



St Bernard's Preparatory School

Anti-bullying Policy

Authorised by: The Board of Governors of St Bernard's Preparatory School

Term: Pentecost 2025

Signature:

Review Date: Pentecost 2026

Circulation: Governors/all staff/volunteers automatically

Parents on request/School Website

Status: Current

Contents

Mission Statement	3
Position and values	3
Clarification of terms	3
Definition of bullying.....	3
Definition of cyber-bullying	3
Types of bullying	3
Types of cyber-bullying	4
Actions not considered to be bullying	6
Reasons for bullying.....	6
The effects of bullying.....	6
Roles and responsibilities	7
The role of Governors	7
The role of the Headteacher	7
The role of the staff	8
Bullying in the workplace.....	8
The role of parents/carers	8
The role of children.....	8
Cyber bullying	8
Remote and blended learning	9
Reporting, sanctions and monitoring	9
Monitoring, evaluation and review	10
Strategies to reduce bullying	10
Useful websites.....	10
Appendix 1: Bullying Incident Form	12

Mission Statement

With God as our shelter and Christ as our guide, the mission of St Bernard's Preparatory School is to educate towards love and service to God, each other and the wider community. Through our broad balanced curriculum, we will develop an understanding of each faith and the values we share. We will treat each person with respect, knowing we are special and unique.

St Bernard's is part of the St Benedict's family of schools. All schools in the group share a similar Catholic and Benedictine/Bernardine ethos.

Position and values

St Bernard's Preparatory School provides an environment where every child can feel:

- safe
- healthy
- able to enjoy and achieve
- able to make a positive contribution.

To protect the rights of all children to have a safe and secure learning environment St Bernard's will continuously work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. These behaviours are unacceptable and interfere with both our school's ability to educate children and a child's ability to learn. If such a case arises, the staff will follow the anti-bullying guidelines laid out in this policy. This will enable staff to:

- Identify children displaying unacceptable behaviour and know how to support them in order that they develop the necessary skills to participate in the school community effectively and positively
- Keep all other children safe, happy and confident.

Clarification of terms

Definition of bullying

A bully is defined as someone who deliberately sets out to hurt another person on more than one occasion. All children have upsets and squabbles; these are not classed as bullying and are dealt with through the Behaviour Policy.

Definition of cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target a child. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be more difficult to track as the cyber-bully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening others online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face.

Types of bullying

- **Physical:** Deliberately hurting particular children on a regular basis
- **Verbal:** Deliberately hurting feelings through name-calling etc.
- **Ostracising:** Making someone feel left out and different by deliberately setting out to exclude them.

Types of cyber-bullying

- **Flaming:** Online fights, usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
- **Denigration:** Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.
- **Exclusion:** Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- **Outing:** Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- **Trickery:** Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.
- **Harassment:** Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- **Cyber-stalking:** Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.
- **Youth produced sexual imagery:** Youth produced sexual imagery refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images or videos, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The School recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers, known as peer on peer abuse. This can either be between two children of any sex or through a group of children abusing a child or another group of children. It can happen both in school and outside school and can also happen online. Any incidents of alleged or suspected abuse by children or young people will be taken seriously and reported to the safeguarding leads immediately.

All staff understand that, in whatever form it takes, it is never acceptable, will never be tolerated, and is not an inevitable part of growing up or as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'. All staff are trained in our procedures with regards to peer-on-peer abuse and they have an important role to play in preventing or responding to it. Downplaying these behaviours can lead to a culture of poor behaviour and an unsafe environment in the school and in worst cases normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Staff know that peer on peer abuse might take various forms so that they can identify and respond to it; for example, (and the following list is not exhaustive):

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying such as racial, homophobic, gender or culture-related bullying or abuse.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, biting (this may include an online element condoning or threatening physical abuse);
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence, including abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (this may include an online element condoning or threatening physical abuse)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent e.g. forcing them to strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Via the use of ICT e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos, or 'revenge pornography' - staff should be particularly mindful of the potential for the misuse of information technology for bullying and abusive purposes;
- Grooming by peers as part of child sexual exploitation;
- Abuse linked to gang-related activity or initiation-type violence/rituals.

- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This is a criminal act under the Voyeurism Act of April 2019. The Act specifically states the culprit cannot claim images were just taken 'for a laugh', and anyone of any sex can be a victim.
- Initiation/hazing type violence/ritual, which could include harassment, abuse or humiliation as an initiation process and may include an online element.

We know peer abuse might manifest differently for boys and girls, e.g. girls being touched inappropriately or coerced into sexual activity, boys being initiated into gangs etc. Such abuse may also be indicative of a previous or ongoing abusive experience for a perpetrator and / or victim.

Research indicates that children with SEND, additional or complex needs are particularly vulnerable. All staff should be mindful of the added vulnerability of children and young people, who have been the victims of violent crime, including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs, as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may, therefore, be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Consequently, any plan to reduce and / or manage risk posed by a child, who is alleged to have abused another, must also address their needs and responses should be considered accordingly.

As a school, we recognise it is not enough 'just' to respond to incidents should they arise. We understand, that even if there are no reports in our school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their DSL (or deputy). In addition, we try and **minimise the possibility of peer abuse** by:

- Creating and maintaining an environment which is safe, caring, respectful and stimulating, and which seeks to promote the social, physical and moral development of our children.
- Actively discouraging and challenging all unacceptable behaviour, including all forms of bullying and abuse. We will also challenge the attitudes and behaviours which underpin it;
- Strike an appropriate balance between the child's right to privacy and the need for proportionate supervision to keep them safe in and around school;
- Have in place clear strategies for promoting positive behaviour, including a system of rewards and sanctions that is clear to staff, children and parents;
- Maximise opportunities within the curriculum, via PSHCE, assemblies and focused weeks to deliver key keeping safe and associated behavioural, spiritual, moral, social and cultural messages - including the use of external resources and the expertise of external speakers and groups;
- Ensuring all adults associated with our school understand their role and responsibilities as role models;
- Ensuring staff and any volunteers are trained to look for and respond appropriately to any potential indicators of peer abuse.
- Seeking appropriate and timely advice where uncertainty exists and / or concerns arise.

- Ensuring children and parents know how to raise any worries or concerns with adults / staff in school and by signposting them to appropriate sources of advice and support outside school.

Responding to Allegations of Peer Abuse

The school recognises the need for sensitivity and proportionality when dealing with these difficult issues. The following general rules will apply to their management:

- The safeguarding leads will seek appropriate and timely advice wherever necessary and contact Slough Safeguarding where there are concerns, or the equivalent if the child lives in a different Local Authority. The safety and best interests of victim(s) will be the paramount consideration at all times. The safeguarding leads will also consider the possibility and take account of any wider and / or ongoing risk(s) to others;
- The needs of the victim and the needs of the alleged perpetrator will be considered separately;
- In addition to safeguarding the identified victim, the school will consider (i) whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a risk to any other children; and (ii) how best to manage that risk;
- Children and young people who abuse others are responsible for their abusive behaviour, and safeguarding action must include addressing their behaviour and its causes;
- The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children;
- Where necessary, the school will participate fully in a co-ordinated approach by child welfare/ protection, youth offending, education and health agencies.

Actions not considered to be bullying

- Not liking someone
- Being excluded
- Accidentally bumping into someone
- Making other children play things a certain way
- A single act of telling a joke about someone
- Arguments
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others
- Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness

Reasons for bullying

Some reasons why children might bully someone include:

- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or cool
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group
- They are fearful of other children's differences
- They are jealous of another child
- They are unhappy
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

The effects of bullying

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each child's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness
- loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- unexplainable injuries
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
- frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness

- depression and anxiety
- changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

Roles and responsibilities

The Education Act 2002, Education, Inspections Act and Equalities Act 2006 all make reference to a school's legal responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying. By law, all schools must have a behaviour policy in place and displayed on their website and must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. Schools have the legal power to make sure children behave and do not bully outside of school premises, for example on public transport or in nearby public communal areas. If seen as appropriate, the Headteacher or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. During school hours, including while children are taking part in school visits or after school clubs the school has direct responsibility to ensure children feel safe and secure.

The role of Governors

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The Trustees and Governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Governors on request with regards to the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies.

A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can make a complaint to the Chair of Governors. The complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy which can be accessed from the school's website.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school's anti-bullying strategy, to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the school policy, and that they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour. It is the Headteacher who must ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in school. The Headteacher will draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, this school holds Assemblies and events such as 'Buddy Week' to promote positive behaviour. The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The role of the staff

Members of staff must ensure that they follow the school's anti-bullying policy. All members of staff will routinely attend training that equips them to identify bullying, understand school policy and follow procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Staff will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They will use drama, role-play, stories etc. within the curriculum, to help children understand the feelings of bullied children and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Ring-fenced time will also be used to praise, reward and celebrate the successes of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Members of staff will keep a vigilant watch on suspected bullying and any incidents will be handled carefully. It is important that any child responsible for initiating the bullying is dealt with appropriately. The person dealing with the incident will collect all the relevant information and then record the incident(s) on MyConcern to provide the Headteacher with the information he needs in order that he can decide on an action. The person dealing with the incident will collect all the relevant information and then provide the Headteacher with a copy in order that he can decide on an action. All cases are individual and various strategies will be employed by the Headteacher to address the issue. Teachers and support staff will do all they can to support a child who is being bullied.

Bullying in the workplace

Any incidents where it has been deemed that a member of staff has been bullying a child will be taken very seriously. The Headteacher, with the support of the Governing Body, will deal with this and formal action will be taken where necessary. Such action will also be taken if it is deemed that a member of staff is bullying other members of staff.

In the event of the Headteacher being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the Chair of Governors who will take formal action where necessary.

The role of parents/carers

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately in a calm manner. If they are not satisfied with the action taken they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the procedure detailed above. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school and this expectation of support is outlined in the home/school agreement.

The role of children

Children are encouraged to tell somebody they trust if they are being bullied. If the bullying continues children must keep on letting people know; the children are taught a number of strategies to help them with this. Children are also encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about bullying in order that they clearly understand what to do if they, or another child, are being bullied.

Cyber bullying

St Bernard's Preparatory School has a separate policy related to E-safety addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access and monitoring procedures. The computing code of conduct is displayed prominently in the ICT Suite and is explained and discussed with children in Assemblies, PSHCE classes and computing classes.

Remote and blended learning

All staff should be alert to cyber bullying incidents which can take place when using remote learning platforms and ensure they are addressed. Staff should be mindful that when dealing with any incidents online, opportunities to discuss issues will be different compared to when a child is in school. Therefore, it may be necessary to have a discussion with the parents, to ensure the child is emotionally well supported.

Reporting, sanctions and monitoring

How to report bullying

1. **Reporting by Staff** All incidents of bullying should be logged on MyConcern by the member of staff who is dealing with the incident.
2. **Reporting by Parents** An incident form can be downloaded from the school website or a copy collected from the school office (Appendix 1).
3. All the relevant information must be completed on the form, which can then be emailed to the school office or physically handed in.
4. The DSL/Headteacher has overall day-to-day responsibility for dealing with reported incidents and will forward details to the relevant member of staff to investigate.
5. Alternatively, any member of staff can be approached to report incidents of bullying, and they in turn will report to the DSL/Headteacher.

Procedures

The following steps must be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, or who suspects/observed the bullying.
2. The DSL/Headteacher must be informed immediately
3. A clear account of the incident will be recorded in writing either by the victim or the member of staff recording the victim's verbal statement. All accounts must then be recorded on MyConcern accurately and in a timely manner.
4. The DSL/Headteacher will interview all concerned and will continue to record the incident in the chronology tab on MyConcern.
5. Parents will be kept informed by the DSL/Headteacher
6. Subject teachers will be kept informed and asked to monitor the situation
7. A range of sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned. These sanctions could include: verbal or written warnings, restrictions of break and lunchtime activities, fixed term and in the event of persistent bullying, permanent exclusion. Where appropriate the Headteacher may inform the police.
8. The emotional wellbeing and mental health of all children involved will be monitored carefully and additional pastoral support given. This support may include referral to Early Help or Health Services.
9. There will be an annual audit and analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice.

This school has set procedures to follow in implementing sanctions where a bullying incident has occurred. Sanctions are applied in appropriate proportion to the event. In the event of all other avenues being exhausted, or in particularly serious cases that lead to exclusion, Governors will examine the evidence that a wide range of strategies had been tried and failed to affect a positive change in the bullying behaviour.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

1. Governors, the Headteacher and relevant staff will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.
2. The school council will provide feedback on how effective anti-bullying is in the school.
3. A record of all such incidents will be kept on MyConcern.
4. The numbers of incidents will be reported to Governors annually or provided to them at any time on request
5. Bullying data will be analysed to reflect and re-design further strategies to improve procedures

Strategies to reduce bullying

St Bernard's has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

- the consistent promotion of the school's code of behaviour which requires all children to respect the rights of others
- the reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at St Bernard's
- consultation with the 'Student Voice' on appropriate action
- take part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy
- the supervision by school staff of all play areas at lunch times and breaks
- there is a 'buddy' system in operation throughout the school (where two-year groups are paired up).
- providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied
- the celebration of all children's backgrounds and cultures through Assemblies
- during Assemblies and PHSCE learning sessions discuss and explore bullying issues with the children
- raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet)
- all websites accessed in school are screened
- effective recording systems
- work with multi-agency teams including police and children's services as appropriate
- contact the parents of both the child being bullied and the bully

Useful websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.each.education

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.youngstonewall.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.stoptextbully.com

www.beyondbullying.com

www.childnet-int.org

www.cyberbullying.org

www.chatdanger.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Applies to:

Whole School including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Related Documents:

Safeguarding Portfolio, Data Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Home/School Agreement, Complaints Policy, ICT Portfolio

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, Governors and Trustees will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, annually or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.



St Bernard's Preparatory School

Appendix 1: Bullying Incident Form

Bullying Incident Form

Name of Child:

Year Group/ Class

Date of Reported Incident:

What Happened?