



Anti-Bullying Strategy *for adoption by all CDAT schools*

This strategy is informed by the Christian values which are the basis for all of CDAT's work and any actions taken under the document will reflect this.

'Blessed are those who act justly, who always do what is right'

Psalm 106:3

Approved by	Date	Review Schedule	Date of next review
Education Effectiveness committee	September 2026	Annually	September 2027

1. Our Christian Vision and Commitment

We are deeply committed to our Christian vision of ensuring all pupils, staff, and families experience 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). We believe that all individuals within our school communities should flourish, feeling safe, valued, and respected. Our schools, as Church Schools, are dedicated to Christian vision and values. This strategy reflects our commitment to creating inclusive, nurturing environments where bullying is not tolerated and where courageous advocacy is fostered.

Value Statement

At Overleigh St Mary's CE Primary we want to create an environment where everyone is safe and knows that they are valued. A person has the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and the responsibility to treat others in the same way.

At Overleigh St Mary's we aim to tackle bullying and or harassment by trying to prevent it from happening in the first place, and by tackling it consistently, fairly and effectively when it does. We wish to ensure all our learners are well prepared to contribute positively to society during their schooling and into the future.

2. Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying, but all have three things in common:

- It is a deliberate and hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated, often over a period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to stop the process.

Here at Overleigh St Mary's we will use the acronym STOP to support children in learning this. Children point to four fingers, one in turn saying: Several, Times, On, Purpose – then hold their whole hand with palm facing out and say STOP!

We will use this definition to help us identify bullying behaviour as distinct from other types of behaviour such as random acts of aggression.

Bullying is defined as repetitive, intentional harm inflicted by one person or group on another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It is not a one-off incident but a persistent pattern of behaviour that can take many forms including:

- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or any use of violence.
- Racist: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Prejudice-based bullying directed at protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, as well as misogyny, misandry, or gender-questioning pupils.
- Discriminatory: Bullying based on any protected characteristic, including disability, religion or belief, or any other perceived difference.
- Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, taunting, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats.
- Cyberbullying: Bullying carried out through an internet service or mobile technology, including texts, emails, social media, online games, and sharing of images or videos. This can include inappropriate content or contact, grooming, and exploitation. It also encompasses the non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated imagery (deepfakes).

Relational Conflict vs. Bullying:

It is vital to distinguish between general relational conflict and bullying. Relational conflict or peer fallings-out involve temporary disagreements, arguments, or isolated acts of mean behaviour between pupils of similar power or influence. While these incidents are unacceptable and managed firmly under our Relationships Policy, they do not meet the definition of bullying. Bullying is specifically characterised by a persistent pattern of repetitive, intentional harm where an imbalance of power exist.

Children will often fall out with friends or say unkind things when they are angry.

We explain to children that this is also taken seriously but that it is different from bullying.

The STOP Framework:

To ensure clarity across our school communities, we define bullying using the **STOP** framework: **Several Times On Purpose**. Bullying involves targeted, repeated actions intended to cause physical or emotional distress, rather than accidental or one-off peer disputes

Bullying is not:

- Responding to nastiness from another person.
- When children with the same power, numbers, and strength fight or argue.
- Friendship falling outs

3. Preventing Bullying: A Whole-School Approach

Our strategy emphasises a proactive, whole-school approach to prevent bullying, embedding an anti-bullying culture across all aspects of school life.

3.1 Fostering a Positive School Ethos and Culture:

- **Christian Values:** Our Christian values of dignity, respect, compassion, justice, and forgiveness underpin all our relationships and interactions, creating a culture where all are valued as children of God.
- **Inclusion and Diversity:** We celebrate diversity and nurture inclusion, ensuring that all pupils feel a sense of belonging and are protected from harm and fear.
- **Relationships Education:** Our schools promote healthy, respectful relationships through age-appropriate PSHE and Relationships Education.
- **Curriculum:** School leaders integrate anti-bullying messages and the celebration of difference within the curriculum, challenging stereotypes and promoting understanding.
- **Anti-racist culture:** Proactive bystander behaviour and challenging racist language and behaviour are integral to a healthy anti-racist environment. We encourage pupils to stand up for what is right and make a difference to others, as Jesus did.

3.2 Clear Expectations and Communication:

- Our anti-bullying strategy is an integral part of the overarching Trust Behaviour & Relationships policy, which is clearly communicated to all pupils, staff, and parents.
- Our schools encourage pupils to report bullying by fostering an environment where they feel safe and confident to speak out. Regular opportunities for pupils to voice their concerns will be provided.
- All staff will receive regular training on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying, including specific training on cyberbullying and bullying related to protected characteristics.
- School staff work in partnership with parents and carers, informing them of the strategy and encouraging their support in preventing and addressing bullying.

