



## **St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School**

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Agreed by Governing Board Autumn 2023  
Policy will be reviewed by Headteacher Autumn 2024 or when deemed  
necessary by monitoring.

## Introduction

Our Mission at St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is: -

**'...to ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.'**

Our Mission is rooted in scripture

***'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full'***

***John 10:10***

Therefore, the full and consistent implementation of our Anti-Bullying Policy plays an integral part in enabling us to strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care.

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, we strive to provide a learning environment where we are safe, happy and cared for; an environment which enables and encourages all to achieve their full potential and aspire to excellence. We make Christ known and loved, using his example in all that we do because we believe *that 'in loving others we love Jesus.'*

In partnership with parents, families and the parish of St Bernadette's, we aim to deliver an outstanding and distinctive Catholic education with Gospel values at its heart. Where each person's unique value is recognised and nurtured so that, through God's grace we can grow, learn and realise our full potential to become the people God intended us to be. Where the dignity and worth of every individual is protected; where differences are celebrated and valued, for it is in others that we see the face of God.

### Whole School Behaviour Ethos



We believe that an effective school is one where a positive atmosphere is based on shared Gospel values, agreed principles and good relationships. We have high expectations of behaviour which lead to high standards of work and presentation. We take a positive approach to behaviour management and recognise that in order to promote excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning,

children need to be listened to, understood and respected. We exercise 'Restorative Practice' where we encourage children to talk to each other about disagreements and come to a mutual agreement where forgiveness and understanding can be reached.

The promotion of positive behaviour permeates throughout our school, in lessons, worship and communication. We celebrate good behaviour as a whole school, supporting one another's achievements in Celebration Assembly every Friday and encouraging our children to feel proud of themselves and one another. We believe that a well-planned curriculum, matched to the abilities and interests of our children, set in an environment which is both engaging and inspirational, promotes a good attitude to learning, consequently giving way to good behaviour. All staff at St Bernadette's are fully committed to this.

## Context

This policy should be read and followed with due reference to the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Health & Safety
- Home-School Agreement
- Single Equality
- Online safety
- Care & Control

### Why is an anti-bullying policy necessary?

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary school, we believe that the children have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All schools contain some numbers of children with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. At St Bernadette's it is made clear that bullying in any form is **WRONG** and will not be tolerated.

### Who is this policy for?

This policy is for all staff, pupils, families, governors, students, volunteers and visitors, irrespective of race, gender, ability or faith. It applies to all types of bullying, in any form it occurs and whoever it involves whether that be child to child, child to adult, adult to adult, adult to child.

### School principles

- Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Staff take action immediately; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to.
- Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

### School definition of Bullying

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.



### Some common examples of bullying behaviour include:

- talking badly about someone behind their back (online or in person)
- teasing someone, calling them names, giving nasty looks or making rude gestures
- spreading rumours or lies about someone (online or in person)
- hurting someone physically by pushing, hitting, slapping, ganging up on or restraining them
- excluding someone from a group (online or in person)
- harassing someone because of their race, sex, religion, gender or a disability
- sharing embarrassing photos of someone online
- posting mean things about someone on social media
- harassing someone online with comments or DMs, or in person by intimidating them or following them.

### It is **NOT** bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one off argument/fight between pupils of equal stature or strength
- There is good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity
- A pupil is called a nickname with which they are happy.

### Types of bullying

There are many different kinds of behaviour that can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying can be acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

**Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

**Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

**Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

**Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

**Online (Cyber) Bullying:** The following actions are common forms of online bullying:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages.
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips taken or shared via mobile phone cameras.
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim's phone to harass others to make them think the victim is responsible.
- Threatening or bullying emails; possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name.
- Intimidating or hurtful responses to someone in a chat-room.
- Unpleasant messages sent during instant messaging.
- Unpleasant or untrue information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook).

**The following procedures and responsibilities are in place to prevent online bullying:**

- The Headteacher will be in overall charge of the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and will ensure that their effectiveness is monitored.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the school maintains details of agencies and resources that may assist in preventing and addressing online bullying.
- All members of staff will be trained to identify signs of online bullying and will be helped to stay informed about the technologies commonly used by pupils.
- It is made clear in our '**POLICY ON THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND OTHER FORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**' that members of staff should not have contact with current pupils on social networking sites (specifically, they should not befriend pupils on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or any other platform). In addition it is advisable not to have past pupils as friends.
- Pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors are expected to comply with the school's online safety policy and acceptable user agreements.
- Parents/carers sign a home school agreement where they agree to support school policies on behaviour, online safety and this policy.
- Parents/carers are provided with information and advice regarding keeping their children safe online via the school website, school App and other literature. They are also offered online safety workshops led by external consultants.
- Pupils will learn about the impact of their online behaviours and decisions; their digital footprint and about the impact of online bullying through a carefully sequenced and age appropriate online safety curriculum.

