Anti Bullying Policy

(Students)

St Bernard's High School

Approved by:	Full Governing Board	Date: October 2026
Last reviewed on:	October 2026	
Next review due by:	October 2027	

INTRODUCTION

Our Mission Statement

St Bernard's is a school community that aims to live by Jesus' commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you."

We are a Catholic learning community committed to the on-going development of the entire potential of every person, achieved through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

We care for each other as individuals of equal worth, regardless of status, sex, race or religion and thus actively seek to promote safeguarding, justice and fairness.

We provide an atmosphere in which all can grow in our Faith, and encourage this faith by a lively relevant liturgy.

We work with parents, parishes, local communities and industry to prepare our students for the opportunities of adulthood.

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1. Aims

- To work towards the elimination of bullying at St Bernard's High School
- To enhance the Behaviour Policy which confirms the school expectations;
- To involve all members of the school community in countering bullying;
- To enable students, staff, parents and governors to understand what constitutes bullying and their specific responsibilities;
- To ensure that there are strategies to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and procedures;
- To enable parents to feel confident that bullying will be firmly dealt with by the school;
- To inform all members of the school community that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

2. Defining Bullying

Bullying is: "Behaviour by an individual or group, persistent, deliberate and repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (DfE definition).

There are four commonly recognised types of bullying which can be defined as follow:

Verbal bullying - involving name calling or making use of written notes, e-mails or mobile phone messages, pictures or video clips (so called 'cyber bullying'); this bullying may include threats of physical violence, racist insults or threats, sexual insults or threats, or other prejudice-based behaviour.

Physical bullying – hurting someone by touching, for example through deliberate jostling, bumping, pushing, shoving or sexual touching. Those responsible may maintain that it was accidental when first detected, but it is a criminal offence if it involves assault, actual bodily harm or wounding. This type of bullying may involve theft or damage to property, accompanied by the threat of violence. Not all theft or damage is bullying, but it is where it is repeated and the intention is to create fear or to intimidate.

Indirect bullying - involving the manipulation of social networks with the intention of belittling an individual or individuals or excluding them or marginalising them from their friends and normal relationships; this can be by spreading rumours or making malicious accusations and might involve cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying can be multifaceted and therefore the following protection is in place:
• an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that includes clear statements about e communications
• assemblies highlighting cyber bullying and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection), a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the exploitation of children.

Some forms of bullying may break the law and may be reported to the police by the school:
• Violence or assault;
• Theft;
• Repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages, sexual harassment and peer on peer abuse; • Hate crimes – any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice

towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

Prevention

Preventing bullying behaviours can be possible through a range of proactive measures. At St Bernard's High School, we look for every opportunity to prevent bullying type behaviours from happening. Some of the actions the school takes to prevent bullying include:

• The issue of bullying is included in the curriculum.
• Bullying is addressed through the PSHE programme and is aligned with the standards of the PSHE Association.
• The Form Time and Assembly programmes reinforce British Values and the ethos of the school.
• Anti-bullying week is dedicated to raising awareness of bullying and reminding staff and students of their responsibilities to report it.
• Students are not permitted to have their mobile phones on them and they must be in their locker. This is partly to prevent cyber-bullying.
• Duty staff have been trained to be vigilant and to watch and listen for any bullying type behaviours, no matter how small.
• Duty points have been carefully considered to ensure there are no 'dead spaces' where bullying can take place undisturbed.
• Seating plans in lessons are carefully considered using any relevant information about the relationships between specific students.
• External speakers raise awareness of issues such as racism and homophobia.
• Posters around the school emphasise the importance of diversity in the school community.
• Working with the wider community such as the police/children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent to send a strong message that bullying is unacceptable within our school.

3. Tackling bullying

St Bernard's High School has clear strategies for responding to bullying incidents. These may include outcomes from the school behaviour system, as detailed within the school behaviour policy. The consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident. All sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably – after careful consideration of possible contributing factors such as special educational needs, disabilities or other vulnerabilities of both the victim and perpetrator.

The school will support the victim upon finding out about bullying, but will also seek to work with the perpetrator of the bullying in order prevent further incidents in the future.