3.3 Online Safety:

- Education: CDAT schools educate pupils on safe and responsible online behaviour, including the risks of cyberbullying and how to report it. Our schools proactively address emerging online risks, including AI-generated harms, digital harassment, and misinformation. They are also taught how to identify misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Monitoring: The Trust implements appropriate filtering and monitoring systems on school IT systems to prevent access to harmful content and identify instances of cyberbullying.
- Reporting Mechanisms: Schools ensure there are clear procedures for reporting cyberbullying, both within school and to relevant external agencies where necessary.
- Senior Leadership Teams and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) conduct an annual review of school filtering and monitoring systems to ensure robust protection against online abuse

3.4. Signs and Symptoms

We listen carefully and respond promptly to children's concerns. However, our staff are also highly vigilant and know all our children well. We are aware that they may display other symptoms that can be indicators of bullying and staff know how to action these concerns.

These could include:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Change in a (child's) usual routine
- Not wanting to come to school
- Becoming anxious and withdrawn
- Truanting
- Beginning to do less well at school
- Having possessions go missing
- Asking for or stealing money
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Becoming withdrawn / lacking in confidence
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- Anger
- Bullying other children or siblings
- Giving improbable excuses to any of the above

We also note that parents may identify different symptoms such as bed wetting or wanting to be driven to school. Therefore, working in partnership is vital for identifying a problem.

Prevention Strategies

- Code of Conduct for our school and following our school values
Everyone will act with courtesy and consideration to others at all times
- The Curriculum
Each year the whole school will have an anti-bullying focus days where children complete units of work from the Jigsaw programme and other resources to ensure they understand what bullying is, the implications of such behaviours and strategies to deal with bullying. Parents are communicated with to share in the children's work and to ensure they understand the schools approach to bullying. Throughout the year assemblies and class PSHE lessons are used to revisit and reinforce the key learning points.
- Yearly developing and reviewing our anti bullying charter ensuring a whole school commitment and harnessing pupil voice
- Ensuring effective supervision of all areas of the school and maintaining a stimulating, bright and open environment
- Developing responsible sexual behaviour and deterring offensive behaviour through our PSHE and sex and relationship education programmes
- Ensuring racial and homophobic harassment is proactively tackled through worship, during anti bullying week, through the curriculum and drawing on partnership support as appropriate.
- Cyber-bullying targeted through internet safety lessons and covered in Anti-Bullying week. Parental support through delivery of *information evenings in partnership with the police*.
- Proactively preventing disablist bullying through our disability plan and curriculum
- Providing information and support for parents / carers
- Strengthening provision at playtimes

4. Responding to Bullying

When bullying occurs, our response will be swift, consistent, and supportive, focusing on the well-being of the victim and working directly with the perpetrator to ensure that this behaviour does not continue. Bullying as a form of "peer-on-peer abuse," and serious incidents should be addressed as a child protection concern.

4.1 Reporting and Recording:

- Schools will ensure multiple, accessible ways for pupils, staff, and parents to report bullying incidents (e.g., directly to staff, worry boxes, designated email addresses).
- All bullying incidents or allegations will be recorded thoroughly, clearly, and factually, detailing the concern, how it was followed up, and the outcome. This data will be used to monitor trends and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
- To identify early indicators of potential bullying, Senior Leadership Teams and DSLs systematically review pastoral and behaviour incident logs (such as CPOMS or MyConcerns) on a regular, planned basis. These reviews explicitly track repeated low-level conflicts, recurring peer friction, or isolated reports involving the same pupils to intervene before patterns escalate into established bullying
- When a concern is raised by a parent or pupil, it is initially recorded as an 'alleged bullying incident' while a prompt, factual investigation is conducted. Following the investigation, leaders will formally communicate the outcome to parents. If the evidence shows the incident is a relational conflict rather than bullying, the school will outline the resolution steps taken under the Relationships Policy while reassuring parents of ongoing pupil support

4.2 Investigation and Intervention:

- All reported incidents will be investigated promptly and sensitively.
- Staff will listen to all parties involved, including the alleged victim, alleged bully, and witnesses.
- Schools will provide immediate and ongoing support to the victim, ensuring they feel safe and are heard. This may include pastoral support and strategies to rebuild confidence and self-esteem. The victim should have agency in determining next steps.
- Interventions for pupils who have bullied others will focus on understanding the impact of their actions, taking responsibility, and learning alternative behaviours. Sanctions will be proportionate and supportive, aiming to educate rather than simply punish. Restorative approaches will be considered where appropriate.
- Parental Communication: Schools will endeavour to keep parents of all involved pupils informed throughout the process, seeking their cooperation and support.

4.3 Legal Framework and Safeguarding:

- Legal Duties: The trust and its schools will comply with all legal duties regarding bullying, including those under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Safeguarding: Bullying is recognised as a potential form of child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence). Such behaviour will never be dismissed as 'banter' or a normal 'rite of passage'. Where bullying concerns escalate, staff follow KCSIE 2026 safeguarding protocols, making referrals to local Family Help provisions or statutory children's social care services as appropriate
- Bullying Outside School Premises: Schools will support parents/carers in referring any incidents of criminal behaviour to the police. This includes: violence or assault; theft; repeated harassment or intimidation, for example threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages; hate crimes.