- An online Safety Charter suitable for children will be developed, periodically reviewed and communicated - to help pupils protect themselves from being caught up in online bullying and to advise them on reporting any incidents.
- Outside the curriculum, pupils will receive regular pastoral sessions about Online Safety and online bullying through assemblies, enrichment activities and anti-bullying week projects and tasks.
- Pupils will have a voice through our 'Online Safety Team' of which the head pupils are members of. This ensures that the voice of the children is heard and ensures they are fully engaged and involved in evaluating and improving policy and procedures.

**If cyber-bullying occurs, the school will take the following steps:**

- Advise the child not to respond to the message.
- Refer to relevant policies, including behaviour, Online Safety, acceptable use agreements, behaviour and anti-bullying, and apply appropriate sanctions.
- Advise the pupil not to delete the message/image.
- Secure and preserve any evidence.
- Inform the sender's e-mail service provider.
- Inform Headteacher and the senior leadership team.
- Notify parents of the children involved.
- Consider delivering a parent workshop for the school community.
- Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence.

**If malicious posts or threats are made against pupils or school staff, the following steps will be taken:**

- Inform the site and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally.
- Secure and preserve any evidence including URLs, screenshots and printouts.
- Inform the Headteacher and senior leadership team.
- Inform parents.
- Send all the evidence to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).  
Telephone 0870 000 Email: [enquiries@ceop.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ceop.gov.uk) Website:  
<http://www.ceop.gov.uk> Postcode: SW1V 2WG

However, if the comment/material is threatening or abusive, sexist, of a sexist nature or constitutes a hate crime, the school may consider contacting the police. Under the Communications Act 2003, communications sent via social media are capable of amounting to criminal offences and prosecutors will make an initial assessment of the content of the communication and the conduct in question so as to distinguish between:

- Communications which may constitute credible threats of violence to the person or property.
- Communications which specifically target an individual or individuals and which may constitute harassment or stalking within the meaning of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

- Communications which may amount to a breach of a court order i.e. a restraining order.
- Communications which do not fall into any of the above and must be considered separately i.e. those which may be considered grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or false.

The feelings of the person being bullied online are paramount and, as with any form of bullying, support for the individual will depend on the circumstances. For example:

- Emotional support and reassurance that it was right to report the incident and advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop.
- Emotional support and reassurance that they haven't done anything wrong.
- Advice on other aspects of the code to prevent re-occurrence.
- Advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked from the individual's sites or services.
- Actions, where possible and appropriate, to have offending material removed and advice to consider changing email addresses and/or mobile phone numbers. Discuss contacting the police in cases of suspected illegal content.

In addition, the school will take the following steps with the perpetrator of the online bullying, assuming they are a member of the school community:

- Work with the perpetrator and any sanctions will be determined on an individual basis, in accordance with the Anti-bullying Policy.
- Hold the perpetrator to account, so they recognise the harm caused and do not repeat the behaviour.
- Help bullies to recognise the consequences of their actions and facilitate change in their attitude and behaviour.
- Demonstrate that online bullying, as with any other form of bullying, is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it.

### **Prevention**

- The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in this policy and in the children's version of this policy which is regularly promoted across the whole school.
- All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in the school are challenged by a member of staff.
- Staff encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.
- All types of bullying are discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- Changing and organising seating arrangements in class helps to prevent instances of bullying.
- Potential pupils at risk of bullying are drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- All members of the school community are made aware of the school's Anti- Bullying Policy.

### **Signs of bullying**

Some of the signs that a pupil may be experiencing bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs are engaged with, in order to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- The governing body evaluates and reviews this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible bullying of pupils and to deal with incidents as the highest priority.
- The Headteacher reviews and amends this policy, taking account of new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures.
- The Headteacher keeps a record of all reported incidents of bullying in the serious incident log. The report must include which type of bullying has occurred to allow for proper analyses of the data collected.
- The Headteacher analyses bullying data in the serious incident log at termly intervals in order to identify any trends in the types of bullying occurring and implement the appropriate measures to tackle it.
- The Headteacher arranges appropriate training for staff members.
- Key stage leaders will correspond and meet with parents/carers where necessary. They also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur. The Headteacher may also fulfil this role.

