



Bennett Memorial Diocesan School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Adoption Arrangements and Date

All statutory policies in the Trust are ultimately the responsibility of the Trust Board. To enable it to discharge this responsibility appropriately and in collaboration with the constituent schools, the Trust Board will

1. either set a full Trust wide policy,
2. or set a 'policy principles' document (a framework within which LGBs develop a full and appropriately customised policy),
3. or delegate to LGBs the power to develop their own policy which the Trust Board will then ratify.

Review Body: Local Governing Body
Leadership Grp Responsibility: Headteacher
Policy Type: Non-statutory

Adopted: Spring 2021
Date of next review: Spring 2024
Review period: 3 years

This is a Level 3 Policy against the Trust Governance Plan.

The Bennett Memorial Ethos

As a Church of England school, Bennett is committed to being a community in which every school member respects and co-operates with others. We aim to foster each student's sense of worth and their respect for each person around them and to make it self-evident that bullying of any kind is unacceptable in the Bennett context. Bennett aims to be a community where social relationships are good and positive, and based on mutual respect and co-operation. The fostering of good relationships is the key feature of an anti-bullying policy. This includes good relationships between individuals but also a tolerance of individual and/or specific group differences.

Bennett recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our school can help to create a safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our school community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the antibullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

This policy is based on DfE guidance "[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance "[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)" and 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' guidance. The school has read Childnet's "[Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools](#)".

What is bullying?

- Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.
- Additionally bullying of specific groups may arise as a reflection of negative attitudes towards particular groups.

The school recognises that bullying can take place both in and outside of school and this policy applies to all cases of bullying involving Bennett students.

Forms of bullying covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to appearance
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual harassment and abuse
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/students with protected characteristics):
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Types of Harassment

Physical Fighting, pushing, shoving, gestures or invasion of personal space.

Verbal Name-calling and offensive language, including comments about race, academic ability, size, colour or sexuality. Derogatory use of negative language to convey lesser status of objects, for example, using the word “gay” in a derogatory way. Rumour spreading, picking on people because of their race, sex, sexual orientation or religion.

Visual Offensive notes or material, graffiti, or damage to other’s possessions. Offensive notes, emails, text messaging, messages on internet sites, such as Facebook, or any other material.

Victimisation Bullying, picking on others, threats to “get” people or members of their friends or family, demanding money or where gangs try to dominate others.

Sexual • Touching or brushing against someone in a sexual manner

- Sexually orientated jokes, drawings and literature
- Commenting on the size and shape of someone’s body
- Calling someone rude names or making comments about morals
- Unsolicited invitations of a sexual nature
- Unsolicited questions about a person’s private life

Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

The school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students’ social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through student voice.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Train all staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying, including recording incidents of bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people.

- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

- The whole school community will:
 - Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
 - Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
 - Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school's attention, which involves or affects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
 - Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
 - Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

- The school community will:
 - Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
 - Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, PSHE, peer support etc.
 - Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

What should happen if bullying does occur?

Students, whether a victim of bullying or a witness to it, or simply concerned about the behaviour of another student (either being bullied or bullying), **must talk to a member of staff** about any incidence of bullying. Alternatively, they may report using the form on MSTEams or place a message in the boxes (outside the Student Welfare team offices).

Students will be made aware of their responsibility to report all incidents; ignoring the bullying of others is viewed as collusion.

All staff must deal immediately with any reported or witnessed incident of bullying.

Whether the incident is reported to or discovered by a teacher, that teacher must respond to it. If the incident is minor, the teacher who becomes aware of the incident will deal with the student(s) involved, but if it is more serious he/she must refer the student(s) to the Year Manager by noting the incident on a yellow referral form, either by hand or electronically, which must then be passed to the Year Manager.

Action by Year Managers:

The Year Manager will monitor minor bullying incidents reported to him/her, and take action on repeated incidents. On more serious incidents, the Year Manager will liaise with other parties (including outside agencies) as appropriate: Parents, Headteacher, Deputy or Assistant Headteacher if exclusion is a possibility. Action taken will follow the guidelines in the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. The Year Manager must record bullying incidents on SIMS behaviour log. An annual report on these returns is made in the Safeguarding Report to the governing body. Any racist incidents must be reported to the Deputy Headteacher, who keeps a log and reports to KCC yearly.

All members of the Bennett community, both staff and students, are expected to work together to foster good relationships, to eradicate bullying and to prevent it recurring.

ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURE: DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Minor incidents of bullying (e.g. casual name-calling, pushing, taking possessions without agreement) should be identified and dealt with straight away by the nearest member of staff. In order to give the Year Manager a good overview of student behaviour the incident should be recorded on a referral form and passed to the Year Manager.

For repeated or more serious incidents of bullying (for examples, see below), the students involved should be interviewed by the Year Manager and should write down their perceptions of what happened. Discussion would then be focused on developing strategies to ensure that the incident is not repeated. A key aim is to bring the students (whether bullying or bullied) to a point of mutual reconciliation. This may involve the service of the Welfare Team to work with victim and/or bully. A follow-up discussion at a later date is essential to review whether or not the solution agreed in discussion has been effective. The Year Manager should contact all the parents involved to inform them about the incident and the school's response.

If discussion proves to be ineffective, extra measures need to be taken. These could include: supervising a bullying student at break and lunchtimes for an appropriate length of time; interviewing parents in school; referring the bullying student to a Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or the Headteacher; exclusion.

Examples of this kind of behaviour are:

- ☐ Use of racist language
- ☐ Use of homophobic or transphobic language
- ☐ Use of sexist language
- ☐ when a student has been persistently name-called over a period of time
- ☐ when malicious rumours have been deliberately spread about a student
- ☐ when a student is ostracised and not allowed to join in group activities
- ☐ when a student is persistently pushed, jostled or tripped but does not suffer physical damage
- ☐ when a student is chased around the school by groups of students.

For severe incidents of bullying which result in damage to the person or to property (for examples see below): following initial response by the Year Manager, there should be an immediate referral to a senior member of staff. Parents will be informed and exclusion will be considered.

Examples of behaviour which would result in these sanctions are:

- ☐ racial abuse
- ☐ homophobic or transphobic abuse
- ☐ sexual harassment or abuse
- ☐ when a student's belongings have been deliberately defaced;
- ☐ when actual bodily harm has been caused;
- ☐ when repeated verbal comments have affected student welfare.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and also the school searching and confiscation policy.
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).

Supporting students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Children Social Work Service, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Students who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.

- o Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Children Social Work Service, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Supporting adults

- Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.
- *Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:*
 - o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
 - o Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
 - o Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and discipline policy.
 - o Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
 - o Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
 - o Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
- *Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:*
 - o Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
 - o Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
 - o If online, requesting that content be removed.
 - o Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Promoting this Policy

- Through assemblies, PACE, the rest of the curriculum where appropriate and special campaigns the school will indicate what students can do to prevent bullying and ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- The school will regularly canvas student's views on the extent and nature of bullying.

- The school will advise and inform parents about strategies to prevent bullying and will involve parents at an early stage.
- The policy will monitored by the Deputy Headteacher, Welfare and will be reviewed by the Governing Body. As part of this, regular student satisfaction surveys will be conducted and these will include questions on the safety of students.

This policy takes into account the Kent County Council Model School Anti-Bullying Policy.