE programme, reflected in our delivery using JIGSAW.

2. Principles and values

At Stretton Church of England Academy, our Christian values underpin everything we do. We recognise the uniqueness of every member of the Stretton family and the value of each person's contribution to our school and to our local and wider communities. Our approach to learning is founded on the principles of empathy and challenge: we seek to provide a positive, respectful and inspiring environment in which children are encouraged to be open, honest and kind. We aim to provide a curriculum which respects and validates children's diverse experiences and broadens their horizons. We support each other to work hard and embrace new opportunities and challenges with confidence so that we can all achieve our best.

We want our children to be well-informed, reflective, and critical thinkers with the self-confidence to form and pursue their own valuable goals in life. They will be equipped to be ambitious, compassionate members of society who have the courage to challenge injustice and become responsible and empathetic leaders in their chosen fields. Our aim is for all our children to believe that there are no limits to what they can achieve and to equip them with the skills, personal qualities and understanding to nurture their own spiritual growth and to make their dreams a reality.

3. Objectives of this policy

As a school, we take bullying and its impact very seriously. Pupils and their families should be assured that we will respond quickly to all reports of bullying. **Bullying will not be tolerated.** The school will consistently seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of behaviour and we will always challenge behaviour that falls below this.

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to all staff, governors, volunteers, children and their families about what we can all do to prevent and deal with bullying. **Our aim is to prevent bullying from taking place in our school, and, if it does happen, to ensure that it is stopped quickly and those involved receive the support they need.**

This policy will support all governors, staff, pupils and their families to understand what bullying is so that they can identify and report it swiftly.

This policy will establish clearly how members of our school community will respond when bullying is reported.

Our aim that all members of our school community can work together to ensure that our school is a safe, respectful and happy place to be for everyone.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our [Child protection and Safeguarding policy](#), the [School Behaviour for Learning policy](#) and our [Online Safety policy](#).

4. What is bullying? - Distinguishing relational conflict from bullying.

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 a general willingness to make things right, to reflect on what went wrong and to try to plot a way forward to repair damaged relationships. Not all conflict leads to bullying, but some does. It is important to address and resolve conflicts effectively, so that a pattern of behaviour and persistent bad feelings do not lead to intentional harm or distress.

All staff will work with children to support them to identify how conflicts arise and how best to prevent and resolve them. Our aim is to teach children to form positive, considerate relationships, to be empathetic and to recognise how their actions and words affect others. We use our personal qualities and our Christian values to support all members of our community to understand how to communicate sensitively and to co-operate with others.

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 take many forms and can take place face to face or online. The main forms of bullying include:

Physical	hitting, kicking, biting, pushing, shaking, poking, hair-pulling, taking belongings, etc.
Verbal	name-calling, teasing, insulting a child or their family
Emotional	threatening behaviour, undermining a child, excluding a child from a friendship group or from activities, spreading rumours, intimidation.
Cyber (online)	excluding a child from online games, activities, or friendship groups; sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages via text, email, games platforms, or social media; creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos; creating fake accounts, stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble in their name; spreading online hate or abuse.

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture or beliefs
- Gender
- SEND or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home or family circumstances
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying may be motivated by actual differences or perceived differences between children. It may also reflect prejudices towards specific groups and/or a desire to provoke a reaction in others.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can be achieved by:

- The size (or age) of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Differences between individuals (e.g. perceived 'popularity'/social status)
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

5. Why is it important to address bullying quickly and consistently?

We recognise that:

- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect; bullying can never be justified
- Bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development
- In some instances, bullying can cause significant harm, that can last into later life
- All children have the right to equal protection from all forms of harm or abuse
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and everyone can play a role in stopping bullying.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours. They must approach bullying in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse. All staff must recognise that everyone has the responsibility to protect children from bullying. Do not wait to be told before you take action. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them. Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; those coming from families facing challenges, or those struggling with emotional problems or mental health issues, which may make them more vulnerable to bullying, find reporting concerns more difficult, or may lead to them becoming vulnerable to bullying others.

