

St. Benet's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Young
Chair of Governors: Mrs Laura Gray
Date: March 2026
Date for Review: March 2027



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership

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Anti-Bullying Policy

‘The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them’.

Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

‘Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.’

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Introduction

At St Benet’s Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide an environment that is both safe and secure, in which children may develop and grow positively to achieve their full potential. Therefore, we believe that all of our children are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate fully in school life without experiencing intimidation. Bullying prevents this entitlement from being met and as such cause’s inequality of opportunities. It is the responsibility of all members of our school community to prevent this from happening.

We understand the importance of listening, and aim not only to actively listen to the children and young people in our care, but also to act accordingly on information imparted to us. In this way, we hope to ensure that a safe, secure and positive environment is maintained

It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don’t Suffer in Silence and Bullying – A Charter for Action*. This policy reflects this guidance.

Bullying involves dominance of one person by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. St Benet’s interpretation mirrors that of the DfE:

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.” (DfE – What is bullying? July 2013)

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Within school we recognise and target all forms of bullying, including;

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone’s belongings, etc.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insulting a person’s family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down, etc.
- Emotional/psychological - excluding someone from a group, humiliation, creating a feeling of danger, etc.
- **Racist:** insulting language/gestures based on a person’s actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name-calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence, etc.
- **Sexual:** sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact, etc.

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- **Homophobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, homophobic violence, etc.
- **Biphobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, biphobic violence, etc.
- **Transphobic:** insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived gender identity, name-calling, graffiti, transphobic violence etc.
- **Disabled:** name calling, insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived disability.
- **Electronic:** bullying by text message and on the internet (in chat rooms, smart phone apps, social media, online multiplayer games and through other instant messaging services).

We endeavour to be proactive with regards new developments in the technology our children use and regularly review the websites and apps which are popular with our children through contact with parents, fellow staff members, other schools in our partnership and local area and the children themselves.

Aims and Objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to create a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

We aim to build an anti-bullying climate in school, therefore increasing understanding for the victims of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child;

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| • Is frightened of walking to or from school | • Asks for money or starts stealing money |
| • Begs to be driven to school | • Has dinner or other monies continually "lost" |
| • Changes their usual routine | • Has unexplained cuts or bruises |
| • Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) | • Comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen) |
| • Begins to truant | • Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable |
| • Absconds from home or school | • Is bullying other children or siblings |
| • Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence | • Stops eating |
| • Starts stammering | • Is frightened to say what's wrong |
| • Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away | • Gives improbable excuses for any of the above |
| • Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares | • Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone |
| • Feels ill in the morning | • Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received |

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- Begins to do make less effort with school work than previously
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in attitude to people at home

There is no formula for detecting bullying, however, this list can help our staff, parents and carers know what to look out for. Especially if they see a number of these behaviours in a child in their care. These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

A culture of openness and talking

Pupils can either report bullying incidents through:

- Class councillors
- Class 'worry boxes'
- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied or if they feel someone else is being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. They are continually reminded that, 'We are a telling school'.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors:

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, 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 governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher strives to promote positive behaviour at all opportunities through good teacher/pupil relationships and the use of verbal praise, stickers, and golden book nominations.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

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The Headteacher sets 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.

The Headteacher is also responsible for monitoring the Incident Log via Arbor and/or CPOMS to check for any patterns in events, pupils, situations, locations that may occur. They will respond to any patterns that may occur by making appropriate adaptations and alterations.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All staff in school pride themselves on building good professional relationships with all children. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour through verbal praise, house points and the use of stickers. Additionally, in our school, we take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place. **This behaviour is not accepted or tolerated.**

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

All incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class are recorded and reported to a member of SLT (Senior Leadership Team). We also record incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying should record it in the behaviour log, and report it to a member of SLT.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or member of the SLT. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as social services.

All members of staff undergo training, attend staff briefings and undergo appraisal which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Teachers also address bullying issues as part of their PSHE/ RSHE curriculum and as part of the National Anti-Bullying Week, every November. The PSHE coordinator also has the responsibility for promoting anti bullying strategies in school. Members of staff also teach pupils how to stay safe online, these messages are repeated on a termly basis.

Through their training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- Celebrating achievement;
- Anticipating problems and providing support;

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- Disciplining sensibly, fairly and consistently, considering any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil and the needs of vulnerable pupils;
- Providing opportunities to listen to pupils.

The role of parents

Parents 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. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed on the school website.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. This is endorsed through yearly home school agreements.

They should:

- Expect the school to take bullying seriously
- Support school in its policy against bullying by discussing it with their child
- Encourage their child to follow the school anti-bullying code
- Inform school if their child is experiencing bullying
- Support school in its actions against those who bully
- Always contact school if they have a concern about bullying

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Our school and children develop the school aims which are based on support, mutual respect and teamwork.

Prevention of Bullying

Prevention of bullying is evident in all parts of school in because the children know and understand that we are a Rights Respecting School. The children understand that any allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with by the Headteacher.

The children are reminded about school procedures relating to bullying through class discussions, assemblies and whole school events. Training and Anti Bullying Week are used to remind the children that there is a zero tolerance to any form of bullying. In addition, children are taught how they might respond to and deal with bullying type behaviour.

As a school we have a positive approach to behaviour management. We model and reward desired behaviours through the use of positive praise, stickers and golden book nominations.

E-safety: All children are reminded about how to use all aspects of IT on a daily basis; however key messages are also shared with children on Safer Internet Day every February and during Anti-Bullying Week in November.

Equality: All children are encouraged to celebrate diversity. Every year the children spend a week studying Judaism during November and a week looking at Islam in March. During these weeks the children learn about these world faiths in detail and why they believe what they believe. The children are also taught about the special needs of others within school. This might be when a child joins school or when a special educational need develops.

Staff training: All staff and governors receive Child Protection training every two years. This enables them to support any child who may reveal any issues during the investigation of any bullying incidents.

The Headteacher will monitor incident records to spot trends or patterns of behaviour and to act to challenge prejudice.

Advice to Parents

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, or a member of the SLT.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on CPOMS and the Headteacher will be notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child, or by speaking to their parents in person or via social media.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

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

Help Organisations

- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321
- Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345
- KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204
- Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
- Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.
- Visit Viva Anti-bullying services website www.bullyinterventiongroup.co.uk for further support, links and advice

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "Stop Bullying", "Preventing Bullying" and "You Can Beat Bullying", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (marked "Bully Pack") with 6 first class stamps to: Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Monitor and Review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness. They do this by examining the school's behaviour log, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.
This policy was reviewed by Governors on: March 2026