Living and Learning through Christ

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed Nov 2025	Next review T2 2027

Equality Statement

The Governing Board has considered the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the development and approval of this policy. The school is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. Due regard has been given to the potential impact of this policy on pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and other members of the school community who share protected characteristics.

At St Bernadette Catholic Primary school Catholicity permeates all aspects of teaching and learning. Our values and beliefs aim to provide a strong level of coherence and focus which enriches the whole child. High standards are expected and articulated so that they are made explicit to all.

Rationale

All children have the right to feel safe and secure in an environment which is stress free and happy.'

Definition

Bullying is intentional, repeated behaviour that harms or intimidates peers or someone the perpetrator perceives as vulnerable. It can be physical (hitting, pushing),verbal (name-calling, threats, spreading rumours), non-verbal (glaring, staring, facial expressions to scare and intimidate) and often involves an abuse of power. Bullying can happen anywhere, including online, and is intended to cause physical or emotional harm.

Bullying is about power. Victims feel powerless to stop it. Others, such as parents for instance, may feel powerless to know how to help.

- 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, (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.
- We recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- Bullying is recognised by St Bernadette Catholic Primary School as being a form of child on child abuse; children can abuse other children.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “roasting”, “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.

Any of these may also have contexts which discriminate in relation to age, race, gender, special educational need, religion, socio-economic background, sexual orientation or disability. Those being bullied or harassed may show changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. Their school work may deteriorate. They may lack concentration, behave in a way that is different to their usual manner, there may be a drop in attendance, have many ‘tummy upsets’ and ‘act out’ of character.

Actions to tackle Bullying

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply ‘falling out’.

The school has in place many strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and this includes bullying. PSHME is incorporated into our timetable as are anti-bullying assemblies, lessons and focus weeks. This gives children the opportunity to discuss their feelings and responses to situations. Additional support via staff mentors provides opportunities for children to air concerns/worries and devise solutions and/or support strategies.

Prevention is better than cure so, at St Bernadette, we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously.

Pupils are encouraged to report any incidence of bullying to an adult within the school. These are recorded on CPOMs.

(See also PSHE Policy and Behaviour Policy).

Aims

- To prevent bullying occurring at school
- To encourage children to tell an adult about any incidents of bullying they have experienced or witnessed in school
- To help members of the school to feel positive about themselves
- To help the children be assertive and non-aggressive
- To involve all members of the school community in adopting our anti-bullying policy.

Procedures

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 Leads (DSLs) or other appropriate member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school 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 confidentially policies.
- Appropriate sanctions and support, for example as identified within the school behaviour 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 make every effort to ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy. 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:
- Support 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 searching and confiscation policy. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully).
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.

- Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, 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.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- 0ffering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Where appropriate, advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss 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 support through the school nurse service or CAMHS.

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 change 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 service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
    - Suspensions
    - official warnings
    - internal exclusions
    - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
    - in extreme or repeated cases - permanent exclusions.

The parents of aggressors and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

The aggressor will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent aggressors may be excluded from school).

‘If there continues to be no improvement, the Head teacher will arrange a meeting with the parent or guardian and others from relevant agencies. The school Governors may be informed of the situation.

Where necessary we will call on outside resources and agencies to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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/ukcouncil-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

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/tools-information/all-about-bullying/atrisk-groups/sen-disability
• 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.srtrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+
• Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
• 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-campaignposters
Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying
Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying/investigating-and-respondingsexual
Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame