

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Christ is our teacher.

At St Bernard's we believe that all persons are created by God, unique and equal. We strive to create a caring Christian community in which we provide education based on Gospel values where all people reach their full potential. We aim to develop positive relationships with every individual and family, the parishes and the wider community.

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"

John 10:10

Reviewed by:	E Lee, Pastoral Lead, May 2023
Reviewed at:	Student Welfare Meeting, 10 th May 2023
Approved at:	Full Governing Body Meeting, 5 th July 2023
Signed:	Austin Senior, Chair of Governors

ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

St Bernard's Catholic High School recognises that we are lucky to have students who are, on the whole, respectful of each other, supportive and kind. Bullying incidents are rare, but it is important for all to ensure that each member of our school community knows what to do if bullying does occur.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening amongst the children and young people who attend our school.
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible, if it does happen, and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying amongst children and young people.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware of the correct procedures for dealing with a potential bullying incident.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of St Bernard's Catholic High School, including senior leadership team and the board of Governors, teachers, office, estate and support staff, volunteers, agency staff and trainees.

Related policies and procedures. This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:

- Child protection / safeguarding policy statement
- Procedures for responding to concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing
- Online safety policy and procedures for responding to concerns about online abuse within our Safeguarding policy
- Equality and diversity policies
- A student specific version of the policy will be produced by our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and launched during Anti-Bullying week 2019.

Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.”

Bullying can take many forms, these can include:

Personal Non Physical abuse

This includes things like:-

- Making repeated fun of students' appearance, ability, home, etc.
- Name calling
- Threatening with physical violence
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Isolating a student

Personal Physical Abuse

This includes things like:-

- Deliberately causing physical injury (*hitting, pushing, kicking, punching, etc*)
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Spitting

Taking or damaging the belongings of others

This includes things like:-

- Taking students possessions
- Demanding money from students
- Spoiling work
- Damaging belongings

Racist, Sexist, Transphobic or Homophobic bullying

This includes things like:-

- Making any derogatory reference to a person's ethnic origin, culture or language
- Making any derogatory reference to a person's gender or sexuality.

Cyber Bullying

This includes things like:-

- Any form of Personal Non Physical, Racist, Sexist, Transphobic, Homophobic abuse which occurs via electronic means of communication e.g. Texts, messaging services, social networking sites, etc.
- Sharing of personal information, images or video of another student without their permission.

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We at St Bernard's believe that:

- Everyone is entitled to speak to someone if they are being bullied.
- Everyone is entitled to receive help and care if they are being bullied.
- Everyone has responsibility to help and care for students who are being bullied.
- All incidents of bullying will be thoroughly investigated before any action is taken.
- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We also have a responsibility towards the perpetrator and those on the fringes of bullying to educate them on how their behaviour affects others, and what they can do differently in the future.
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by: Developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our school is expected to behave, both in face-to-face contact and online, holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, students and families who are part of our school community about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on:

- group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- practising skills such as listening to each other
- respecting the fact that we are all different
- making sure that no one is without friends
- dealing with problems in a positive way
- checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, transphobic, homophobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place

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- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account: the needs of the person being bullied, the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour, needs of any bystanders, and our organisation as a whole.
- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term. We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.
- Ensuring that as part of our Respect programme students, staff and parents/carers are educated about how to deal with online bullying, reporting strategies, privacy settings, what to share and how to stay safe online.
- Ensuring that our Identity Champions, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Mental Health Advocates and Digital Champions are well trained, and a visible part of school life. Regular activities, events and celebrations will take place, to ensure that awareness is raised, and staff and students are educated about how to access support.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- developing a whole school approach to bullying, with all school staff receiving Anti-Bullying training
- developing our team of Anti-Bullying and other Respect Ambassadors to lead in peer support and guide and inform the adults in school with regards to issues they may face.
- Encourage parent/carer involvement through; training sessions, celebration events and by providing training.
- Focussing on the bullying experiences (if any) of our students, and their general social, emotional mental health through the undertaking of a well-being assessment which will then form part of our Anti-Bullying action plan.

Suspected bullying needs to be dealt with in the following way:

Students – if a student witnesses or suspects that bullying is taking place, it can be reported to a member of staff, preferably a Pastoral Lead or the Anti-Bullying Leads. An Anti-Bullying Ambassador may also be approached if the student is nervous about approaching a member of staff. They will support the student to report what has happened to the Anti-Bullying Leads.

Staff – Any potential bullying can be reported via the drop down box 'bullying referral' on Go4Schools, this will then be picked up by the Pastoral Team and investigated ASAP. Advice can also be sought via the Anti-Bullying Leads when needed. If the investigation concludes that a bullying incident has taken place, this will be recorded in the bullying log.

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Our response to any incidents of bullying will be carefully considered and will usually include one or more of the following sanctions as appropriate for the circumstances.

- Verbal reprimand
- Detention
- Behaviour reflection activity
- Meeting with parents and a member of the Pastoral Team/SLT.
- Replace belongings or money
- Repairing damaged property
- Mobile device ban in school
- Teaching/Form group move
- Isolation
- Repeated bullying will be taken very seriously and may lead to exclusion

In all cases the school will ensure:

- Parents of all students involved will be notified.
- Support is provided for the victim of any bullying incidents.
- An opportunity for an apology and reconciliation between students is facilitated.
- Any additional required support measures are put in place to try and ensure there is no future repetition of events.
- The situation will be monitored on an on-going basis, to ensure that no further bullying behaviour is reported.

There are people capable of bullying in every school, however through education and promotion of tolerance and respect; we aim to proactively ensure a safe school environment. In order to effectively deal with any suspected incident of bullying, it is expected that all staff and students report concerns so that swift action can be taken. Remember we are very fortunate that most members of our school community are sensible and responsible individuals who find the idea of bullying, hurting, frightening, intimidating, upsetting others very objectionable. It is a cowardly act which will not be tolerated.

**"If you have love for one another, then everyone
will know that you are my disciples"
(John 13.35 G.N.B.)**