

Whitchurch CE Federation

Anti-Bullying Policy



Implemented

September 2026

Review date

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures.

Our aims and values are firmly based on Christian principles and in particular we wish to promote racial harmony and social cohesion in our local community.

“Learning to Love God and Love our Neighbour as Ourselves.”

We are proud to be federated Church of England academies at the heart of the community of Whitchurch.

An inclusive family under God, welcoming everyone into our friendly, respectful, and caring Federation. We aim to provide an aspirational curriculum and supportive working environment to enable every individual to reach their full potential.

To create a welcoming and inclusive environment in which all children will flourish. Every child is encouraged to care for, respect and appreciate the ultimate worth of others, developing positive relationships as they take their first steps towards independence and becoming responsible, thoughtful, and confident adults of the future, making successful contributions to their local and the global community.

This policy is based on DfE and Church of England guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (DfE, September 2026)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, July 2026)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- Valuing All God's Children Guidance for Church of England schools on challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying Second Edition Summer 2019.(Church of England Education Office)

This policy should be read alongside the Federation's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

The Federation adopts a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, child-on-child abuse, harassment and discrimination. All incidents will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and responded to promptly.

As a Federation, we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to.

Bullying will not be tolerated. The Federation will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within our academies or in the local community. The ethos of our Federation fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour, and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and All staff should know what the Federation policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the Federation policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.



All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our Federation is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the Federation community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

What Is Bullying?

The Department for Education defines bullying as:

'The repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.'

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, relational or online and can take place face-to-face or through digital technologies.

Bullying is usually repetitive, however a single incident may be treated as bullying where it causes significant harm or forms part of a wider pattern of behaviour.

Bullying differs from occasional conflict between peers because it involves a deliberate intention to cause harm and an imbalance of power that makes it difficult for the victim to defend themselves

Bullying can be:

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures)

Physical- pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Racial- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual- unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic - because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality.

Direct or indirect Verbal- name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, taunting, mocking.

Online bullying (cyberbullying) is bullying that takes place through digital technologies and online platforms.

The Federation recognises emerging online risks including AI-generated content, manipulated images, deepfakes, misinformation and disinformation. Such behaviour will be managed in accordance with the Federation's safeguarding and online safety procedures.

This may include:

- Social media platforms
- Messaging and communication services
- Gaming platforms
- Live-streaming platforms
- Image and video sharing sites
- Mobile phones and digital devices
- Anonymous messaging applications
- Emerging technologies including artificial intelligence tools

Online bullying may involve threatening or abusive messages, deliberate exclusion, impersonation, sharing images without consent, spreading rumours, harassment, hate-related content or other behaviour intended to cause distress.

The Federation will take appropriate action when online behaviour negatively affects the wellbeing, safety or education of members of the school community, whether or not the behaviour occurs on school premises

• Child-on-Child Abuse:

The Federation recognises that children can abuse other children and that child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside school, including online.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse and understand that all concerns must be taken seriously and responded to promptly.

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated images and videos
- up-skirting



- online abuse
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children and
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing, suffering abuse or experiencing violence at home
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

It can also be because:

- They don't know how to manage their own thoughts and feelings (e.g. they often hit and hurt others)
- They have been bullied or hurt by other people themselves
- They are scared of being hurt by other people
- They are jealous of other people
- They feel like they are not good enough
- They have negative beliefs about people who are different
- They are overcome by stress or pressure

The Federation recognises that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will never be dismissed as banter, harmless fun, part of growing up or just children being children.

All concerns relating to child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously, recorded appropriately and responded to in accordance with the Federation's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Federation is committed to preventing and responding to prejudice-based bullying.

We recognise that some pupils may be targeted because of actual or perceived protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

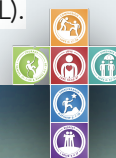
This includes bullying related to:

- Disability
- Race, ethnicity or culture
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Special Educational Needs
- Appearance or health conditions
- Family circumstances
- Young carer status
- Looked-after or previously looked-after status

Prejudice-related incidents will be recorded, monitored and addressed appropriately.

All reports of bullying will be considered within the wider context of safeguarding and child protection. Staff will remain vigilant to the possibility that bullying may be associated with vulnerability, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, mental health concerns or other safeguarding risks.

Where bullying presents a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the procedures outlined in the Federation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).



Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, or culture.
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability).

The Federation recognises that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may experience additional barriers when recognising, reporting or seeking support for bullying. Staff will take these vulnerabilities into account when assessing concerns and implementing support.

- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying).
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual, and transphobic bullying.
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

Perpetrators and Victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved.
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Our Federation community:

- Discusses, monitors, and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports all members of staff to promote positive relationships to prevent bullying.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the academies to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the MAT and Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying

The ethos and working philosophy of Whitchurch Church of England Federation means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Positive behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

The Federation 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.
- § Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- § Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- § Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- § Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non- discrimination, and respect towards others.



§ Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support, anti-bullying ambassadors and the school council.

§ Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.

§ Adopt an early intervention approach by identifying patterns of behaviour at the earliest opportunity and taking timely action before concerns escalate.

§ Use information from safeguarding records, behaviour records, attendance data, pupil voice and parental concerns to identify emerging risks and vulnerable pupils.

§ Train all staff including teaching staff and support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) to identify all forms of bullying, follow the Federation policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).

§ Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying from occurring.

§ 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 online etc.

§ Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.

§ Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.

§ Work with other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns.

§ Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

The following steps will be taken by staff when dealing with incidents:

The Federation will provide appropriate support to:

- pupils who have experienced bullying
- pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour
- pupils who may have witnessed bullying incidents

Support may include pastoral support, restorative approaches, mentoring, behaviour support, referral to external agencies and safeguarding intervention where appropriate.

§ If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously and appropriate first steps are taken promptly by the member of staff who has been approached each incident will be investigated thoroughly, sensitively, and effectively.

§ A clear account of the incident, actions taken, and review date will be recorded either on the form detailed on Appendix 2 if a Hate Crime or directly onto CPOMS, given to the designated safeguarding leads and kept so incidents can be monitored. The designated safeguarding leads will ensure any paper records are scanned / transferred onto CPOMS.

All incidents of bullying, allegations of bullying and prejudice-related incidents will be recorded on CPOMS.

Records will include:

- Nature of the incident
- Individuals involved
- Any protected characteristic involved
- Actions taken
- Outcomes
- Follow-up support provided
- Review date

Senior leaders and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will regularly analyse incident data to identify patterns, trends and any groups of pupils requiring additional support or intervention.



§ Relevant staff will be kept informed and if the bullying persists, they will record this and inform the head of school/designated safeguarding lead, and appropriate further action is taken parents/carers will be kept informed appropriately.

§ Appropriate rewards and sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy will be used to support the improvement of pupils' behaviour.

§ The school will inform the Local Authority of any hate or prejudice related incident as part of the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and in support of the Shropshire Tackling Hate Crime Initiative. See Appendix 1.

Involvement of pupils

We will:

§ Regularly discuss children's views on the extent and nature of bullying.

§ Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.

§ Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in our academies and embedded messages in the wider curriculum.

§ Publicise the details of help lines and websites.

§ Offer support and reassurance to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

§ Offer opportunities to discuss issues to do with self-esteem, gender identity, and anti-bullying and offer opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves and their bodies through our PSHE / RSE physical, social, health and economic education scheme of work.

Liaison with parents and carers

We will:

§ Make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers on the Federation website and in the academy offices.

§ Ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.

§ Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

§ 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 Federation to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.

The Federation recognises that bullying, harassment and intimidation of staff are unacceptable.

All members of the school community are expected to treat staff, governors, volunteers and visitors with dignity and respect. Concerns relating to bullying or harassment of staff will be addressed promptly and in accordance with relevant Federation policies, procedures and professional standards.



Appendix One

Preventative Strategies:

- i. High levels of Supervision i.e.
 - a) Playground – at least two adults on the playground.
 - b) Midday Supervisor for each class at the Infant Academy and for at least every two classes at the Junior Academy.
 - c) Full time Teaching Assistants in Foundation Stage and full and part time teaching assistants in KS1 and KS2 plus extra support where necessary.
 - d) Ensuring adequate adult/child ratio when going on school trip/walk etc.

Playground Equipment and adults support – OPAL activities /markings/games / activities on the playground, picnic tables and lunchtime equipment all help to keep children positively focused on desired behaviour as well as adult support for play.

- ii. Positive reinforcement kind/helpful behaviour e.g. if one child assists another who has fallen over in the playground.
- iii. Reinforce caring for each other through Bible/related stories in Collective Worship, the Federation Christian values and through other appropriate curriculum areas.
- iv. Remind children to speak to a trusted adult if somebody does something to them that they don't like in the classroom/playground/toilet.
- v. Encourage children to add a worry to the worry monster if they wish to talk to a trusted adult.
- vi. Carpet Discussion Time - when incident brought to teacher's attention e.g. pushing/fighting, sit down and discuss with whole class how they feel about the incident. Would they like it to happen to them? How does it make them feel? What should they do?
- vii. Keep record of incidents – Complete a record onto CPOMS and alert Principal / Designated safeguarding lead / Head of School. If a pattern of behaviour is emerging or serious incident occurs, contact parents to discuss ways of resolving the situation.
- viii. Teach children how to recognise when others do not like what is happening to them – sad face, crying.
- ix. Encourage children to use the friendship bench if they need a friend on the playground. (Infant Academy)
- x. Appoint anti-bullying ambassadors at the Junior Academy who have regular meetings to support their peers and act as a first point of contact for any pupil who has a concern relating to bullying.

Appendix 2

For the most up to date - Shropshire school hate related incident form <https://www.shropshirelg.net/media/qawetcko/hate-related-incident-reporting-form-shropshire-schools.docx>
emailed to educationimprovementservice@shropshire.gov.uk

