BISHOP VESEY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Anti-Bullying Policy

Review Prepared by:	Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)
Approved by and date:	Full Board of Governors October 2026
School's next review date/by whom:	Autumn 2027 by Full Board of Governors

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This behaviour policy is written with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of The Child in Mind. All of our policies bear in mind Articles 3 and 28 - the child's best interests and the right of the child to an education. This policy also bears in mind Article 29 (Goals of education - to develop a child's talents and abilities to the full).

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is linked to our Behaviour Policy (including Appendix on Discrimination and Prejudice Related Incidents), Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use and E–Safety Policies, Equality and Diversity Policy and SEN Policy.

Please see the link to the 'School Safeguarding Policy' which includes a section on child-on-child abuse (section 12).

In addition, the 'Parent and Student Guide to what happens in the case of child-on-child abuse in School' can be found on the school website' in the safeguarding section.

Legislation and guidance:

This policy is written with the following legislation and guidance from the Department of Education (DfE):

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (updated July 2026)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and Staff (February 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Updated September 2026)
- Equality Act 2010

Our vision is to be a warm, outward looking community, celebrating diversity and supporting others. We believe it is every member of the School Community's right to go to school in safety and to be free from harassment, and for every student to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

Bullying is any act or incident that repeatedly causes distress to an individual or group, be it verbal, psychological or physical. Bullying can include name- calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, excluding people from activities/groups, physical assault, taking and/or damaging other people's property, spreading hurtful rumours and cyberbullying.

Bullying involves:

- Intentionality from the perpetrator or perpetrators.
- Involves repetition over time.
- An imbalance of power between individuals involved.

Bullying can happen to anyone, and staff are trained to have the attitude that 'it can happen here'. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith

- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying) Bullying against children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Bishop Vesey's Grammar School is committed to ensure vulnerable students are specifically cared for and considered as part of this policy. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Children In Care (CIC), Children previously in care and those that are adopted
- Children that are living in poverty
- Excluded pupils or those at risk of exclusion
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils
- Asylum seekers, refugees and new migrants
- Those belonging to Black and Minority Ethnic groups
- Pupils that identity as LGBTQ+ or that are perceived to be
- Pupils that are gender questioning
- Young carers
- Young offenders
- Young people with mental health issues or medical needs
- Teenage parents
- Children with a social worker

When considering whether bullying is prejudicial or discriminatory in nature, we consider any prejudice related bullying linked to any of the protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- Age
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity

It is the responsibility of all members of our community to ensure that bullying does not happen at BVGS.

Students are expected to report any incident or on-going problem to a member of staff – Form Tutor, Head of Year or the first available person. We undertake to handle these matters discretely and sensitively. Students can also use the Toot Toot system to report bullying of any form.

Parents are invited to contact the Form Tutor; Head of Year or any other member of staff should they be concerned about any possible indication of bullying.

Staff are encouraged to watch out for the early signs of distress in students e.g. deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, erratic attendance. Whilst this behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, it may be the early signs of bullying.

Staff will follow up any cases which should occur, both to ensure that the victim is supported and that the recurrence of the behaviour is prevented. Documentation is essential. Staff must keep full records of all interviews and discussions regarding incidents. Parents/carers will be informed of our actions so that they can reinforce and support us.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous 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 external agencies 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.

Pupils 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.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, the completion of restorative tasks, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term suspensions or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national external agencies 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.

The Restorative Practice approach will be used if it is appropriate to bring both pupils together.
The aim of this approach is to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships. It encourages acceptance of responsibility and sets clear boundaries.

The school will keep parents/carers informed of developments and seek their support in monitoring the situation. This includes those perpetrating the bullying and those targeted by bullying. It is not the school's policy to discuss with any parents/carers any action taken unless it is specifically about their child.

Students are taught through the pastoral programme that everyone has a duty to ensure that bullying does not occur, and other areas of the curriculum are used to get the message across.
The school is thoroughly supervised to promote positive relationships at all times.

Recording incidents:
Incidents of bullying are reported by teaching staff, including the pastoral team on MyConcern. Numbers of incidents are analysed to look for trends and patterns, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups. Adaptation to PSHE lessons, assemblies and other provision can be made in response to specific types of incidents or worrying trends.

The Deputy Headteacher (pastoral), along with the Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor incidents of bullying and report trends and actions to governors annually.

Cyberbullying:
Cyberbullying can include inappropriate use of any form of technology to facilitate harm to others, in an intentional and repetitive manner.
This could be and is not limited to the use of:

- Social media
- Gaming platforms
- Group chats
- Image sharing
- AI-generated abuse or manipulated images
- Anonymous or disappearing messaging platforms

If cyberbullying is found to be happening, it will be investigated by the pastoral and safeguarding teams. Pupils are accountable for their actions and can be sanctioned in line with the behaviour policy.

Preventing bullying

Culture
The whole 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.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children child on child abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- The active promotion of healthy relationships and empathy through assemblies, form activities and PSHE lessons
- Involvement in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

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, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

Above all we don't want students to suffer in silence. We will never tolerate bullying.

Useful Links and Organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:
- DfE: SEND code of practice

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

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

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm

- 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
- Disrespect No Body
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying