



OUR LADY AND ST BENEDICT CATHOLIC ACADEMY ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Our Mission Statement:

‘Loving, Learning and Looking forward with Christ.’

Following the example of Our Lady and St. Benedict we are rooted to Christ in all that we say, do and think. Within our safe Catholic family we love, learn and ensure children are ready for their next step in society with Christ as their purpose.

Our Aim

We at Our Lady and St Benedict are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our academy. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* academy. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Objectives of this Policy

- All academy representatives, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All academy representatives and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the academy policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the academy policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an academy we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the deliberate and persistent use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, theft
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, homophobic remarks, threats, name calling
- Cyber or online (including sexting) - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or actions such as up skirting.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We as an Academy community have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues 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:

- is frightened of walking to or from academy
- doesn't want to go on the academy / public bus
- begs to be driven to the academy
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to the academy (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in their work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to staff
- Follow up each case to support the victim and to prevent further incidence
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded by staff and parents of both parties will be informed either in writing (via home/academy diary) or verbally
- In persistent cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

The role of the Principal

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

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

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

The Principal sets the academy 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 academy, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our academy take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers make a records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the academy, on CPOMS. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Principal. 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 Principal, the teacher informs the child's parents.

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, then the Principal will invite the child's parents into academy to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Principal may contact external support agencies for additional support.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use the PHSE programme, restorative justice; drama, role-play, social 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 so help create a positive atmosphere.

Children who are suffering from bullying are encouraged to TELL someone they trust. This can be any adult in academy. To support victims, a peer or older 'buddy' may be assigned to them as friend to turn to at risk periods. The buddy will be agreed by victim, member of staff and the buddy themselves. The buddy will offer moral support to TELL someone or to deal with situations which may arise. They will also act as an extra 'pair of eyes' if necessary.

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 who engage in bullying are responsible for their own actions and resulting consequences.

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 Principal. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the academy's complaints procedure.

Parents should allow the academy to contact other parents who need to be approached to discuss instances of bullying.

Parents have a responsibility to support and share the academy's desire to create a calm, orderly and caring environment in which all children can develop and learn and to support the academy's anti-bullying policy; actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the academy.

Remember to be sensitive and to listen to your child if they tell you they are being bullied. Do not rush in, it may be the very response your child was dreading. Talk to your child about what the next step is. It is a good idea to suggest they keep a diary of incidents so that they have concrete facts to show the academy if necessary. Make an appointment to speak to the teacher with your child. Finally, tell your child you love them and do what you can to make their lives outside academy enjoyable; it will make them feel good about themselves.

Recording bullying incidents

Following a report of bullying, staff should make an accurate record of the incident on CPOMS marking it 'bullying' and the actions taken to address the issue to conclusion.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

KIDSCAPE	www.kidscape.org.uk
Thinkuknow	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
Childline	www.childline.org.uk
Anti-bullying Alliance	https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/
National online safety	https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides

Monitoring and review

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

This policy will be reviewed by the Academy Committee in February 2024.