THE BARLOW
RC HIGH SCHOOL

SERVE • PRAY • ACHIEVE • RESPECT

Rise up,
take courage,
and do it.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement

As a Catholic school, our mission is to show love through our Respect for others.

We value our God-given gifts, talents and abilities.
Our aim is to bring out the best in everyone, within a safe And happy environment.

Everyone should know that we are followers of God by what we do, not just by what we say.

RATIFIED BY GOVERNING BODY	**November 2026**
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1. Introduction

At The Barlow, we are committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment where all pupils are respected, valued and able to achieve their full potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

This policy sets out the school's approach to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying. It aims to promote a culture of respect, dignity and inclusion, ensuring that all pupils feel safe, supported and confident to report concerns.

The school recognises that bullying can have a significant impact on a pupil's wellbeing, safety, attendance, achievement and mental health. We are therefore committed to preventing bullying, responding effectively when concerns arise and supporting all pupils involved.

This policy applies to all members of the school community and to all forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, discriminatory behaviour and cyberbullying. It applies to behaviour on school premises, during educational visits, while travelling to and from school, and, where appropriate, to incidents occurring outside school, including online, where there is a clear impact on the safety, wellbeing or education of pupils or on the wider school community.

The school recognises that emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), may be misused to harm, intimidate or exploit others. Such behaviour will be addressed in accordance with this policy and, where appropriate, the school's safeguarding procedures.

2. Legislative Framework and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.

The school's approach to preventing and tackling bullying is informed by:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- The Children Act 1989;
- The Children Act 2004;
- The Education Act 2011;
- The Human Rights Act 1998;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying;
- Behaviour in Schools; and
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

3. Rationale

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between individuals who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The school also recognises that some incidents of bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse and therefore require a safeguarding response. Such incidents will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory safeguarding guidance.

Where bullying behaviour is identified, the school will take appropriate steps to:

- Protect and support those affected;
- Address the behaviour of those responsible;
- Promote positive relationships and respect for others;
- Prevent recurrence; and
- Fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities.

The school is committed to working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, governors, staff and external agencies, where appropriate, to ensure that all pupils can learn in a safe environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

3.1. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined by the Department for Education in its guidance, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying,* as: ***"Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."***

The school recognises that bullying is often characterised by an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, making it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. We also recognise that not all incidents between pupils constitute bullying. Relational conflict, friendship difficulties and one-off incidents will be addressed through the school's pastoral systems and behaviour policy. Examples may include:

- Mutual disagreements or arguments.
- One-off acts of unkindness.
- Friendship breakdowns.
- Isolated incidents of conflict between pupils where there is no imbalance of power.
- Differences of opinion or misunderstandings.

Whilst these behaviours are not necessarily bullying, they will still be taken seriously and addressed appropriately. However, where behaviour is intentional, repeated and involves an imbalance of power, it constitutes bullying and will be addressed in accordance with this policy.

Bullying may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups or by perceived differences between individuals. It may be related to age, race, religion or belief, sex, disability, special educational needs, sexual orientation, gender identity, appearance, family circumstances or any other characteristic.

The school recognises that bullying can occur both within and beyond the school environment, including through the use of technology, social media, messaging services, online gaming and emerging digital platforms.

In some circumstances, bullying behaviour may require a safeguarding response in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

We are committed to promoting a culture of respect, kindness, dignity and inclusion in which differences are celebrated, diversity is valued and all members of the school community understand their responsibility to treat others with courtesy and consideration.

3.2. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms and may include, but is not limited to:

Physical
Physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, inappropriate physical contact, damaging property or threatening behaviour.

Verbal
Name-calling, insulting remarks, teasing, intimidation, threats, ridicule or offensive comments.

Emotional
Excluding individuals, spreading rumours, humiliating others, manipulation of friendships, intimidation or undermining confidence and self-esteem.

Racist
Bullying related to race, ethnicity, nationality, culture or language, including racist comments, gestures, jokes or discriminatory behaviour.

Faith-Based
Bullying related to a person's religion, faith or beliefs.

Sexual
Unwanted sexual comments, sexual harassment, inappropriate touching, sexual intimidation or sexual abuse.

Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic
Bullying directed towards individuals because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sexist and Misogynistic Bullying
Bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour based on sex, including sexist language, stereotyping, intimidation, misogynistic attitudes or behaviour that demeans or targets individuals because of their sex.

Disability or SEND-Related
Bullying aimed at pupils because of a disability, special educational need, learning difference or medical condition.

Prejudice-Based Bullying
Bullying related to any protected characteristic or perceived difference.

Cyberbullying
The use of the internet and related technologies to harm other people in a deliberate, repeated and hostile manner, including through text messages, emails, social media platforms, messaging applications, websites or online gaming. Cyberbullying may occur both within and outside school and may be anonymous in nature.

Cyberbullying may include:

- Sharing, sending or posting offensive, threatening or humiliating messages.
- Sharing or creating harmful images, videos or recordings.
- Sharing or creating images and videos that have been digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfakes.
- Impersonating others through fake accounts, profiles or AI-generated content.
- Spreading rumours or misinformation online.
- Deliberately excluding individuals from online groups, forums or activities.
- Encouraging others to target, harass or humiliate an individual online.

The school recognises that AI-generated, manipulated or synthetic content, including deepfake images, videos and audio recordings, can be used to bully, intimidate, humiliate or exploit others. Such incidents will be treated with the same seriousness as any other form of bullying and may constitute a safeguarding concern.

3.3. Signs and Indicators of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Whilst these signs do not necessarily mean that bullying is taking place, adults should be alert to the possibility and investigate concerns appropriately.

Possible signs may include:

- Becoming withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence.
- Reluctance to attend school or participate in particular lessons or activities.
- Frequent absence or deterioration in attendance.
- Changes in academic performance or engagement with learning.
- Isolation from friendship groups.
- Changes in behaviour, mood or emotional wellbeing.
- Unexplained injuries or damage to personal belongings.
- Requests for money or unexplained loss of possessions.
- Difficulty sleeping or signs of distress.
- Increased use of, or avoidance of, technology and social media.
- Reluctance to use mobile devices or engage online.
- Expressions of low self-esteem or negative self-worth.
- Self-harming behaviours or comments indicating emotional distress.

Pupils who are concerned about bullying, whether involving themselves or another person, are encouraged to report their concerns to a member of staff, trusted adult or pupil leader. All reports will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately.

4. The Role of the Curriculum

At The Barlow, the promotion of respect for oneself, for others and for the dignity of every person is central to our Catholic mission and values. We believe that all members of our school community are created in the image and likeness of God and therefore deserve to be treated with dignity, kindness and compassion.

The school recognises that the most effective way to prevent bullying is through education, awareness and the promotion of positive relationships. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils are supported to develop respect for others, celebrate diversity, understand the consequences of their actions and contribute positively to the school community.

Bullying prevention is embedded within both the curriculum and the wider life of the school through PSHCE, Family Time, Celebration of the Word and awareness campaigns, fostering a culture of respect, dignity and inclusion.

Through the curriculum, pupils will be supported to:

- Understand what bullying is and how it differs from conflict or friendship difficulties.
- Recognise the different forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, emotional, prejudice-based and cyberbullying.
- Understand the impact bullying can have on individuals, families and the wider community.
- Develop empathy, resilience and positive relationship skills.
- Demonstrate respect for others, regardless of difference.

- Value diversity and recognise the importance of human dignity and inclusion.
- Understand the protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010 and the importance of challenging discrimination and prejudice.
- Recognise and challenge racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, disability discrimination and other forms of prejudicial behaviour.
- Understand the importance of challenging sexist, misogynistic and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
- Know how to seek support for themselves and others and how to report bullying concerns.
- Understand the importance of being an active bystander and reporting concerns when they witness bullying behaviour.
- Understand how to use digital technologies safely, responsibly and respectfully.
- Recognise the risks associated with social media, online communication and emerging technologies.
- Understand how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used responsibly and how it may be misused to harm, intimidate or exploit others.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to cyberbullying, including incidents involving AI-generated, manipulated or synthetic content such as deepfakes.
- Know what action to take if they encounter harmful, inappropriate or AI-generated content involving themselves or others.

Through all aspects of school life, pupils are encouraged to uphold the school's core value of **Respect** by showing consideration for others, celebrating difference, taking responsibility for their actions and challenging behaviour that undermines the wellbeing, dignity or safety of others.

