ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL
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Anti-Bullying Policy – Junior School

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Made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils on the school website and for inspection at school on request. Copies are available free of charge on request.

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St Benedict's Junior School 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 Benedict's Junior 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 Benedict's Junior School 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 *SBJS Behaviour Policy*.

Definition of Cyber-bullying
Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate, or target a child. 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.

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 disparaging 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.

Prejudice -based Bullying

St Benedict's School is committed to safeguarding the dignity and wellbeing of every child. We recognise that bullying can sometimes be motivated by prejudice, whether based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, special educational needs, or any other protected characteristic. Prejudice-based bullying includes any behaviour—verbal, physical, or online—that singles out an individual or group because of who they are or what they believe.

We do not tolerate any form of prejudice-based bullying. Such behaviour is contrary to our Benedictine values of respect, fairness, and hospitality. All incidents will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and addressed in accordance with our procedures. We are committed to educating our children about the harm caused by prejudice and to fostering a culture where everyone feels safe, included, and valued.

This policy is written with reference to the Independent School Standards, including the requirement that bullying at the school is prevented so far as reasonably practicable through the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. The school's approach includes cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, including bullying related to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Actions Not Considered to be Bullying

Some behaviours may not meet the school's definition of bullying because they are isolated incidents. However, harassment, intimidation, prejudice-based language, aggression, and unkind behaviour are always taken seriously and addressed under the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and this policy where relevant.

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

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 jewelry

- 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 behaviour such as negative self-talk, running away from home, harming themselves or talking about suicide

Roles and Responsibilities

The *Education Act 2002*, *Education, Inspections Act and Equality Act 2010* 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 Head or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. Although the School is not responsible for children's welfare when they are not in school, it recognises that it can play an important role in reducing vulnerability beyond school, including through education about cyber-bullying, online safety and respectful relationships.

The Role of Governors

- The Governing Body supports the Head 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 (e.g. the Safeguarding Committee, and Governor Engagement Days). The Trustees and Governors require the Head 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 *Concerns and Complaints* policy which can be accessed from the School's website.

The Role of the Head

It is the responsibility of the Head of the Junior School 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 Head of the Junior School 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 Head of the Junior School who must ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in school. The Head of the Junior School will draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, this School holds regular assemblies and events such as '*Kindness Week'* (aka *Anti-Bullying Week*) to promote positive behaviour. The Head of the Junior School will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Head of the Junior School 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 regarding 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, particularly within PSHE lessons 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 (e.g. *Deputy Head*; *Assistant Head*; or *Head of Key Stage*) will collect all the relevant information and record and report to the Head of the Junior School so that he can decide on an action. All cases are individual and various strategies will be employed by the Head of the Junior School 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 Head of the Junior School, 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 Head of the Junior School 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 Form Tutor immediately in a calm manner. If they are not satisfied with the action taken, they should contact the Head of the Junior School. 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 should be encouraged to let people know; the children are taught a variety 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 Benedict's Junior School has a separate policy related to *Child Protection and Safeguarding* addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access, and monitoring procedures. The "Digital Rights" guidelines are displayed prominently in *School Planners* and in the *ICT Suite* and these are explained and discussed with children in PSHE classes and computing classes.

Reporting, Sanctions and Monitoring

How to Report Bullying – Parents and Carers

1. Contact SBJS via email, phone or in person to raise concern with firstly the Form Tutor, then following this, a member of the Senior Team (Head of the Junior School, Deputy Head, Assistant Head, Head of relevant Key Stage).
2. The SBJS DDSLs and the Head of the Junior School have overall day-to-day responsibility for dealing with reported incidents and will share details to the relevant member of staff to investigate. Information will be recorded using *MyConcern*.

3. Alternatively, any member of staff can be approached to report incidents of bullying, and they in turn will record the details using *MyConcern* and report matters to the SBJS DDSL and the Head of the Junior School.

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 SBJS DDSLs and the Head of the Junior School 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
4. The SBJS DDSLs and the Head of the Junior School, or a staff member delegated by the Head of the Junior School will interview all concerned and will record the incident
5. Parents will be kept informed by the DDSLs/Head or delegated member of staff
6. All members of staff 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 Head of the Junior School may inform the police.
8. 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 Head of the Junior School, 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. A record of all such incidents will be kept electronically
3. The numbers of incidents will be reported to Governors annually or provided to them at any time on request.
4. Bullying data will be analysed to reflect and redesign further strategies to improve procedures.

Strategies to Reduce Bullying

St Benedict's Junior School 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 Rules which requires all children to respect the rights of others
- the reinforcement of the clear message that bullying has no place at St Benedict's Junior School
- consultation with the *'Pupil Voice'* on appropriate action
- take part in initiatives such as *Kindness (aka 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 all times
- providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if the suspect their child is being bullied
- the celebration of all children's backgrounds and cultures through assemblies and themed days (Faith and Heritage Day)

- during assemblies and PSHE 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: *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*; *SBJS Behaviour Policy*; and *Concerns and Complaints Policy.*