



ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL  
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## Anti-Bullying Policy – Senior School

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*'Love your neighbour as yourself.' No other commandment is greater...*

## **1 Introduction**

The Education Act 2002, Education and Inspections Act and Equalities Act 2006 all explain the legal responsibility of every school to prevent and tackle bullying. 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. In line with this St Benedict's has written this anti-bullying policy, a copy of which is available from the school office and on the school website for parents, staff, and pupils to access when and as they wish. The policy takes into account DfE guidance given in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, staff, and Governing Bodies (Oct 2017), 'No Place for Bullying' (June 2012).

This policy will help the St Benedict's community ensure this school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, and ensure that the school provides an environment where every member of that community has the unconditional right:

- To be valued and respected.
- To feel safe and be healthy.
- To be able to enjoy their time at school and reach their full potential.
- Everyone has the right and responsibility to respect themselves and others by not bullying, and to stand up to bullies, whether they are the victim or they are supporting someone else being bullied.

To ensure that all our students have a safe and secure learning environment St Benedict's will always work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment, aggression, and violence as being unacceptable and opposed to the Gospel principles and Rule of St Benedict upon which the school is based. It is also clear that bullying can result in physical, psychological, and emotional damage and, as such, is taken very seriously by St Benedict's.

If such a case arises, the staff at 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 so that they can participate in the school community effectively and positively.
- Keep all other children safe, happy and confident.

Schools have the legal power to make sure pupils 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 headmaster or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. During school hours, including while pupils are taking part in school visits, after school clubs and in cases of cyber bullying the school has direct responsibility to ensure children feel safe and secure. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 staff will always be mindful of the fact that bullying could be seen as a safeguarding issue.

## **2 Clarification of Terms**

### **2.1 Definition of bullying**

A bully is defined as someone who deliberately sets out to hurt, injure, threaten, frighten or isolate another person on more than one occasion. All children have upsets and squabbles; these are not classed as bullying, but any incident is dealt with through the Behaviour Policy and each is taken seriously in their own right.

## 2.2 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, Twitter and Snapchat to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target someone. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be 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.

## 2.3 Types of bullying

- **Physical:** Deliberately hurting particular people on a regular basis or threatening to do so or taking or damaging their property
- **Verbal:** Deliberately hurting feelings through name-calling etc. This could involve racist, sexist or homophobic remarks or commenting on issues to do with disability or SEN. What some students might see as 'banter' can in fact be very hurtful to another student and students should be mindful of this. Staff should always take this form of bullying seriously and investigate concerns arising from this. This form of bullying can also include gossiping about someone behind their backs.
- **Ostracising:** Making someone feel left out and different by deliberately setting out to exclude them

## 2.4 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.

## 2.5 Actions NOT considered to be bullying

- Not liking someone.
- Being excluded from a group.
- Arguments.
- Isolated acts of meanness or expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others.

## 2.6 Reasons for bullying

Some reasons why children might bully someone include:

- They think it is 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.

## 2.7 The effects of bullying, and signs to look out for

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

- Unwillingness to go to school.
- Depression and anxiety.
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem, loneliness, loss of confidence and unexpected mood swings.
- 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.
- 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 behaviour such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

## 2.8 Who to turn to if feeling bullied

- Your parents.
- Your friends.
- A mentor.
- A Decan or Sixth Former whom you trust.
- Your form teacher.
- Your Division Head.
- The School Nurse.
- Deputy Heads or Head.
- The school counsellor.
- Any teacher with whom you feel you have a relationship of trust.
- Any other adult who works at the school e.g. a school secretary.
- A helpline or website.

# 3 Roles and Responsibilities

## 3.1 The role of Governors

The governing body supports the head teacher in dealing with bullying in 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 occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the headmaster to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies. St Benedict's School monitors its Anti-Bullying policy regularly and reports to the Governors on bullying incidents termly in order to ensure its effectiveness.

The policy is also reviewed at least annually by the Governors.

A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can make a complaint. The School complaints policy can be accessed from the website.

### 3.2 The role of the Headmaster

It is the responsibility of the headmaster 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 headmaster will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

### 3.3 The role of the staff

Members of staff will do all that they can to eradicate bullying. They will ensure that they follow the school's anti-bullying policy and will do all they can to support a child who is being bullied. All members of staff will routinely attend training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and 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. Members of staff will keep a vigilant watch on suspected 'bullies'; any incidents will be handled carefully. It is important that the child responsible for initiating the bullying is dealt with appropriately. All suspected cases of bullying should be recorded on MyConcern, and the person dealing with the incident will need to collect all the relevant information so that the correct course of action can be decided on as described below.

### 3.4 Bullying in the workplace

Incidents, where it has been deemed that a member of staff has been bullying a child, will be taken very seriously as a matter of child protection. The headmaster, 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 headmaster being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the chair of governors who will also take formal action where necessary.

### 3.5 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 always contact their child's tutor or division head immediately. It is important to understand that telling teachers about any possible problems, or even suspicions of problems, will be taken seriously but also will not instantly lead to children being publicly identified as being a victim or other children being identified as bullies. Teachers will use information with discretion, and it can be a valuable starting point for them to start investigating possible problems, and often information provided by one parent will be adding into other information that staff already have about bullying problems.

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the action taken they should contact the headmaster. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the procedure detailed in the Concerns and Complaints Policy. Even if not immediately concerned for their own children parents can support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school:

- Show a real interest in your child's social life and in school events.
- Encourage your child to have friends round, to join clubs and to be tolerant and broad-minded towards others.
- Build up your child's self-esteem by emphasising positive features and accepting individual characteristics.

- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with your child and suggest positive strategies if his/her rights are abused.
- Encourage your child to take action on bullying, but do not tell him/her to retaliate either physically or with name-calling.
- Show an example by being firm but positive and not aggressive in your approach to discipline.
- Confront the possibility that your child may be a bully and be supportive of the school in dealing with this.
- **DO NOT TELL YOUR CHILD THAT BULLYING IS PART OF GROWING-UP OR IMPLY THAT IT IS IN ANY WAY ACCEPTABLE.**
- If your child is being bullied, please **REPORT IT** – then the school will take action.

### 3.6 The role of pupils

Students are strongly encouraged to tell somebody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues they must keep on letting people know. Children are taught a number of strategies to help them with this:

- **Tell the bully to stop.** Make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful.
- **Seek help.** Talk to somebody whom you trust.
- **Report it.** St. Benedict's does not tolerate bullying. Trust the school to deal with any incident appropriately and report it to your tutor or assistant tutor or any member of staff who you feel comfortable talking to.

### 3.7 What to do to help prevent bullying of other students

St Benedict's encourages its students to be vigilant for bullying happening to other people, and to challenge it if they do notice it. Students should:

- Care enough to take action, whether you are personally involved or not.
- Intervene at an early stage so that the problem is dealt with before it gets out of hand.
- Have the courage to report bullying
- Do not follow friends when you disagree with what they are doing.
- Learn to be tolerant and broad-minded and to rejoice in individual differences.
- Be aware of the schools anti-bullying policy and give it your full support.
- Sometimes bullies exclude people. If you are popular and have a positive peer-group, try and be inclusive to those who have been or are being victims of bullying.
- Listen to, and ask for advice in, PSHE lessons.

### 3.8 Assurances that teachers can provide about bullying:

- If you have been bullied you are not to blame.
- Nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Everyone is entitled to enjoy school.
- Staying silent solves nothing.
- We are here to help.
- All reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.
- Victims of bullying are treated with care and respect.

## 4 Cyber Bullying

Cyber-bullying is treated as seriously as any other form of bullying. In fact cyber bullying can often be worse as it can continue outside school at any place and any time. St Benedict's has a separate

policy related to e-safety addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access and monitoring procedures in place. The ICT code of conduct is displayed prominently in all ICT classrooms and is explained and discussed with pupils in assemblies, PSHE classes and IT classes.

## 5 Reporting, Sanctions and Monitoring

### 5.2 Procedures for staff dealing with bullying

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

- 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.
- 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 and added to MyConcern.
- The student's year-group head and tutor must be informed immediately along with the deputy head.
- Parents will be kept informed according to the different stage of bullying as described below.
- Subject teachers will be kept informed and asked to monitor the situation.

