Beacon Federation

Pupil
Anti-Bullying Policy

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Our Christian Ethos and Values
Our academies are open to all and accepting of all regardless of faith. Our passion and ambition are to see children and young people in all our academies achieve excellent educational outcomes alongside developing and growing into their potential as individuals made in the image of God.

Our culture is one of high aspiration for all. This is rooted in our Christian values as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have a desire to see our academies acknowledged as places of aspiration, high quality learning, achievement and hope making a significant contribution to the communities they serve.

All policies within St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as "the Trust"), whether relating to an individual academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our Christian ethos and values.

Overall accountabilities and roles
The Trust has overall accountability for all its academies and staff. Through a Scheme of Delegation it sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, its Executive Officers, the Local Governance Committee and the Headteacher. The Headteacher of each academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Trust.
All employees of the Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

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1. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that all those connected with the Trust are protected from bullying behaviour. Whilst no school can guarantee there will be no bullying of any kind whatsoever due to some of the factors that cause bullying, the ongoing and long-term aim of the policy is to reduce the number of pupils who experience bullying.

We aim to increase awareness of this type of behaviour, including the causes and the impact it has on pupils. This will enable the staff, parents, and carers who make up the Trust community to help pupils find and put into practice a series of solutions to the problem of bullying.

The policy will ensure that individual cases of bullying will be dealt with consistently and in a constructive and fair manner when they occur. Procedures for dealing with bullying will be clearly set out so that all members of the Trust community know what they can expect and what is expected of them with regard to bullying.

2. Definition of 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).
This should be distinguished from a disagreement, or ongoing conflict, between individuals – especially where younger children are concerned.

There are many different types of bullying that can be experienced by children and adults alike; some are obvious to spot while others can be more subtle. The different types of bullying defined below are some of the ways that bullying could be happening. Different types of bullying, as drawn from the National Centre Against Bullying, include:

- **Physical bullying** which includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing, or damaging property.
- **Verbal bullying** which includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- **Social bullying** which includes harming someone's social reputation and/or causing humiliation by lying and spreading rumours about them, making negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking unkindly, and encouraging others to socially exclude someone or damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance. Social bullying is sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back.
- **Cyber bullying** which includes sending abusive or hurtful texts, emails, social media posts, images or videos, deliberately excluding others online, spreading nasty gossip or rumours online and imitating others online or using their log-in. Cyber bullying can be overt or covert, but uses digital technologies, including hardware such as computers and smartphones, and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites, artificial intelligence and other online platforms. Cyber bullying can happen at any time, can be in public or in private online spaces, and so is sometimes only known to the target and the person bullying.

There can be different drivers behind bullying behaviours, some of which are covered by the Equality Act 2010 in respect of protected characteristics. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to age, race, religion, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)

- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Gender related and transphobic bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying

Bullying is the abuse of power by one person over another and can happen to anyone, but this does not mean it is an inevitable part of school life. It is a behaviour in which individuals make choices about how to act in order to harm others. Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

All of the types of behaviour listed above are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our schools. We will challenge such behaviour choices wherever they are encountered and sanctions, depending on the severity of the offence, will be taken against those who bully others. Pupils and staff are expected to act in principled, caring and reflective ways to each other.

Any investigations into bullying incidents will seek to establish the reason for the behaviour in order to tackle the root cause. The causes of bullying are complex and those who bully often cite their own experience of being bullied when trying to explain their behaviour. Whilst such experience will elicit sympathy and support from the pastoral staff charged with dealing with bullying, it is not a justification for bullying others and will not exempt bullies from taking responsibility for their actions.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust community 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 schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. This requires an ongoing collective effort from all stakeholders who should fulfil the below responsibilities:

- Headteachers will communicate this policy to their school communities, ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team takes overall responsibility for implementing this policy within their school.
- All staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, will support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers will support their children and work in partnership with the school which they attend.
- Pupils will abide by the policy.
- All members of the Trust community will speak out when they are aware that bullying is occurring.
- The Trust will maintain oversight of patterns or trends in bullying incidents through reporting at Academy Review Meetings (ARMs) and Trust level reporting.

