ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

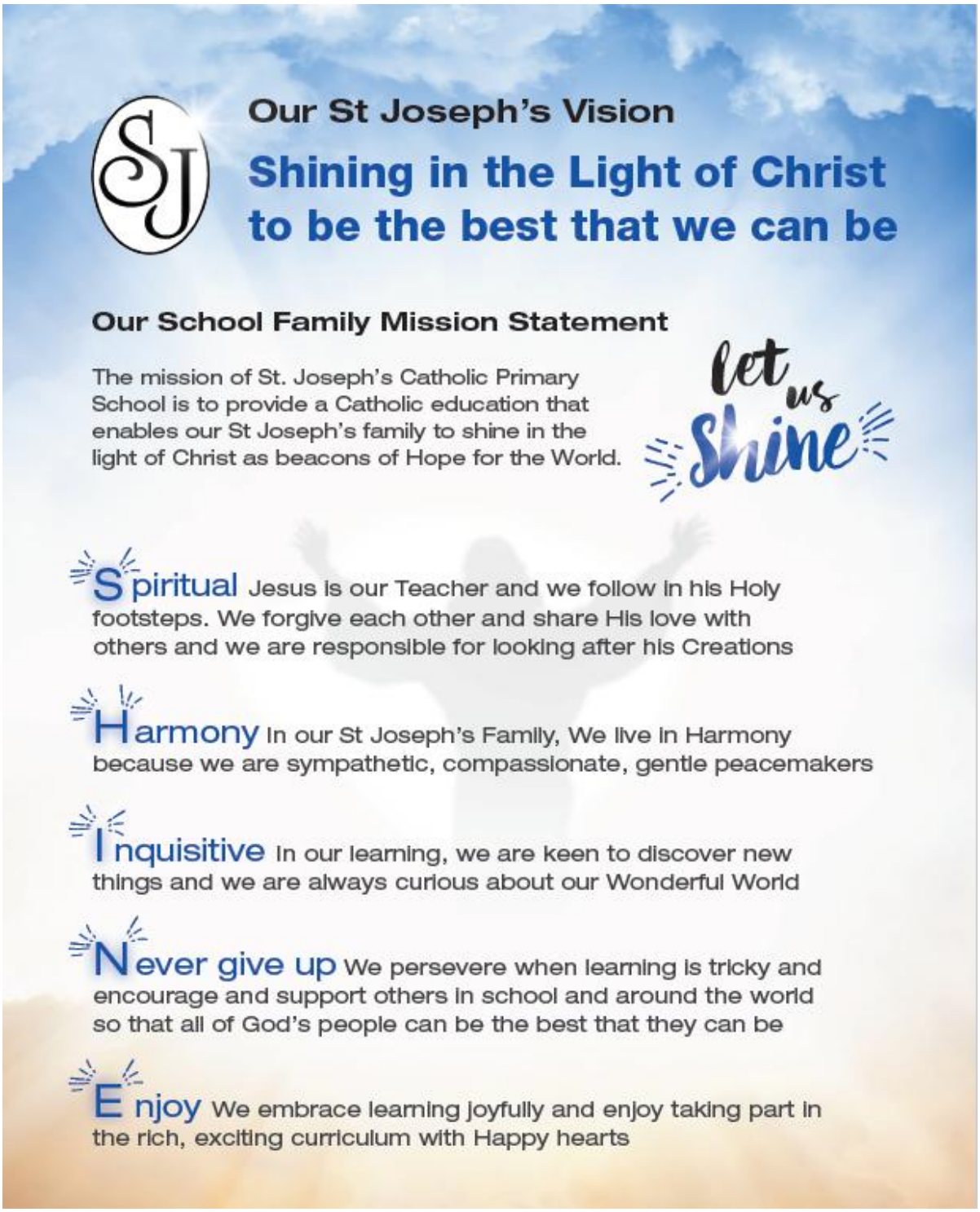
2026-2027



Approved by:	Yvonne Wilkins Headteacher	**Date:** 2/11/2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Shining in the Light of Christ to be the Best that we can be

Our Vision and Values



Introduction

At St. Joseph's School, our core values are to nurture and support each child to flourish and grow to their full potential in order to SHINE their light in the world.

As a consequence of our values we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for learning for all our pupils to allow them to flourish and grow, helping them to maximise their potential.

We expect pupils to act safely and feel safe in school, including that they understand the issues relating to all forms of bullying and that they feel confident to seek support from school should they feel they or others are unsafe.

We also want parents/carers to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in school and that incidents when they do arise, are dealt with promptly and well.

The school is aware of its legal obligations including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community supporting parents/carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head teacher – Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies.

The Headteacher's responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents and ensuring
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

The nominated Governor with the responsibility for Anti- bullying Behaviour is: - Mrs Julie Boyle

Definition of Bullying

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.

https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/what-bullying

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional).

Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict. Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'. Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying.

Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

What does bullying look like?

Bullying behaviour can include:-

• Physical • Verbal • Emotional • Sexual • Online • Indirect

Specific types of bullying include: Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of: • age • being or becoming a transsexual person • being married or in a civil partnership • being pregnant or having a child • disability • race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers • religion, belief or lack of religion/belief • sex /gender • sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes.

Other vulnerable groups include • pupils with Special Education Needs bullying related to appearance or health • bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers. In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Where does bullying take place?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It also persists outside school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community and may continue into Further Education. The school acknowledges its responsibilities to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

Online/Cyber bullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:- • hacking into someone's accounts/sites • Posting prejudice/hate messages • Impersonating someone on line • Public posting of images • Exclusion • Threats and manipulation • Stalking We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our e-safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour

Bullying can take place between: • young people • young people and staff • between staff • individuals or groups

How to report a concern

All pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors have the right to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community. We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year.. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties. The staff are aware of and follow the same procedure: Interview all parties ▪ Inform parents ▪ Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with our Behaviour Policy.

These are graded according to the seriousness of the incident but send out a message that bullying is unacceptable

▪ We are clear that responses may also vary according to the type of bullying and may involve other agencies where appropriate ▪ Follow up, in particular keeping in touch with the person who reported the situation, parents/carers. ▪ We have a clear complaints' procedure for parents/carers who are not satisfied with the school's actions ▪ We have a range of follow up responses and support appropriate to the situation for all involved such as - solution focused, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim, perpetrator and bystanders, referral to outside agencies if appropriate ▪ We liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises i.e. in the case of cyberbullying.

Recording bullying and evaluating the policy

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident on CPOMS.

This information will be presented to the governors (anonymized) so they have oversight of how Bullying is dealt with.

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

Strategies for preventing bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we

have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour.

▪ Anti-Bullying week annually in November (organized by our Pupil Anti-Bullying Ambassadors)

▪ PSHE/Citizenship lessons and Catholic Sociial Teaching focusing on the Dignity of the Person

▪ Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety

▪ School council ▪ Peer mentoring schemes

• Reactive programmes for vulnerable groups or groups involved in bullying.

▪ Support for parents/carers

▪ Support for all school staff

▪ Staff training and development for staff

