

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School



'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13

Anti-Bullying policy

**Ratified: Sep 2026
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At the heart of our school vision is a desire for an authentic and life-giving relationship with ourselves, one another, our world, and with God. We believe that it is through Christ who gives us the strength, all can achieve within a learning environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image of God, and where teaching and learning is of consistently high standard.

STJHV Statement of Intent

St John's Highbury Vale in Islington is committed to providing a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child is empowered to reach their full potential. Grounded in our Christian ethos and guided by our values, we strive to create a vibrant and dynamic educational experience that prepares our pupils to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society.

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is based on DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (updated 2024) and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE 2026) and 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges' guidance. The school has also read Childnet's 'Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools' and has regard to the Online Safety Act 2023.

1. Policy Objectives

This policy outlines what St John's Highbury Vale will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community. St John's Highbury Vale is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2. Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy (including Section 4: Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse, and Section 17: Trauma-Informed Practice)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Curriculum policies: RSE/RSHE, PSHE, citizenship and computing
- Online Safety Policy (including mobile and smart technology and social media)

3. Links to Legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Online Safety Act 2023

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to manage all bullying concerns that give rise to a safeguarding issue, and to liaise with external agencies where appropriate.
- The Safeguarding Governor to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy on behalf of the governing body.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

5. Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. (DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', 2024)

Bullying can include physical and emotional abuse such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, peer isolation (e.g. excluding people from groups) and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

St John's Highbury Vale recognises that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. Bullying is recognised as being a form of child-on-child abuse; children can abuse other children (see also Section 4 of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy).

Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported. All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

6. Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

7. School Ethos

Our school community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our community:

- Understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected and will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8. Responding to Bullying Concerns

Restorative Practice

As a school, we are committed to using restorative approaches as part of our response to bullying. All staff have received training in restorative practice, enabling them to support pupils in repairing harm, rebuilding relationships and fostering mutual respect. Restorative conversations and structured meetings provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the impact of their actions, take responsibility, and agree positive steps

forward. This approach supports both those affected by bullying and those who have engaged in it, ensuring that accountability is balanced with support, and that our school community continues to be a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues.
- The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or another appropriate member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Appropriate responses and support, as identified within the school Behaviour and Relationships Policy and Child Protection Policy, will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed or Early Help if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our Online Safety Policy, the school Behaviour and Relationships Policy (Section 11: Behaviour Outside School Premises and Online), and KCSIE 2026. If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include: looking at use of the school systems; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Supporting reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school's Searches and Confiscation policy (Section 15 of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy).
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.

- Where an individual can be identified, ensure that appropriate responses are implemented to address the attitude and behaviour of the pupil, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
 - Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
 - Helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain.

Where an online incident involves nude or semi-nude images, the member of staff will refer the matter immediately to the DSL (or deputy), who will manage the response in line with KCSIE 2025 and UK Council for Internet Safety guidance.

Supporting Pupils

Trauma-informed note: Children who are bullied and children who bully others may both have underlying unmet emotional needs. Our response to bullying is shaped by our wider trauma-informed approach (see Section 17 of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy). We seek to understand the need behind behaviour whilst maintaining clear expectations, and we prioritise restoration of relationships and wellbeing alongside any consequences.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and being helped to think about how to respond to any further concerns.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Integrated Children Services or through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help address the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to the service provider.
- Responding in line with our Behaviour and Relationships Policy. This means working through our five-step framework) Reminder -> Support -> Reset -> Repair -> Reconnect and, where a pattern persists, escalating through our graduated response (Wave 1: class teacher-led; Wave 2: phase leader-led; Wave 3: SLT-led with possible external agency involvement). Exclusion will be considered only as an absolute last resort, in line with Section 10 of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy. The school does not use detentions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to

Integrated Children Services, Early Help, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Supporting Adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable. Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the DSL, a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discussing how to respond to future concerns.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

9. Preventing Bullying

Environment

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child-on-child abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Recognise that bullying may be affected and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, including looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.

- Actively create safe spaces for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school's attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online.
- Implement appropriate responses; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff annually, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support and the school/student council.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

10. Involvement of Pupils

We will:

- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of responses which may be applied where bullying has occurred.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in school and embed messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil-led education and support.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

11. Involvement and Liaison with Parents and Carers

We will:

- Make sure that key information about prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

12. Monitoring and Review

The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning. The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Governor will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes. This will include analysis of incidents by type, frequency and any patterns relating to protected characteristics, to ensure the policy is being applied fairly and consistently.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor.

13. Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes – advice for education settings: www.gov.uk (UKCIS)

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance – Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- DfE SEND Code of Practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Race, Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate Against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

- NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame