

Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy



St Benedict
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Authors:	HR
Effective Date:	01 September 2025
Last Review Date:	April 2024 June 2025
Review Frequency:	Every 3 years
Next Review Due:	Summer 2028

ST BENEDICT CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST
ANTI-HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

Our mission is inspired by our Patron St Benedict, to live, learn, pray and celebrate together. Our community of Catholic schools are committed to ensuring that each child realises their God given gifts. Our strong sense of community promotes Gospel values which inspire students to make a positive contribution to society. We provide the best possible opportunities for every child's education, with an overarching mission focused on delivering a strong Catholic education, firmly rooted in the belief that Christ should be at the core of all our endeavour.

This Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy has been approved and adopted by St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust for use in all its academies on 01 September 2025 and will be reviewed every three years.

DEFINITIONS

In this Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- I. 'Academy' means any academy operated by St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust and includes all sites upon which the Academy undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- II. 'Board' means the board of Directors of the Trust.
- III. 'Headteacher' means the most senior teacher in the Academy who is responsible for its management and administration. Such teacher may also be referred to as the Head of School or Principal.
- IV. 'Local Academy Committee/Local Governing Board' means the body carrying out the employment functions of the Trust in relation to the Academy.
- V. 'Trust' means St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust, which is the company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Academy.

1. About this policy

- 1.1 The Trust is committed to providing a working environment free from harassment and bullying and ensuring all staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect.
- 1.2 This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs at work and out of the workplace, such as on work-related trips or at work-related events or social functions. It covers bullying and harassment by staff (which may include consultants, contractors, and agency workers) and also by third parties such as suppliers or visitors to our premises.
- 1.3 This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers, and agency workers.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Personnel responsible for this policy

- 2.1 The Trust Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the Headteacher.
- 2.2 All managers have a specific responsibility to operate within the boundaries of this policy, ensure that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and to take action when behaviour falls below its requirements.
- 2.3 Staff should disclose any instances of harassment or bullying of which they become aware to their line manager, or if that is not appropriate, to SLT or the HR Manager.
- 2.4 Questions about this policy and requests for training or information on dealing with bullying or harassment should be directed to SLT and HR.

3. What is harassment?

- 3.1** Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.
- 3.2** It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.
- 3.3** Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.
- 3.4** Harassment may include, for example:
- (a) unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing;
 - (b) continued suggestions for social activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome;
 - (c) sending or displaying material that is pornographic or that some people may find offensive (including emails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile phone or posted on the internet);
 - (d) unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless);
 - (e) racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, or derogatory or stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic or religious group or gender;
 - (f) outing or threatening to out someone's sexual identity and/or gender identity;
 - (g) offensive emails, text messages or social media content; or
 - (h) mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability.
- 3.5** A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if the jokes create an offensive environment.

4. What is bullying?

- 4.1** Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.
- 4.2** Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Bullying may include, by way of example:
- (a) physical or psychological threats;
 - (b) overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision;
 - (c) inappropriate derogatory remarks about someone's performance.
- 4.3** Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of a worker's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to workers in the course of their employment, will not amount to bullying on their own.

5. If you are being harassed or bullied: informal steps

- 5.1** If you are being harassed or bullied, consider whether you feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. You should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing, you should speak to your line manager, who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the

issue formally or informally. In the event that your line manager is the perpetrator of the harassment and/or bullying behaviour, you should contact SLT or HR.

- 5.2 If you are not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to bullying or harassment, you should initially contact your line manager or HR informally for confidential advice.
- 5.3 If informal steps are not appropriate, or have been unsuccessful, you should follow the formal procedure set out in our Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure.
- 5.4 Where you raise a grievance under our Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure, we will consider any request that you make for changes to your own working arrangements during the investigation. For example, you may ask for changes to your duties or working hours so as to avoid or minimise contact with the alleged harasser or bully. However, the Trust reserves the right to refuse such changes where it would have a disproportionate adverse impact on colleagues and/or the efficient delivery of education and may suggest alternative measures to alleviate your concerns during the investigation, although there is no requirement for it to do so.

6. Action Following Investigation

- 6.1 As part of the investigation of any grievance raised relating to harassment and/or bullying, whether or not your grievance is upheld, we will consider how best to manage the ongoing working relationship between you and the person concerned. It may be appropriate to arrange some form of mediation and/or counselling, or to change the duties, working location or reporting lines of one or both parties, subject always to the needs of the Trust and the efficient delivery of education.
- 6.2 Where the harasser or bully is an employee, the matter may be dealt with as a case of possible misconduct or gross misconduct under our Disciplinary Procedure. If the harasser or bully is a third party such as a parent, supplier, or other visitor, we will consider what action would be appropriate to deal with the problem. Whether or not your complaint is upheld, we will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationship between you and the person concerned.

7. Protection and support for those involved

- 7.1 Staff who make complaints/grievances or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 7.2 If you believe you have suffered any such treatment you should inform your line manager or HR. If the matter is not remedied, you should raise it formally using our Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure.

8. Confidentiality and record-keeping

- 8.1 Confidentiality is an important part of the procedures referred to in this policy. Details of the investigation and the names of the person making the complaint and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need to know" basis. Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 8.2 Information about a complaint by or about an employee may be placed on the employee's individual staff file, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process. These will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

Anti-harassment & Bullying Policy – Flow Chart

This policy outlines the Trust's commitment to providing a safe and respectful environment for all employees, free from harassment and bullying. Harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment; a single incident can constitute harassment.

Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined, or threatened. The policy details both informal and formal stages for addressing such behaviour, including raising the issue with the perpetrator or line manager in the first instance, and the option to escalate to the formal stages of the Grievance Policy if necessary.

Outcomes may include remedial actions such as counselling or mediation, and disciplinary action against the perpetrator, if deemed appropriate.

Flow chart