### 5.3 The disciplinary structure for responding to Bullying

**It is likely that given the public and permanent nature of most cyber-bullying, that this will often warrant a level 2 sanction from the outset because of its seriousness. It is also important for students to realise that use of photographs of other students may well make the case into a safeguarding issue that needs police involvement.**

#### **WARNING**

If a pupil is beginning to behave in a manner which could develop into or be interpreted as bullying wherever possible a warning will be given. In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialize. However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the School and a pupil involved in a serious instance of bullying will bypass this stage and be placed directly on Stage 1. This stage will be led by the relevant tutor who is responsible for updating SIMS and passing the discipline referral form to the Deputy Head along with the head of year and either director of middle and upper school or the director of sixth form. A note should also be made on *MyConcern* to alert the DSL team who can then decide if the incident should be referred to the Police and/or social services, particularly if the victim is particularly vulnerable.

#### **Stage 1**

Where, after due investigation the School is satisfied that bullying occurred, it will be explained to the bully why his behaviour is unacceptable. At this stage positive strategies will be pursued alongside sanctions in order to raise their self-esteem as well as to protect the victim. An Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) will be agreed and generally a Saturday pastoral detention would be given. It is possible that after a considerable period of time during which the pupil has not only totally desisted from bullying, but also given evidence of positive support of and participation in the anti-bullying policy, that pupil will be removed from Stage 1. However, this is entirely at the discretion of the School and a pupil involved in a further instance of bullying will be placed directly on Stage 2. The action by the School will be confirmed in a letter to the parents which will be attached to the child's SIMs file. This stage will be led by the relevant Division Head who is responsible for updating SIMS and passing the discipline referral form to the Deputy Head. A note should also be made on

*MyConcern* to alert the DSL team who can then decide if the incident should be referred to the Police and/or social services, especially if the victim is particularly vulnerable.

## **Stage 2**

If the bullying continues, arrangements will be made to minimise contact between bully and victim if this would be seen as helpful. The bully's parents will be called into School to discuss the situation. Moves to Stage 2 will be confirmed in writing and a Saturday detention given. The bully will sign a second IBP promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It will not be possible to be removed from Stage 2 or any subsequent stage. It is envisaged that in most cases these two stages will be sufficient. The action by the School will be confirmed in a letter which will be attached to the child's SIMs file. This stage will be led by the Head of Year who is responsible for updating SIMS and passing the discipline referral form to the Deputy Head. A note should also be made on *MyConcern* to alert the DSL team who can then decide if the incident should be referred to the Police and/or social services, particularly if the victim is particularly vulnerable.

## **Stage 3**

Where no improvement in the bullying takes place, the bully will be excluded from School for a fixed term. Parents will be invited to meet the Deputy Head or the Headmaster. A third and final IBP will be agreed. The action by the School will be confirmed in a letter which will be attached to the child's SIMs file. This stage will be led by the Deputy Head who is responsible for updating SIMS. A note should also be made on *MyConcern* to alert the DSL team who can then decide if the incident should be referred to the Police and/or social services, especially if the victim is particularly vulnerable.

## **Stage 4**

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the School community, he/she will be permanently excluded from St Benedict's. The action by the School will be confirmed in a letter which will be attached to the child's SIMs file. This stage will be led by the Headmaster who is responsible for updating SIMS. A note should also be made on *MyConcern* to alert the DSL team who can then decide if the incident should be referred to the Police and/or social services, particularly if the victim is particularly vulnerable. The school file on the student expelled will be forwarded to their new school in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

Pupils placed on any Stage of the Anti-Bullying Policy are asked to read and then sign an undertaking to comply with this policy. A parent or guardian and stage leader then countersign. St Benedict's Senior School Anti-Bullying Policy. If a student is already on a level of the school behavior policy, then going onto a stage of the school anti-bullying policy will generally put them onto the next level of the school behavior policy as well.

## **6 Strategies the School Uses to Reduce and Prevent Bullying**

St Benedict's expects a high standard of behaviour at all times. We aim to provide a safe and caring environment for everybody and have adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour alongside our overarching Anti-Bullying policy:

- Our staff have appropriate training in the principles of the school anti-bullying policy and their legal and professional duties. Specific training is provided so that staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils and 'Looked after children'.