The school will regularly review its curriculum provision to ensure that pupils are equipped to understand and respond to emerging risks and are prepared to make positive, respectful and responsible choices both online and offline.

5. Bullying and Safeguarding

The school recognises that bullying can have a significant impact on a pupil's safety, wellbeing and mental health. Whilst not all bullying incidents constitute a safeguarding concern, all incidents will be considered within the wider context of safeguarding and pupil welfare.

Particular consideration will be given to pupils who may be more vulnerable to bullying, including those with SEND, looked after children, young carers, pupils with protected characteristics and those experiencing social, emotional or mental health difficulties.

In some circumstances, bullying behaviour may constitute **child-on-child abuse** and require a safeguarding response in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

All staff should be aware that some bullying incidents may meet safeguarding thresholds and must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL (DDSL). Staff should not assume that bullying is solely a behaviour issue where there are concerns regarding a pupil's safety, welfare or wellbeing.

Bullying concerns may require a safeguarding response where they involve, or are associated with:

- Sexual harassment or sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Online sexual abuse or exploitation.
- Sharing or threats to share nude or semi-nude images.
- Hate-related incidents or behaviour motivated by prejudice.
- Serious threats, intimidation or coercive behaviour.
- Criminal behaviour or behaviour which may constitute a criminal offence.

- Persistent targeting of a vulnerable pupil.
- Bullying based on a protected characteristic.
- The use of AI-generated, manipulated or synthetic content, including deepfake images, videos or audio recordings.
- Behaviour that causes significant emotional harm or raises concerns regarding a pupil's welfare, safety or wellbeing.
- Any behaviour that may constitute child-on-child abuse.

Where appropriate, pupils should retain evidence of online bullying, such as screenshots, messages or links, and share these with school staff when reporting concerns.

Where safeguarding concerns are identified, safeguarding procedures will take precedence over behaviour management procedures. Such incidents will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may require referral to external agencies, including Children's Social Care, the Police or other relevant services.

Incidents involving AI-generated or manipulated content will be assessed using the same safeguarding thresholds as equivalent non-AI incidents and may require referral to external agencies where appropriate.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns without delay. Where there is any uncertainty as to whether an incident meets safeguarding thresholds, advice must be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All incidents of bullying will be recorded and monitored. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, incidents will also be recorded and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

6. Bullying Incident Procedures

The school aims to acknowledge and begin investigating reports of bullying promptly. Parents/carers will be informed and kept updated throughout the investigation process. Whilst most investigations will be concluded within 48 hours, more complex cases may require additional time.

Where there is any indication that an incident may constitute child-on-child abuse or otherwise meet safeguarding thresholds, the matter must be referred immediately to the DSL or DDSL and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Stage 1 (Staff member receives the initial report of potential bullying)

- Discuss the nature of the incident with the victim, remaining patient and understanding.

- If relevant Stage 1 of the yellow Bullying Investigation Report should be completed, with all the relevant information required, signed and dated before being handed directly and immediately to a member of the Anti-Bullying Champion Team.

- However, if an immediate referral is not possible due to teaching commitments, the member of staff involved should instead make a bullying referral via Classcharts, which will be picked up and actioned by a member of the Anti-Bullying Champion Team.

Stage 2 (Anti-Bullying Champion Investigation)

- Identify and meet with (separately) the victim/s, perpetrator/s and any witnesses, use the Bullying Investigation Prompt Sheet for each interview and record their statements.

- If the perpetrator/s own up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at The Barlow and what effect it has on the education of the victim and the rest of the pupils in the class/school. Ask the bully to put themselves in the position of the person being bullied.

- If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further.

- If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, contact the parents or carers of victim/s and perpetrator/s and inform that the issue is under further investigation and that they will be kept informed - record that contact has been made.

- Stage 2 of the Bullying Investigation Report should then be completed, signed and dated by the Anti-Bullying Champion and handed directly and immediately to the relevant HOY or Director of Key Stage.

Stage 3 (Final Outcome)

- HOY and Director of Key Stage to review all of the information provided at Stage 2 and decide if the incident is deemed to be bullying before taking the relevant next steps i.e. applying sanctions and providing appropriate support for the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) and, where appropriate, affected peer groups.

