

# Bethany School Anti-Bullying Policy

December 2020

*'Live in peace with each other. And we urge you brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.'*

1 Thessalonians 5:13-15

## Context

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in Bethany School. It is a distortion of how God intended us to live in relationships with one another. We believe that everyone has the right to work in a safe and considerate atmosphere where each person feels accepted and understands their inherent value as bearers of God's image. Bullying may occur in our school, but should never go unchallenged or unaddressed. Forgiveness, healing and reconciliation are part of the way God graciously deals with us and should be reflected in our policy. In Bethany School we are looking for pupils to feel a sense of belonging, forge friendships with peers and maintain respectful relationships with adults. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, Bethany school can help to create a safe, disciplined environment where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

## Definition

(Taken from <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/facts-about-bullying/what-is-bullying/>)

## What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

## What is NOT bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt, is repeated and where there is an imbalance of power (when it is hard for the person being bullied to defend themselves). This means that one off incidents are not usually bullying behaviour though they may still be frightening and harmful. In a group situation it may be the case that lots of children say or do something to a child, and though each individual child may only say or do something once, the behaviour has been repeated throughout the group, and is therefore likely to be bullying.

Bullying can take several forms. The main types are

- **Physical:** Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- **Verbal:** Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- **Emotional:** Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- **Racist:** Targeted at ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact, use of explicit sexual or suggestive language.

- **Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic:** Targeted at actual or perceived sexuality and/or gender
- **Targeting any difference:** Targeted at an impairment or special educational need. Targeted at 'looks', weight and height, colour of hair, wearing glasses or braces, acne, psoriasis and eczema, scars, marks or conditions of the face or body, body odour, poverty, gifts and talents or family situation (e.g. divorce, bereavement, homelessness).
- **Cyber bullying:** The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation. Behaviour that is classed as cyber bullying includes: Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made over the internet or using digital communications this includes internet trolling. Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause humiliation or harm. Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send abusive or inappropriate content while posing as that person. Creating specific websites that negatively target an individual or group typically by posting content that intends to ostracise, humiliate and or threaten. Blackmail or pressuring someone to do something online they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit image.

## Responsibilities

The Governors, Senior Management Team and all staff and volunteers are committed to the prevention and appropriate management of bullying and peer-on-peer abuse. This policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy, good behaviour and discipline policy, equality policy and online safety policy for further details on how behaviour is managed within the school.

All staff, volunteers, parents and pupils have an understanding of what bullying is, and how to respond to it. All members of the school community have an expectation that incidents should be recorded and dealt with promptly and effectively.

Parents should support the schools approach to bullying by expecting high standards of behaviour from their own child and encouraging their child to report incidents to their teacher as soon as possible. They should advise their children not to retaliate violently to bullying, reassure and support their own children, work closely with school teachers if there are problems, and cooperate with discipline measures if their child is involved in bullying another pupil.

Staff use the curriculum and tutor time to address issues of respect, tolerance and dealing with friendship/conflict. They ensure that pupils are heard and treated with understanding when an issue is reported. Modelling appropriate behaviour, providing good supervision, identifying problems and minimising opportunities for poor behaviour form effective strategies to prevent bullying.

Pupils are encouraged to tell a teacher about any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying and treat others as they wish to be treated. Accepting responsibility for their own actions, keeping the school rules and contributing to a culture of mutual respect and courtesy will ensure that Bethany school is a safe and accepting community.

## Signs of Bullying

The signs listed below do not necessarily mean that a child is being bullied, but if repeated or occurring in combination, they warrant investigation.

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness or refusal to attend school
- Deterioration in educational performance
- Patterns of physical illness
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour, especially after a weekend or a holiday
- Visible signs of anxiety or stress
- Losing or having damaged possessions
- Increased requests for money, or stealing
- Unexplained bruises, cuts or damaged clothing

## Procedure

The procedure for dealing with bullying should follow the pathway set out below. This is in line with how incidents are dealt with in the Good Behaviour and Discipline policy. A complaint of bullying, or a pattern of bad behaviour, targeted and/or intentional unkindness will always be taken seriously.

### 1. Informal.

- a) A child feeling wronged may **address the situation directly with the person** responsible and explain that their behaviour is unwelcome and unacceptable. They may wish to seek assistance from their peers. This may resolve the situation and no further action may be necessary.
- b) If the situation is not resolved, or the person feeling wronged does not feel they can approach the perpetrator, then they should **raise the issue with their class teacher**. The teacher will **complete an incident record** and may attempt to address the matter informally between the parties concerned.
- c) Staff should get **a complete picture of the incident and history**, before judging what course of action to take. Some behaviours may immediately be considered as bullying, for example overt hate speech, targeted, unprovoked violence or damage. They may be immediately dealt with via the usual good behaviour and discipline policy or the formal bullying procedure outlined below. Other behaviours may be occasional incidents of unkindness, thoughtlessness or resulting from a disagreement between both parties.
- d) The situation may be resolved following a **one off intervention from a staff member** and no further action may be necessary. If the matter cannot be resolved, or the offending behaviour is seen to persist, become targeted and/or more intentional, then the **formal bullying procedure** should be followed. (Pupils should know that it is safe to make a complaint to a teacher, or another adult, in confidence. If this raises serious issues such as self-harm, abuse, suicidal ideas, then the appropriate authority must be informed.)

- e) The **incident record log** must be completed consistently and clearly and reviewed each half term to monitor behaviour, and intervene should a pattern of poor behaviour or bullying occur.

## 2. Formal

- a) Following a complaint of alleged bullying and implementation of the informal procedure (above), the class teacher should **inform the Head Teacher** of the alleged bullying, with as much detail as possible. There should be a written record of this (appendix 1) and the parents of both parties informed. The written record will be placed in the **Anti-Bullying Log**.
- b) **The Head Teacher will review the incident(s)**, in discussion with the class teacher, the pupils and parents and, if bullying has occurred, the Head Teacher should form a **plan of reconciliation** in partnership with all the parties involved.  
This plan should include:
- a description of the bullying and its impact on the victim
  - the consequence of continued bullying
  - expectations for each party
  - a time span for resolution.
- c) If the plan fails and bullying continues then the Disciplinary procedure will be activated at the point of a **period of temporary exclusion**. Any dispute in this formal procedure can be brought before the Governing Body, who will assume responsibility for dealing with the matter.
- d) The Head Teacher should **report** the number, nature and outcome of all established incidents of bullying reaching the Formal level to the Governing Body each year.  
(See: appendix 2)

Policy Adopted by governors: 11/01/2021

Policy due for review/update: 2023

## Appendix 1

**BULLYING RECORD SHEET**

Ref No:

*N.B Please record in as much detail as possible the alleged incident/incidents of bullying and inform the parents of both parties. Include details of how the matter has been addressed using a separate sheet if necessary and file in Anti-Bullying Log.*

Date:

Reporting Teacher:

Names of Parties involved:

Details:

Plan of Reconciliation:    Yes / No  
(Include details or attach copy)

Outcome:

Signature:

## Appendix 2

### Annual Head Teacher's Report to the Governing Body Incidents of Bullying

To be completed annually and reported to the first Governors' meeting of the new school year, before being published on the Bethany School website.

**September 2019 – August 2020**

Number of Incidents:

TERM 1      TERM 2      TERM 3

Nature of Incident:	Racial	_____	_____	_____
	Verbal	_____	_____	_____
	Physical	_____	_____	_____
	Other	_____	_____	_____

Conclusion reached: Yes / No

Signature: (Chair of Governors)

Date:

Date of next report: September 2021