- All pupils are treated fairly in accordance to the 2010 Equality Act and all reasonable adjustments are made in dealing with bullying for pupils with SEND.
- Every student has a dedicated tutor who sees them at morning registration, at lunchtime, and at dismissal at the end of the school day. They are the central point of the pastoral care for the students along with the head of year who has overall pastoral supervision of each year group. During the school day there is supervision by school staff of all play areas at lunchtimes and breaks.
- We provide information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if the suspect their child is being bullied. Particular care is taken to ensure that parents are well informed about the possibility of cyber bullying. The school will always contact the parents of both the child being bullied and the bully when cases of bullying are discovered.
- There is a clear policy of mobile phones not being permitted to be used during school hours unless directly requested by a classroom teacher for academic reasons (research or taking pictures of prep or classwork).
- We consistently promote of the school's code of behaviour which requires all pupils to respect the rights of others and which is on display in every classroom: in particular, the clear message that unkindness and bullying has no place at St Benedict's is strongly. Each year the school take Anti-Bullying Week as its theme for the week.
- The sixth form decans who are trained at the start of the year take on a pastoral role with students from the younger years. There is also a school council with students from every year group. They are encouraged to raise any concerns about bullying in their discussions. There is annual consultation with the Student Council on student behaviour and bullying.
- During assemblies and PHSE lessons there is time to discuss and explore bullying issues with the children. These times are also used to raise awareness of cyber bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet)
- All websites accessed in school are screened. This software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites. Rude or offensive emails, websites, documents are sent to the senior deputy head who will work with the tutors and heads of year of those involved to take action on this.
- All instances of bullying are recorded on MyConcern as well as on a central record of bullying kept by the deputy head. There will be a biannual audit and analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice.
- The DSL's of St Benedict's are experienced at working with the Ealing Council and other external agencies including police and children's services as appropriate and will pass on bullying concerns that also might be safeguarding concerns as appropriate.
- St Benedict's liaise with feeder schools and pastoral leaders to ensure that records are appropriately passed on to manage pupil's transition between the various stages of their education.

## **7 What the School Will Do to Help Students Who Have Been Bullied**

Staff will support all pupils who are bullied. This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact.

The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include:

- A quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, especially if they feel under pressure to find them a buddy.
- Asking the pastoral team (Pastoral Leader, Designated Safeguarding Lead, and SS Counsellor) to provide support.
- Providing formal counselling with agreed referral from parents.
- To arrange a phased return to school.
- To find them things to do at break and lunchtime so they are not alone.

The school will do all it can to ensure bullied children continue to attend school. In addition to the examples of support listed above, this could include using separate on-site provision that provides respite for bullied pupils, whilst maintaining their educational progression. It is important that this support goes hand-in-hand with measures to tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe at school, and on their way to and from school.

## **8 What the School Will Do to Support Students Who Have Bullied**

Often there are pastoral concerns which lie behind students bullying others, and it is important that the causes of bullying are addressed alongside sanctions for that behavior. There are a number of ways that St Benedict's does this:

- The behavior levels of the bullying policy and the whole school behavior policy have positive as well as negative points, and include rewards for moving to more positive behavior with incentives such as coffee shop vouchers for good behavior over a period of time.
- School will work closely with parents and the student if there is a current SEND concern or if, in light of the bullying incident a SEND concern is suspected. Positive support in and out of class, and if appropriate with external agencies / GP's can often help to improve behavior.
- There is a mentoring system in the school, and students who have been involved in bullying are also often partnered with a senior student who they can talk to and who can support them in the aftermath of a bullying incident. If appropriate students can also be referred to the school counselling service.
- Form teachers and class teacher have an important role to play in ensuring that all students move on positively from an incident where bullying has been occurring.
- If students who have been bullying are excluded, then they will be sent work to do and supported on their return to school if it is a long exclusion.

## **9 Useful Websites**

The following websites all provide further resources for students who are either being bullied or worrying about someone being bullied.

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.each.education](http://www.each.education)  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
[www.youngstonewall.org.uk](http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.stoptextbully.com](http://www.stoptextbully.com)  
[www.beyondbullying.com](http://www.beyondbullying.com)  
[www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)  
[www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)  
[www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)  
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)