

St Bede's Catholic School: Anti Bullying Policy

October 2023 (to be reviewed October 2024)



STATEMENT OF INTENT

WE AT ST BEDE'S SCHOOL AIM TO CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY CAN FEEL SECURE, VALUED AND RESPECTED.

This policy is available on our school websites and a paper copy is available by request (contact the school office on 0191 587 6220)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies:

- [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Behaviour for Learning Policy](#)
- [Mental Health Policy](#)
- [SEND Policy](#)
- [Equality Policy](#)

It is also integral to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils in PSHE and through other personal development opportunities. See [PSHE Curriculum Overview and Progression Model](#).

This anti-bullying document is also compliant with:

- [Equality Act, 2010](#).
- [SEND Code of Practice 2014: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, October 2017](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#)

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and is often motivated by prejudice. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Physical assault.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.
- Prejudice-based or discriminatory behaviour.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidating but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair, colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability.

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Pupils are educated through PSHE, assemblies, and external speakers to raise awareness, with discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police

DEFINITION OF CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse').
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse) Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. UKCIS (UK Council for Child Internet Safety) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may

be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

IT IS THE AIM OF ST.BEDE'S SCHOOL;

- To promote a secure and happy environment in our community, free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy on personal and social development.
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.
- To inform pupils and parents of the college's expectations and to foster with them a productive partnership, this helps to maintain a bully-free environment.
- To support pupils in being caring citizens in and out of school
- To ensure that staff are aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve these aims.

INDICATORS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLYING

Can be mistaken for bullying but it is not bullying	Bullying where harm is intended	Criminal Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playful teasing ● A one- off fight ● Rough and tumble or play fighting without real intention to cause damage ● One off verbal altercation? 	<p><u>PHYSICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● biting ● hair pulling ● hitting ● kicking ● locking in a room ● pinching ● punching ● scratching ● spitting ● any other form of physical attack damaging a person’s property <p><u>NON-PHYSICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Abusive language ● Abusive telephone calls ● Abusive texting ● Extorting money ● Intimidation/threats of violence Name calling ● Racist/sexist remarks ● Sexually suggestive language ● Cruel remarks ● Spreading false/malicious rumours via social media or otherwise <p><u>NON-VERBAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct ● Mean faces/rude gestures ● Indirect ● Manipulating/ruining friendships Systematically excluding, ignoring and isolating ● Sending often anonymous poisonous ● Notes texts messages etc.. ● Videoing incidents ● Can be any one or a combination Bullying is usually repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assault with a weapon ● Grievous bodily harm ● Seriously threatening to kill or harm Serious theft ● Sexual abuse ● Racial abuse
<p>Suggested School Action</p> <p>This should be handled sensitively by the school where appropriate but not treated as bullying</p>	<p>Suggested School Action</p> <p>This should be handled by the school</p>	<p>Suggested School Action</p> <p>This should be handled by the police or other appropriate authorities</p>

Source: The Anti-Bullying Handbook Keith Sullivan Oxford OUP

STAFF GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH BULLYING ISSUE

We at St. Bede's School take bullying seriously and provide guidance for all staff. Identifying pupils who are being targeted is often difficult. We use the following indicators as guidelines:

- The pupil's work may be suffering
- They appear to have no friends around
- They appear to be unhappy
- They are frequently absent
- They have a tendency to display aggressive behaviour

We encourage all staff to observe general behaviour in and around school

DEALING WITH PUPILS WHO HAVE BEEN BULLIED

Procedure if a pupil should witness bullying behaviour:

1. Pupils should report this to a Head of House / trusted teacher as soon as possible.

Procedure for members of staff should you witness an incident of bullying or it is reported to you:

1. Reassure and support the pupils involved.
2. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team. (Head of House, Deputy Head).
3. Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.

Heads of House must record all incidents of reported potential bullying and ensure that the **Assistant Head (Pastoral)** is informed. **The Assistant Head (Pastoral)** will keep a central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) and record the way in which they were dealt.

What will happen?

The victim will be interviewed by their Head of House, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate.

Once the Head of House is clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the perpetrator and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

Details of the incident will be recorded on all the pupils' CPOMS. The **Assistant Head (Pastoral)** is copied in so that it can be recorded as a bullying incident. The pastoral team will decide on an appropriate course of action. In the first instance the tutor or Head of House will interview the pupil or pupils whose behaviour has caused distress and give him/them a formal bullying warning; making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling will be offered to the perpetrator?. A suitable punishment will also be given.

If the Head of House decides it is appropriate, or if it is a pupil's second offence, the **Assistant Head (Pastoral)** will become involved and the parents of the perpetrator/s will be informed by letter or telephone.

The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the school Behaviour for Learning Policy:

- Formal School Warning from the **Assistant Head (Pastoral)**. The **Assistant Head (Pastoral)** will speak to the pupils involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them into school to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning. Their support for the School's actions should be enlisted if possible.
- **Suspension** at the Headteacher's discretion (see the Behaviour for Learning Policy).

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the police or Children's Services. However, it is the policy of the school to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

The school will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on school notice boards and will be discussed with pupils during PSHE sessions. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for student committees and feedback will be taken to School Council. It will also be revisited as necessary during assembly sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the school's actions to prevent bullying.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by Heads of House, to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the **Assistant Head (Pastoral)** and the Pastoral teams regularly at pastoral meetings to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective.

We are absolutely confident that the vast majority of pupils will agree with our sentiments on bullying. It is our intention to identify and take action against those who do not.

Further References

- [Preventing and tackling bullying, Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DFE, July 2017](#)
- [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, DFE, 2014](#)
- [Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying, DFE, 2014](#)
- [Safe to Learn, Embedding Anti-Bullying work in Schools, DCSF, 2007](#)
- [Childline: 0800 1111](#)

We at St. Bede's School treat targets (pupils who have been bullied) and incidents seriously whether reported by staff/ parents/ peers. We recognise the fact that anyone can be a target and it is not **their** fault.

- Record incidents within bullying log and monitor/ track regularly.
- Let the pupil know what is being done. Set a time and date for a meeting
- Parents should be informed of procedures in place and actions taken.
- Reassure the pupil they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Establish details without making the pupil feel responsible for being bullied
- Empower the child by praising their courage for telling.
- Identify areas of the environment where bullying occurs: corridors, classrooms where the teacher is absent, yards. Once identified these areas will need to be managed effectively
- Appropriate strategies will be taken. E.g. anger management, circle time. (Resource and Reference materials) The strategies will be reviewed regularly.

DEALING WITH A PUPIL WHO IS A BULLY

We are aware a student may bully for a variety of reasons: because of the family/life events/power of an antisocial

peer group/social climate of the school/surrounding community/personality characteristics and or a combination of these and other factors. Some bullies may have low self-esteem that often manifests itself in violence. Some bullies are extremely manipulative of people and or situations.

Staff at St Bede's School are encouraged to:

- Diffuse the situation and remain calm and non-judgemental.
- Separate the bullying actions from the person who is bullying (allows a way out of situation)
- Explain clearly to pupil what is going to happen to ensure they understand rules, responsibilities and consequences that the school follows.
- Involve and inform parents of events and consequences that may follow.
- Decide which strategy is effective and appropriate.
- Involve outside agencies if deemed appropriate e.g. CAHMS, Educational Psychologist, and Social Worker.
- Where serious violence is involved the Head Teacher may suspend the pupil immediately pending further investigations

EXPECTATIONS

Our aim at St. Bede's School is to put in place preventative measures through the following expectations:

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF AND GOVERNORS

- To embrace a whole school approach that celebrates individuals and provides support for all pupils.
- The college will have an effective anti-bullying policy in place that is an integral part of school life.
- A supportive governing body that encourages the involvement of parents in the school.
- A clear system of rules, rights, responsibilities and consequences
- To provide an environment that is stimulating and enjoyable.
- To recognise that the responsibility for dealing with bullying incidents rests with the school and governing body.
- To know that the school has no responsibility to deal with bullying incidents occurring outside the school premises, however we will endeavour to support the child and parents.
- To respond to parental queries and concerns positively and without delay.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

- To be involved in their child's school life and attend parents evenings etc.
- To be supportive of the school's expectations of behaviour
- To respond to school concerns positively and without delay
- Parents will make appointments where and when possible
- To know that the school has no responsibility to deal with bullying incidents that occur outside school premises, however they will endeavour to support the pupil and parents.

EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS

- To be involved in a proactive college council
- To support the school rules, rights, responsibilities and consequences
- To take responsibility for their behaviour.
- To respond to school concerns positively and without delay

ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO COMBAT BULLYING

- Regular staff training to address policy issues provided by inset LA or outside agencies.
- Regular meetings to assess and review procedures/ incidents

- Address issues through PHSE Guidance tutorials and assemblies
- Training pupils to peer mentor
- Effective deployment of learning mentors and or support staff

OTHER PROVIDERS OF STAFF TRAINING:

- [Clennell Education Solutions](#)
- Support and advice from Community Police

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Monitoring of the policy is annually by the Assistant Head (Pastoral), Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.
- The Chair of Governors will be kept informed of repeated incidents of bullying.
- Records will be kept for up to three years and then extended if the need required.
- Annual review and up date of policy by governing body.
- The policy will be shared and reviewed with staff/pupils/parents.
- We will involve school council/governors where appropriate in reviewing the policy.

IN YEAR TRANSFERS

It is a statutory responsibility for all schools to have an Anti-Bullying Policy. This policy will explain how they will respond to all incidents. If you are worried or concerned about bullying issues, or your child has reported bullying to you, it is important that you make contact with the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) of the school, who will ensure a member of staff follows up your enquiry, as outlined in this policy. We will endeavour to speak and/or meet with you to discuss your concerns so that we can work with you and your child to resolve the issues. If the matter remains unresolved, the next step would be to refer the matter through the school's complaints procedure, which would involve the school's Governing Body. If you are requesting a school place because of alleged bullying you must submit confirmation in writing from your child's Headteacher that the in-school procedures have been fully exhausted. Your application will NOT be processed without this information.

PARENTS / CARERS GUIDANCE

At St Bede's School we believe parents and carers have a vital role in ensuring their child adheres to the school rules and supports the school when dealing with contentious issues. These guidelines and information are available to parents and are displayed in and around our school.

SIGNS TO LOOK FOR IN YOUR CHILD

Common symptoms may include:

- headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, irritability, stress.
- They may refuse to attend school
- They may have few or no noticeable friends around
- They may lose money or property
- They may have unexplained bruises etc.
- They may be unwilling to talk about school.

PARENTS CAN

1. Obtain a copy of the anti-bullying policy.
2. Support your child: tell them it is not their fault, he/she can't choose the way people behave towards

her/him/**they**, but he/she/**they** can choose how she responds.

3. Find time to talk to your child: empathize with their situation, although he/she/**they** can't choose what happens in **their**/his/her life, being happy is a positive personal choice.
4. Remind them how resilient and strong they are/ they keep going to school despite facing daily bullying.
4. Remind him/her/**they**,he/**they**/she is a unique and wonderful person, with the same rights as everybody. That he/she/**they** can use the power of anger to protect **themselves** without having to attack anyone else.
5. Speak to the teacher or tutor about the problem.
6. If not resolved, see the Headteacher and ask to see their anti-bullying policy.
7. Request initiation of an action plan and timeline to monitor the bullying (examples included).
8. Support your child and the school by becoming involved in reviewing the policy.
10. If you feel the matter is not resolved then you can follow the complaints procedure.

It is the parents, pupils, school and governors responsibility to try and reconcile bullying incidents that may occur.

IF YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING OTHER CHILDREN

Look out for signs of bullying by your child or from others:

- Your child may have more money than usual.
- Your child may have property that does not belong to them.
- Your child may display aggressive behaviour and belittle others.
- These are only guidelines; your child may display some or all of these and not be bullying.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- If you are concerned do make an appointment to meet your child's Head of House.

WITH YOUR CHILD

- Talk with them to discourage this behaviour.
- Discuss how it makes other children feel.
- Give praise when your child displays cooperative behaviour and kindness to others.
- Monitor their use **social media** and other forms of communication e.g. mobile phones.

FURTHER IDEAS

- Counselling: using peers, school council, a professional (available within school)
- Learn new behaviour through PHSE working with other children 1 to 1
- Anger Management
- Circle Time
- Assertive Training
- Circle of friends