4. Reporting bullying

Students can report bullying of themselves or someone else in the following ways:

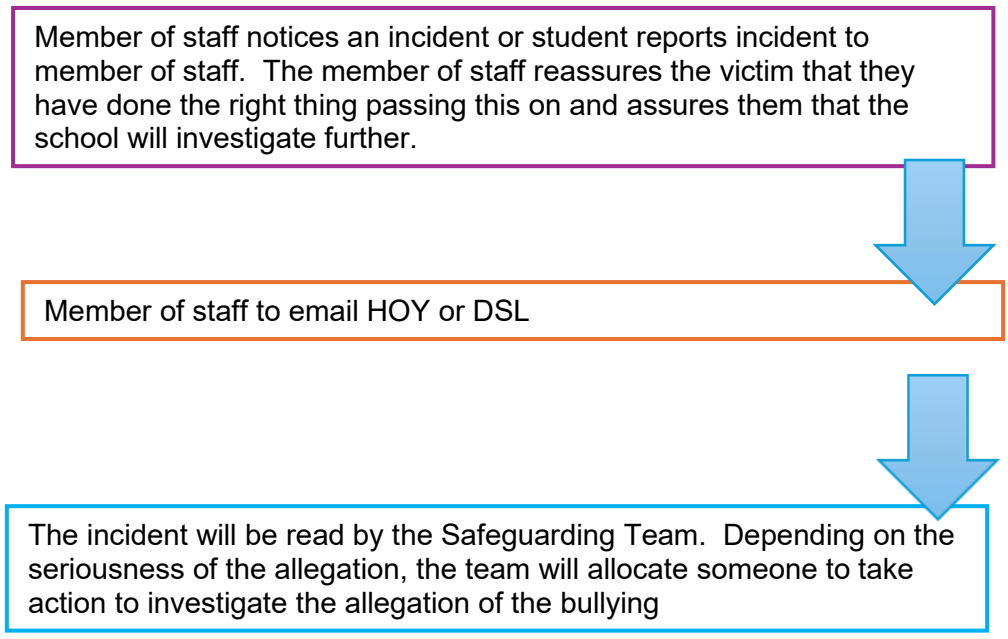
• Speaking to their Tutor
• Speaking to Student Services

• Speaking to their Head of Year
• Year 12/13: contact the Head of Sixth Form or Sixth Form Team
• Speaking to the Designated (or Deputy) Safeguarding Lead
• Year 7 can email their peer mentor
• Importantly, students are reminded that they can speak to any member of staff in school they trust
• Speaking to your parent and asking them to pass on the information to the school.

Parents/Carers can report bullying of their child or someone else's in the following ways:
• Contacting their child's Form Tutor by email, telephone, meeting)
• Contacting student services
• Emailing: pastoralconcerns@stbernards.southend.sch.uk

• Year 12/13: contact the Head of Sixth Form or a member of the Sixth Form Team • Year 7 can email their peer mentor
• Importantly, parents/carers are reminded that they can speak to any member of staff in school regarding this. Staff will pass this on to the Pastoral Team.

5. Staff



6. Investigation

The investigation in to the bullying incident(s) will be conducted by the most appropriate member of staff, depending on the severity of the allegation. This may include the Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher Pastoral or may include external agencies such as the Police.

Any investigation in to alleged bullying will be discreet, sensitive, timely and thorough. The exact timeline of investigations will vary depending on the scenario but will usually include:

- The victims will be talked to along with other witnesses and statements will be taken
- The accused will be talked to, to get their version of events
- Other staff, students and parents will be involved, where needed
- Parents/carers will be kept fully aware
- A record will be placed in all the involved students' files
- All students will be made aware that such behaviour will not be tolerated

7. Outcomes

- The student who has been bullied will be offered support if they feel they need it. This may depend on the nature and severity of the incident and may include counselling or in more extreme cases, referral to external agencies such as CAMHS.
- Students who have displayed bullying behaviour will be issued sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy. These sanctions range from detentions to fixed and even permanent exclusion where it is deemed bullying has been extreme and particularly damaging.
- Parents of those bullied and bullying will be notified of the outcomes of the investigation.
- A restorative meeting will be set up to take place as soon as possible. This is the process where both parties get an opportunity to achieve closure through mediation by trained staff and/or students.

8. Links

The websites listed below offer direct links to other sources of information for parents and young people.

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

Gov.uk Bullying at school: Bullying at school: The law - GOV.UK

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

Childnet International: www.childnet.com

Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBT

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Schools out: www.consortium.lgbt/member-directory/schools-out-uk

SEND

Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk

Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

DFE: SEND Code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

9. Monitoring and review

This policy, the information included, and its implementation will be monitored by the Governing Body and reviewed every year. The next review date is: October 2027