

Anti-Bullying Policy

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School



Approved by:

Date: September 2026

Last reviewed on: September 2026

Next review due by: September 2027

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and "Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges" guidance. The setting has also read Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools".

1) Policy Objectives

- This policy outlines what St Bernadette's Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- St Bernadette's Primary School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2) Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- o Behaviour policy
- o Complaints and compliments policy
- o Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- o Confidentiality policy
- o Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- o Curriculum policies, such as, RSE/RSHE, PSHE, citizenship and computing
- o Social media policies

3) Links to Legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- o The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- o The Equality Act 2010
- o The Children Act 1989
- o Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- o The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- o Public Order Act 1986.

4) Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- o The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- o Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- o All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- o Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- o Pupils to abide by the policy.

5) Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying'

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; this is sometimes called online bullying or 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.

St Bernadette's Primary School 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's Primary School as being a form of child on child abuse; children can abuse other children.

- o Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- o 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.
- o All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

6) Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- o Bullying related to physical appearance

- o Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- o Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- o Physical bullying
- o Emotional bullying
- o Sexualised bullying/harassment
- o Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- o Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

7) School Ethos

St Bernadette's Primary School community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our community:

- o Understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- o Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- o Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- o Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- o Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- o Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- o Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

- o Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- o Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy.
- o Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- o Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8) Responding to Bullying Concerns

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

1. 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.

2. The DSL/SLT will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues.

3. The headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved. The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.

If necessary and appropriate, police could be consulted.

4. A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school on CPOMS in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

5. The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.

Parents/Children must not:

- Attempt to sort the problem out themselves by speaking to the child or by speaking to their parents.
- Encourage a child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve

6. 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.

Stage 1 First incident	<u>Quickly addressed by class teacher</u> • The matter is sorted out quickly by the class teacher who decides the <u>consequences for the child who has been bullying according to the behaviour policy to ensure consistency</u> • The incident is recorded on the internal school system (CPOMS) • Parents informed • If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
Stage 2 Continued involvement	<u>Class teacher / Phase Leader (DHT/Early Years Lead/SEND CO)</u> • A <u>restorative justice approach</u> may be used with those involved (see Appendix A) e.g the school may adopt a 'Circle of Friends' approach • <u>The bully loses a privilege for a period of time</u> • A clear account of the incident will be made by the class teacher recorded and given to the Phase leader and recorded on the internal school system (CPOMS) • The parents of the bully and the child who has been bullied are informed. • The Headteacher informed
Stage 3 S.T.O.P.	<u>Headteacher</u> • If a child bullies again, the Headteacher becomes involved • Accounts are taken from children/adults involved and recorded on the internal school system (CPOMS) • Sanction according to behaviour for learning policy – this could be an internal suspension at the school for a fixed period of time, when the child works away from the class • The bully is timed out/loses a privilege, or suspended from an area of the school • A meeting with both sets of parents (individually) is carried out. • School will devise a contract (Appendix C) – SMART agreed behaviours over a given period with consequences of internal/exclusions. • In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying e.g. police, counsellor etc. • Children are monitored closely by all relevant staff and SLT. • Regular meetings with children and parents in this time period.
Stage 4	<u>Suspension and Permanent Exclusion</u> This may be in the form of a suspension or a permanent exclusion, dependent on the circumstances. Only the Headteacher can permanently exclude a child.

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 harm.

Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this 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:

- o Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- o 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.
- o Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- o 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.

Child on Child Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse).

This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- o Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- o Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns.
- o Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence. **See Appendix A**
- o Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- o 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 Integrated Children Services or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (MHST).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- o Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.

- o Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- o Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- o If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- o Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy (see section 8). This may include:
 - official warnings
 - internal exclusions
 - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
 - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or Early Help or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (MHST).

Supporting Adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- o Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to future concerns.
- o Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
- o Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- o Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- o Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- o Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.

- o Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- o If online, requesting that content be removed.
- o Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

9) Preventing Bullying

Environment

The whole school community will:

- o Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- o Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- o Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- o Recognise that bullying may be affected and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- o Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- o Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- o Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- o Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- o Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- o Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The whole school community will:

- o Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- o Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.