5. SEND

Whilst we understand that pupils may display need-related behaviours often due to SEND, trauma or mental health needs, we also ensure that all staff have a secure understanding of the difference between need-related behaviour and bullying behaviour.

Inclusion for all children is vital and therefore bullying will not be tolerated and schools should expect all pupils to adhere to this policy.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- Trust Board and Local Governance Committees: Oversee the implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying strategy, ensuring it aligns with the trust's vision and statutory guidance.
- Headteachers: Responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the strategy, fostering an anti-bullying culture, and ensuring all staff are trained and confident in responding to bullying.
- All Staff: Have a responsibility to model positive behaviour, identify and challenge bullying, and respond according to the strategy. This includes proactive bystander behaviour
- Pupils: Are encouraged to report bullying and understand their role in creating a positive school community.
- Parents/Carers: Are encouraged to support the school's anti-bullying efforts, report concerns, and work in partnership with the school.

7. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this Anti-Bullying Strategy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Trust's Education Effectiveness Committee and Local Governance Committees. This will include:

- Analysis of reported bullying incidents and outcomes.
- Feedback from pupils, staff, and parents.
- Review of training provision and effectiveness.
- Alignment with latest DfE and Church of England guidance.

This ensures that our Trust Anti-Bullying Strategy remains robust, effective, and deeply embedded in our commitment to enabling all members of our school communities to flourish and experience 'life in all its fullness'.

Harassment

Bullying can be a form of harassment but there may also be incidents that are stand - alone but must be taken just as seriously and dealt with consistently. The broad definition of harassment is:

Unwanted conduct on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. which has the purpose or effect of either violating the child's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

The following are some examples of types and methods of harassment:

Sexual Harassment and Violence

Sexual harassment can include incidents of female against female or male against male as well as male and female against each other and can include heterosexual as well as homosexual behaviours. It may be defined as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or

physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment. It may include:

- Physical contact
- Invasion of personal space
- Suggestive remarks or sounds
- Unwanted comments on dress and appearance
- Showing or suggesting another party shows / touches their penis or vagina - where this is deemed as a sexual behaviour when referenced against the 'Brook's Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool
- Sexting - Sending and receiving: naked pictures or 'nudes', 'underwear shots', sexual or 'dirty pics', rude text messages or videos.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise pertaining to race, colour, nationality - including citizenship, or ethnic or national origins, which is directed at an individual or group and which is found to be offensive or objectionable to recipients and which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Such behaviour may include:

- Derogatory name calling.
- Insults and racist jokes.
- Verbal threats.
- Physical attack.

Harassment on Grounds of Sexual Orientation

This act of harassment is any behaviour deliberate or otherwise, pertaining to sexual orientation. Homophobia is a term used to describe hatred and rejection of e.g. gays, lesbians, those questioning their gender, those considering themselves non-binary and homosexuality. It may be directed against individuals or groups of people who are, or are thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered and is behaviour which can be defined as unwanted conduct violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Examples may include:

- Offensive jokes.
- Ridicule / derogatory comments.
- Verbal threats.
- Derogatory comments.
- Physical attack.

Harassment on Grounds of Religion

Religious Harassment is any behaviour deliberate or otherwise, pertaining to religion, religious belief or other similar philosophical belief and it is behaviour which can be defined as unwanted conduct violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Examples can include:

- Offensive jokes.
- Ridicule.

Harassment on the Grounds of Disability

Harassment may be based on the fact that a person has a physical or mental impairment, learning difficulty or disfigurement. This can include:

- Offensive or patronising language.
- Offensive or patronising action or behaviour.
- Jokes or inappropriate comments.
- Questions which cause offence to the individual or group of individuals concerned.

This is not an exhaustive list and reference should also be made to our Single Equalities Policy. However no such actions will be tolerated at Overleigh St Mary's. Where an incident occurs it will always be taken seriously and documented.

Staff members should follow the **Procedure for dealing with incidents of harassment** attached. This will be revisited each September to ensure all staff know relevant procedure and process.

An integral part of the procedure is addressing harassment and therefore supporting anti-harassment through the curriculum.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed yearly and should also been seen in the context of our Inclusion, Behaviour and Single Equalities objectives and policies. Governor monitoring will ensure equality of opportunity and no group is suffering higher incident rate than any other.

Monitoring activities include:

- Questions incorporated into the yearly pupil questionnaire.
- Head / deputy interviews with children.
- Governor monitoring – health, safety & wellbeing.
- Numbers of reported cases / types of cases and record keeping.

Associated Policies

This policy should be read with particular reference to the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- Equalities
- Behaviour
- Staff code of conduct / handbook
- PSHE
- Curriculum

Procedure for dealing with incidents of harassment