6. Identifying bullying

A child may indicate that he or she is being bullied either by reporting concerns directly, or by their behaviour. Parents should raise any concerns with their child's class teacher, or with the Headteacher. Adults in school should be aware of possible signs and they should always investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school-phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn or anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to make less effort with schoolwork than previously

- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- shows lack of eye contact
- becomes short tempered
- shows a change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should also be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Further advice to parents:

If you feel that your child (or any other child) may be the victim of bullying, you should report this to the class teacher or to the Headteacher. Please be reassured that your report will be taken seriously and investigated fully. You will be advised of the outcome of that investigation and any actions taken.

Please do not attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child who you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents, or by encouraging your child to take physical or verbal action themselves. Both of these actions will make the problem harder to resolve as they compromise safeguarding of children in school. Any action which puts a child at risk will be treated as a serious breach of school code of conduct and behaviour policies.

7. Responding to incidents of bullying

All reports or observations of bullying received by school staff should be recorded on CPOMS. This will include incidents where staff have identified concerns and have intervened to speak with children, and/or those where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying.

All incidents of bullying will be referred to a member of the senior leadership team (normally the Headteacher) for investigation. The outcome of all investigations will be reported on CPOMS with a clear record to indicate whether the incident has been substantiated or not.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with relevant staff and parents of the children involved to ensure that everyone is vigilant and that further incidents by the same child(ren) may be prevented from happening in the future.

The Safeguarding Governor will receive regular reports identifying incidents of bullying and recording sanctions issued and any process of reconciliation. Sanctions will be issued in line with the school's behaviour policy and parents will be informed.

Wherever possible, victims and perpetrators of bullying will be reconciled. This will always be handled sensitively and take into consideration the needs of the children involved. The priority will always be to ensure that children are safe. Victims will be reassured quickly that adults will support them to ensure that the bullying stops. In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others (e.g. a counsellor, Social, Emotional and Mental Health team, police, or other representative of the Local Authority). In serious cases (defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), it may be necessary to issue a fixed term suspension, or even to permanently exclude a child who continues to harm others.

8. Preventing bullying

At Stretton, we use a variety of approaches to create an anti-bullying climate that supports children to understand the serious impact of bullying and how they can prevent it.

- Collective and class worship sessions teach our core values and encourage children to reflect on them. In particular, the Christian values of 'Fairness', 'Truth', 'Love', 'Peace and Reconciliation' and 'Hope' are key to our anti-bullying culture. Children who display these values and qualities are rewarded.
- All children are taught to respect each other as individuals and to value their unique talents and qualities.

- Children are taught to reflect on difficulties that arise and are supported to resolve conflicts appropriately.
- Children are taught what bullying is and how to report their concerns. All children are taught to understand that 'no' means 'no' and who they can talk to if they ever feel uncomfortable about something someone has said or done to them.
- All children are taught to 'Stop, Think, Care' and to be a positive force for good in school. We aim to teach children to be an 'upstander' who notices injustice and seeks help calmly and appropriately to support those in difficulty, and not a 'bystander' who lets bullying continue.
- Staff will regularly discuss bullying as part of teaching (especially within the PSHE and Computing (online safety) curriculum) and make links across the curriculum, as and when appropriate.
- Children will be given opportunities to reflect on their safety in school and to identify any worries they may have (e.g. in class and worship discussions, in pupil voice and surveys). Feedback from pupil voice and surveys will be shared with children and actions identified.
- Parent and family workshops will be held to support families to recognise concerns and understand how school will respond to issues raised. We also provide written information to families (including leaflets and newsletter items) so that they can access appropriate guidance outside school where needed and can take measures to protect their children and prevent bullying.
- We participate in specific profile-raising events such as Anti-bullying Week, Mental Health and Internet Safety days in order to support children to recognise how to prevent and report bullying.
- We have a strong culture of open communication in school so that adults are vigilant and should notice if a child is unhappy or behaving differently from normal. All staff are trained to be aware that it is their responsibility to notice and care for every child. Any child who has concerns has many opportunities to share how they are feeling (with any adult, with their class teacher, with staff supporting welfare (e.g. Miss Inwards) or with senior members of staff (e.g. Mrs Mainwaing and Mrs Moynihan).