- o Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- o Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- o Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

The school community will:

- o Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- o Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- o Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- o Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- o Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

10) Involvement of Pupils

We will:

- o Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- o Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- o Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- o Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- o Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- o Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support
- o Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- o Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

11) Involvement and Liaison with Parents and Carers

We will:

- o Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- o Make sure that key information about prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
- o Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- o Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- o Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- o Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

12) Monitoring and Review: Putting Policy into Practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Appendix A - Responding to Incidents of Bullying – The Support Group Method

This appendix outlines the restorative processes and approaches the school will take when responding to incidents of bullying. This appendix includes an outline of The Support Group Method.

The Support Group Method – Introduction

The Support Group Method, developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, was first outlined in Educational Psychology in Practice (1991). The approach addresses bullying by forming a support group of children and young people who have been bullying and/or have been involved as bystanders. It uses a problem-solving approach, without apportioning blame, giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem and to report back at a subsequent review meeting.

Method

Step one – talk with and listen to the target

Aims of this step:

- To understand the pain experienced by the target
- To explain the method and gain permission to proceed
- To discuss who will make up The Support Group
- To agree what will be recounted to the group.

Step two – convene a meeting with the people involved

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of children who have been involved and suggested by the target.

A group of six to eight children works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use their judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable children are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of the group members to bring about the best outcome.

Step three – explain the problem

The facilitator starts by telling the group that s/he is worried about the target who is having a very hard time at the moment. By asking the group to listen to his/her own worries, the facilitator can divert some suspicion or irritation which might be directed towards the target.

The facilitator recounts the story of the target's unhappiness and may use a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the target's distress. At no time does the facilitator discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step four – share responsibility

When the account is finished the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change in the mood by stating explicitly that:

- no-one is in trouble or going to be punished.
- it is the facilitator's responsibility to help the target to be happy and safe but they cannot do it without the help of the group.

- the group has been convened to help solve the problem

Step five – ask the group members for their ideas

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of the target's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel happier.

Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. The facilitator makes positive responses and does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six – leave it up to them

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. S/he thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven – meet them again

About a week later, the facilitator discusses with the target how things have been going. S/he then meets with the group to discuss how things have been going for them. This allows the facilitator to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process

Appendix B – Logging Information

SECTION A: ALLEGED BULLYING INCIDENT			
Target Name(s)	Age	Year group	Class
Ethnicity	Gender M / F	SEN Stage	
Home language	looked-after child Y / N	young carer Y / N	
Member of staff to whom the incident was reported			
Date of incident			
Time of incident			
Location of incident			
Target's Account / Concern of parents/carers			
Alleged perpetrator(s):			
Name(s)	Age	Year group	Class
Nature of incident including details of any injury or damage to property, etc			
Circle any elements that apply:			
Form: Physical	Verbal	Indirect	Cyberbullying
Type: Race/religion/culture	Sexual/sexist/transphobic	Homophobic	SEN/disability
Home circumstances	Gifted/talented	Health conditions	Other
Parents/carers of alleged target(s) informed:			
Date		Time	

SECTION B: ACCOUNTS OF THOSE INVOLVED			
Alleged perpetrator(s) account of the incident			
Name(s)	Age	Year group	Class
Bystanders' / witnesses' accounts of the incident			
Name(s)	Age	Year group	Class
Parents/carers of alleged perpetrators informed:			
Date		Time	
SECTION C: ACTION TAKEN			
Details of immediate action taken			
Monitoring of action taken and details of follow up and longer term action taken			

Appendix C

Pupil Contract

Name of Student:

Date:

Bullying of any kind will not be accepted at St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School.

Bullying can be defined as 'any behaviour in and around school that makes another student uncomfortable, unhappy or indeed feel threatened either as part of a one-off incident or an ongoing series of events'.

As a result of recent actions we require you to sign this and agree that you will:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Consequences for breaking this contract:

- If the bullying continues then it will result in a one-day internal exclusion
- If the bullying continues then it will result in fixed term exclusion.
- If the bullying continues then it will result in an extended period of targeted work either off site or on site during after school provision (ASP).

I understand what has been said to me today regarding the rules for this contract

Signed _____ (Student)

Signed _____ (Parent)

Signed _____ (Teacher)

Date: _____ Length of Contract: _____