4. Preventing Bullying

At St Benet's MAT we are determined to develop and maintain a culture in our schools where bullying is not tolerated. Preventing bullying from occurring is an important part of this culture, alongside an effective response on any occasions that it does occur.

To prevent and deter bullying from occurring, our school communities will:

- Promote a culture of mutual respect, inclusion, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Recognise 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.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Embrace a character curriculum that reflects the Trust's values of Honesty, Courage, Compassion and Hope. This curriculum will support the holistic development of our pupils into young people who do not bully others.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, collective worship, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Encourage positive and responsible use of technology, especially mobile phones, artificial intelligence and social media.
- Work proactively with children and families to support understanding of the reasons that someone may bully others e.g. low self-esteem, personal experience of being bullied.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Report back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for pupils experiencing vulnerabilities.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

To prevent and deter bullying from occurring, our schools' policies and procedures will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Ensure our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, and that everyone should feel safe to learn.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Regularly evaluate and update 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.
- Ensure the school is organised in a way that minimises opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times or in certain locations.

- Ensure we take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable
  action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying bought to our attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions meaning that 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, including restorative practice.
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.

To prevent and deter bullying from occurring, our training will:

- Empower 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 individual school policy and procedures (including accurate recording and reporting of incidents).

5. Signs and indicators of Bullying

The preventative measures detailed above will significantly reduce the instances of bullying throughout the Trust community, although it is impossible to guarantee that no bullying of any kind will ever occur. It is vital, therefore, that we are vigilant in all of our schools to identify the signs that a child may be being bullied, and then put swift and effective action can be taken to protect them.

There are various signs or behaviours that may indicate that a child is being bullied. All staff who notice, or are advised by parents, should investigate if a child shows any of the following:

Physical signs including but not limited to:

- Unexplained injuries such as cuts or bruises
- Unusually frequent instances of illness
- Anxiety such as fearfulness of walking to or from school or getting the bus, presenting as withdrawn or lacking in confidence, crying themselves to sleep at night or having nightmares
- Concerns around appearance such as coming home with clothes torn or books damaged, having possessions which are damaged or "go missing", having dinner or other monies continually "lost"

Emotional signs including but not limited to:

- Avoiding going to school or beginning to truant
- Uncharacteristic behaviour such as becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Stopping eating
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Reluctance to discuss concerns such as being frightened to say what's wrong
- Mood changes
- Attempting or threatening suicide
- Running away or going missing

School related signs including but not limited to:

- Decline in attendance
- Decline in punctuality

- Decline in behaviour
- Deterioration in work standards
- Lingering behind to avoid social times

A child may also exhibit bullying behaviour or be accused of bullying. All staff who notice or are advised by a parent/other children that bullying is taking place should investigate if a child shows any of the following:

Physical signs including but not limited to:

- Aggressive or robust physical behaviour
- Picking on other pupils (often those more vulnerable)
- Being in possession of additional money or items

Emotional signs including but not limited to:

- Abusive language
- Loss of temper
- Dominating/manipulative behaviour
- Intolerance of others
- Disrespect towards others
- Unwillingness to share with others/include others
- Lack of genuine friendships

School related signs including but not limited to:

- Disruptive behaviour
- Gang or 'pack mentality' type behaviour
- Complaints being received about them by members of school community
- Unpopularity/false popularity

It is important to note that these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

6. Responding to Bullying

At St Benet's MAT, we recognise that each case of bullying will be unique and may require an individualised approach to deal with it. Whilst each of our schools has its own behaviour policy and specific procedures, the following steps will be taken unless there is good reason not to:

- Where bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- A member of staff will speak separately with all parties involved in order to gather a clear and precise account of the incident. This will be accurately recorded by the investigating staff member in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- We will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate, to help them feel safe.
- Staff will work with those responsible for the perpetration of the bullying behaviour to help them change their behaviour. This may involve sanctions (as identified within the school behaviour policy) as appropriate in the circumstances.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of all substantiated bullying incidents and ensure they are recorded on CPOMS.
- Wherever possible, parents/carers of all parties will be informed so that they can support the school as needed.
- If necessary to support those pupils involved, we may consult with other agencies such as the Police or other local services including Children's Social Care.
- Where the bullying takes place off school premises or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), we will ensure that the concern is investigated as far as we are able to in the circumstances.