- Identify an appropriate follow-up plan with dates (within a maximum of 3 weeks of the initial incident)

- Complete Stage 3 of the Bullying Investigation Report including which sanction(s) will be applied and the date for review and then contact the parents /carers of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) to inform them of the outcomes and sanctions

- Record the relevant information on Classcharts.

- All incidents of bullying will be recorded and monitored. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the incident will additionally be recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Stage 4 (Follow Up and Review)

- HOY anti-bullying meetings implemented and recorded every 3 weeks, as required.

- Parents / Carers of victim informed, updated and recorded every 3 weeks, as required.

Stage 5 (Monitoring and Evaluation cycle)

- The Director of Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) and the Director of Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11) will review and analyse all recorded bullying incidents, including victim and perpetrator data, on a half-termly basis. This analysis will consider trends by year group, vulnerable groups and any incidents linked to protected characteristics, attendance, safeguarding concerns or repeat incidents will be reviewed to enable emerging concerns and patterns to be identified. The findings, along with any recommended actions, will be formally presented to the Senior Assistant Headteacher (SAHT) with strategic responsibility for Anti-Bullying.

- The SAHT Anti-Bullying Lead will provide a strategic oversight, challenge and quality assurance ensuring that bullying trends are effectively monitored and addressed across the school. A summary of this data will be reported termly to Governors through the Pastoral Welfare and Ethos Committee enabling Governors to fulfil their monitoring and scrutiny responsibilities in relation to the school's anti-bullying provision.

Pupils should be encouraged:

- To report to a trusted adult or Anti-Bullying Ambassador / Pupil Leader if they are being bullied or in distress.
- To inform a trusted adult immediately if they are aware of anyone else being a victim of bullying.
- To reject bullying in their social groups.

Parents and carers should:

- Raise any change in behaviour of their child(ren) with our school.
- Treat seriously any suggestion by their child(ren) that they may be being bullied.
- Encourage their child(ren) to talk to a trusted adult they know if they feel they cannot talk to their parents or carers.
- Approach the school directly if they feel a bullying incident has not been dealt with effectively or alternatively follow the complaints procedure in the unlikely event of an unsatisfactory outcome.

7. Restorative Approaches and Educational Interventions

In addition to sanctions applied in line with the behaviour policy, the school may use restorative and educational approaches to address bullying behaviour and reduce the risk of recurrence. As a trauma-informed school, we seek to help pupils understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility for their behaviour and make positive choices moving forward.

Where appropriate, pupils may participate in restorative conversations, reflective activities, targeted pastoral support or the school's evidence based non-academic intervention 'Pause, Think, Choose.' These approaches are intended to develop empathy, improve decision making and promote positive relationships. Restorative and educational interventions are used alongside sanctions to promote behaviour change, repair harm where appropriate and support pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to maintain respectful relationships.

8. Sources of Advice and Support

The charities and organisations listed below are linked to some highly successful strategies:

- Bullying Advice from Family Lives UK https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/bullying
- National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children – www.nspcc.org.uk.
- ChildLine – www.childline.org.uk.
- The Mix – www.themix.org.uk.
- Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk.
- The Samaritans – www.samaritans.org.
- UK Safer Internet Centre – www.saferinternet.org.uk
- CEOP – www.ceopeducation.co.uk
- Bullying Intervention Group - www.bullyinginterventiongroup.org

9. Staff Training, Monitoring and Evaluation

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff are equipped to identify, prevent and respond effectively to bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying procedures, safeguarding responsibilities and expectations regarding the management of bullying incidents will form part of staff induction and be reinforced through regular training and professional development opportunities. Training will include recognising when bullying behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse and require safeguarding intervention.

The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying provision will be regularly evaluated through a range of quality assurance activities including:

- Robust analysis of bullying incident data and trends
- Robust monitoring of repeat incidents of bullying for victims / perpetrators
- Pupil voice surveys
- Parent Voice
- Staff Voice

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance or emerging safeguarding risks and should be read in conjunction with the following related school policies:

- Behaviour Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- AI Policy.
- Equality Policy and Guidance.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.
- RSHE Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy incorporating Child Protection.
- Safeguarding Policy (Pupil Version).
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Child-on-Child Policy (Pupil Version)
- Young Carer Policy