- Class teachers are alert to social dynamics in their class and are available for pupils who wish to report bullying. They also provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Teachers ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the Headteacher of such observations.
- All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Throughout the year, the composition of pupil groups shows sensitivity to those who have experienced bullying.
- Parents/carers are advised to inform their child's class teacher if they are concerned that their child may be bullied or be involved in bullying.
- Pupils are advised to inform a member of staff if they witness bullying, or experiencing bullying.
- Pupils are taught not to make counter-threats if they are experiencing bullying.
- Pupils are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other pupils in incidents.
- Pupils are advised to retain all evidence of online bullying.

### **Procedures**

Minor incidents are reported to the pupil's class teacher, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, and informs the Headteacher in writing using CPOMs electronic recording system. This record must include details of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The person making the accusation of bullying, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to the school nurse for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, all parties (bully, victim, witnesses) are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non- confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
- Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

### Sanctions

- If the Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- The Headteacher informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues. Please refer to the [Behaviour Policy](#).
- If possible, the Headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the person being bullied (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the person's full consent. Discretion is used here; those being bullied will never feel pressured into a face- to-face meeting with the bully.
- The bullying pupil is made to realise that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.
- Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- The class teacher informally monitors the pupils involved over the next half- term.

### Support

- The class teacher informally checks whether the bullying has stopped on a weekly basis for a month after the initial complaint of bullying.
- The Key Stage leader formally checks whether the bullying has stopped the week after the bullying, and again during the same half term.
- If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in class.
- The person who has been bullied is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- The person who has been bullied is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- With parental/carer permission the person who has been bullied and the bully maybe referred to the school councillor for support.

### Follow up support

- The progress of both the bully and the person who has been bullied are **monitored** by their class teacher. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be appropriate.
- If appropriate, **follow-up correspondence** is arranged with parents/carers one month after the incident.
- **Co-operative group work** takes place regularly in all classes. Pupils work together on shared tasks, co-operation and accountability, trust building. Pupils learn to work together, to manage conflict within a group and share common goals.
- A nurture group can be facilitated to support vulnerable children, if appropriate.
- **Circle of friends** builds relationships around a vulnerable pupil. Pupils are helped to make friends; this improves inclusion and acceptance in a group.
- **Meetings with the welfare staff** provide them with the knowledge and skills to make lunchtimes happy for children.
- **Training & Professional development for all staff as necessary.**

- Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:
- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their Headteacher or a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Reflecting on why they became involved
- Understanding what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

### **Bullying outside of school**

- Schools have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
- Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff.
- The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.
- The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil.
- If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

### **Consultation, Monitoring & Reporting**

At St Bernadette's we are a happy, caring and ambitious community and it is the function of our school through a system of relationships, rewards and sanctions to encourage and develop self-discipline in our pupils in order to teach them to be valued members of their community so that in later life so that they can become courageous stewards of creation. Our policy has been developed in consultation with the school community and it will be monitored in accordance with the school's annual cycle of monitoring and evaluations and be shared with the Governing body through the Headteacher's report. The policy will be reviewed with all staff at the beginning of the academic year, with midyear reviews where monitoring suggests that this is necessary. Following the annual review of the policy, parents will be informed of any adaptations or changes through the school newsletter.

**ANNEXE A: Bullying Report Form**

This form will be sent to the **Headteacher** upon completion:

Personal Details	
Name of person reporting incident:	
Name of pupil(s) being bullied:	
Sex:	
Year group:	
Form:	
How may we contact you (please circle)?	
At school	At home
Home address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

<b>Incident Details</b>
<b>What happened?</b>
<b>Where did the incident take place?</b>
<b>When did the incident occur?</b>
<b>Who has been suspected of bullying?</b>
<b>Did anyone else see the incident?</b>
<b>According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?</b>
<b>According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?</b>

<p align="center"><b>Impact of the Bullying</b></p> <p><b>What emotional impact has the bullying had on the pupil?</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Was anyone physically hurt?</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Did anyone need medical attention?</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Has anyone else been informed of the bullying?</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>If so, when were they informed?</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>If not, why has the incident not been reported?</b></p>

## **Help & Support**

**What type of help and support are available to the victim?**

**Do you have any concerns about reporting the bullying?**

**What more do you think could be done to help prevent instances like this in future?**