

Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures 2023

**St Bede's Catholic School &
Byron Sixth Form College**



Introduction

The Governors and Headteacher of St Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form College are committed to safeguarding the welfare of pupils and vulnerable adults. Policies and practices will be robust and contain the necessary measures to enable all staff to fulfil their roles and responsibilities with full regard to this commitment.

- a) The policies and procedures contained in this document apply to everyone who is in contact with pupils who come to St Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form College.
- b) We each have a role to play in ensuring that the pupils in our care feel safe.
- c) We all share the responsibility to protect our pupils and that includes taking the right steps to ensure that their safety is maintained.
- d) It is our statutory obligation to follow procedures.
- e) These procedures are set down in this document.

Rationale

*'With the Lord's help, we are united in **faith**, we strive for success and **excellence**, we are **determined** to be the best we can be'.*

In the context of this mission statement and our core values, St Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form College is committed to the protection, support and care of all members of the school community. We believe that the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the pupil is paramount. In doing so, we wish to create an atmosphere where pupils and staff feel safe and secure and where they can enjoy positive and open relationships with each other. Pupils must also be able to interact with staff and with fellow pupils without prejudice.

Principles

St Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form College is a Catholic learning community, guided by Gospel values. A living sign of this community is seen in the way we behave towards each other. Therefore, we will aim to treat all members of our community with the tolerance, love and respect, characteristic of people made in the image and likeness of God.

As a learning community we must ensure that our policies and practices minimise bullying and always help and support every member of the community. Pupils in our care should be able to excel in their learning and development in accordance with their own ability and potential. Equally, members of staff should be able to fulfil their professional duties without impediment. Therefore, our policy on anti-bullying and the procedures which are in place are intended to reflect those beliefs. We are committed to sustaining a culture in which those barriers to teaching and learning that are a consequence of bullying are removed. In line with our school behaviour policy we have also adopted restorative justice in our daily routines.

In carrying out our responsibilities, all staff will seek opportunities to emphasise the message of this policy and put it into practice. Those with responsibility for assemblies, tutor team meetings,

pastoral lessons, subject lessons, prayers and liturgies will ensure that the school's anti-bullying values are highlighted and practised.

Aims

To ensure that:

- Governors, all staff, pupils and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Governors, all staff, pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Measures are put in place which prevent or address incidents of bullying.

These are:

- To establish and maintain a culture of zero-tolerance towards bullying (promoted by an annual Anti-bullying week and Safer Internet Day and in our student planner via the Anti-bullying pledge and advice pages)
- To provide mechanisms for pupils and/or staff to report incidents of bullying (via SIMs, Class Charts and CPOMS).

Definition

For the purpose of this policy document, the following definition of bullying will apply:

Bullying may be defined as the deliberate abuse of power by an individual or group intended to cause distress to another individual or group, whether adult or children. It may happen frequently or occasionally and can take many different forms:

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional.** Being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, damaging property, theft).
- **Physical.** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Racist.** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual.** Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic.** Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- **Verbal.** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Cyber.** All areas of internet, such as email, social media platforms such as Facebook, internet chat room misuse.
- **Mobile threats** by text messaging & calls.
- **Misuse of associated technology**, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- **Social/familial.** Because of socio-economic background.
- **Educational.** Because of educational ability (G&T, SEN)

Bullying is damaging for both victim and perpetrators and is usually linked with secrecy and threat. It can lead to feelings of fear, misery, isolation, loneliness, powerlessness and hopelessness, as well as physical signs in the victim and a sense of power and control in the perpetrator.

Therefore, bullying will not be tolerated in St Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth

Form College and will be taken seriously.

The Online Environment

When using desktop computers, pupils and staff agree to the AUP every time they log on. Examples of our AUP can be found in our online safety policy.

In school each device has Smoothwall installed. This includes a full filtering system when using the web but can also track and monitor the usage of each device – even when it is not on site. The relationship therefore between this policy and our online safety policy has never been more important.

On entry into school, pupils and parents sign a consent for learning opportunities form which includes an agreement for internet access and use of ICT. Staff read and sign the staff Code of Conduct.

Mobile phones are expected to be switched off. Inappropriate use of mobile phones also results in confiscation. Further details can be found in our Behaviour policy.

Relationship with Other Policies

This policy should be understood and applied in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and other policies especially Whistle Blowing, Confidentiality, Sex and Relationships Education, Behaviour and Online Safety.

How we will support victims of bullying in school

The supportive environment which exists in school encourages all members of our community to feel confident in speaking out about bullying (c.f. Whistle Blowing Policy)

Through the use of posters, leaflets, assemblies, pastoral sessions and staff development, we will continue to raise awareness of the issue of bullying. We have identified members of staff who are available during the school day to talk to pupils who have concerns about bullying. We communicate this to pupils through the range of strategies outlined above. In carrying out this important responsibility we are supported by the school governors who can be contacted through the school office.

How we will deal with incidents of bullying

We deal with reports of bullying using a staged response approach:

Incidents of bullying can be reported by pupils to any member of staff. Members of staff detecting bullying situation are responsible to investigate or alert Pastoral Team as soon as possible to allow an opportunity to investigate the situation. Parents can report the incidents of bullying via telephone, e-mail or in person. The stages below will be followed:

Stage 1: Information

Any pupils involved will be spoken to by a member of the relevant pastoral team and if necessary statements will be requested from other pupils or staff.

Stage 2: Investigation and Action

Action will be taken in relation to the incident and pupils involved. At this stage the Head of House will contact parents of any pupils where it is deemed appropriate.

A letter of apology should be written to the victim if the pastoral team deems it appropriate. Every person involved will be approached with care and understanding for their individual and or family circumstances.

The incident will be logged in CPOMS. Recorded incidents are for school information only.

Stage 3: Restorative Work

Suspension may be issued at the discretion of the Headteacher.

How we will recognise incidents of bullying

Signs and Symptoms.

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he is being bullied. Adults, at home and in school, should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not want to go to school on the bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes his usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- is unwilling to do homework
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering or self-harming
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries himself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- underperforms in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other pupils or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong with him
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous/jumpy when a cyber message is received
- change in mood/behaviour (may be angry)
- becomes socially withdrawn.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.