Discriminatory Bullying

Where bullying is found to be discriminatory in its nature (e.g. racist, homophobic, transphobic etc.) this will be reflected in the records made of the incident on CPOMS. The Trust recognises that pupils involved in such incidents, both victims and perpetrators, may require further support or intervention.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, our schools 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 to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school computer systems, including through use of our filtering and monitoring software;
  - 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:
  - Supporting 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 pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law. (The DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation at school July 2022' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance will be used to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully.)
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions (where appropriate) are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying with the aim 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, where necessary.
- Provide information to staff and pupils 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.

Supporting Victims of Bullying

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring them and providing continuous support which may include working and speaking with relevant staff or engaging with parents and carers.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff.
- Working towards restoring their self-esteem and confidence.
- 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's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Supporting Perpetrators of Bullying

Pupils who have perpetrated the bullying will be supported by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help them change the attitude and behaviour of their 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.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour policy; this may include official warnings, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term suspension or permanent exclusion.
- 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's Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

7. Involvement of Pupils

At St Benet's MAT, we believe that it is vital our pupils are empowered to contribute to a culture where bullying is not tolerated. We will do this by:

- Regularly gathering pupil views on the extent and nature of bullying in their school.
- Ensuring that all pupils know the mechanisms in their school to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensuring that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied in their school against those engaging in bullying.
- Involving pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in their school and embedding these messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Empowering pupils to be active bystanders in the event that they observe any bullying in school.
- Publicising the details of internal support in their school for pupils affected by bullying, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offering support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

8. Involvement and liaison with Parents/Carers

Throughout all the Trust schools, working in partnership with parents and carers is key to our approach and we believe that it is important that they too are able to contribute to a culture where bullying is not tolerated. We will do this by:

- Making sure that key information about policies, procedures and named points of contact in their child's school is available in a variety of formats and languages as required.
- Ensuring all parents/carers know who to contact in their child's school if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Working with all parents/carers and local communities to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Encourage parents to work with us to role model positive behaviour for their children, both on and offline.
- Ensuring all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

9. Monitoring and review: Putting policy into practice

The Trust recognises that a policy is only as effective as its implementation. In order to measure the efficacy of this Anti-Bullying Policy, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that it is being consistently and effectively applied. For example:

- The senior leader responsible for implementing this policy and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will receive regular supervision to reflect on how incidents of bullying are handled.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that accurate records of bullying incidents within their school are maintained, so that patterns or trends can be analysed and appropriate action taken accordingly.
- The Trust will maintain oversight of patterns or trends in bullying incidents across all schools so they can provide additional support to school leaders as required.

Where necessary, any issues identified will be incorporated into our Trust action planning and individual school level improvement work to ensure that we have a constant focus on maintaining a culture where bullying is not tolerated.

10. Links to legislation, guidance, and other policies

There are a number of pieces of legislation and guidance which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Article 12 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- DfE guidance - Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017 and supporting documents
- DfE statutory guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools"

This policy also links with a number of other policies, including:

- Individual School Behaviour Policies
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

- S10 Complaints Policy
- S16 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Individual School Attendance Policies
- S05 Health and Safety Policy
- S06 Equality and Diversity Policy

11. Useful links and supporting organisations

General
Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Childline: www.childline.org.uk
Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
The Church of England: https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/education-publications/anti-bullying-guidance-church-england-schools
PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
Kooth: https://www.kooth.com/
Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

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

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
The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, Religion and Nationality
Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBT
Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm

EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying
Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
EVAW Guide for Schools: FINAL-About-Time-WSA-report-140723.pdf
Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: Sexual and sexist bullying