

St Bede's Catholic College



Anti-Bullying Policy

College statement on bullying

St Bede's Catholic College is a community where every person has the right to be feel safe, happy and to be themselves. Everyone at our college is cherished as a person made in the 'Image of God' and therefore must be treated as equal and with loving respect.

Aims and purposes of the policy

All members of the college community are seen as children of God, irrespective of their gender, race, religion, culture, sexuality, appearance or ability. All forms of bullying, of any kind and whatever the motivation, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our college. The safety, welfare and well-being of all pupils and staff is a key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole college community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination. We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole college community. We aim to enable our pupils to become responsible citizens and to prepare them for their varied futures. These values reflect those that will be expected of our pupils by society when they leave college and enter the world of work or further study.

We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. This is different to a 'one-off' conflict between two or more young people. In order to help a young person deal with 'one-off' issues, a certain degree of resilience is advisable that includes non-aggressive strategies. However, in every case, the young person should report the incident, even if it is perceived to be a 'one-off' so that a record of behaviour can be established.

Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies assume that they hold more power than those being bullied.

The nature of bullying can be:

Physical – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact of any nature towards someone.

Verbal – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone

Psychological – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people

Cyber – such as using any form of electronic method to write, or say hurtful and disrespectful things about someone. This includes deliberate spreading of rumours and sharing of images that are private, disturbing or have been maliciously manipulated. Cyber-bullying can be particularly detrimental because there is the potential that a young person is experiencing abuse 24 hours a day. Children who send, receive, or share this genre of content may be subject to referral to outside agencies, including the police.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) - Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

St Bede's Catholic College recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

St Bede's Catholic College will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our Anti-bullying and Behaviour policies.

Attacking property – such as damaging, stealing or hiding possessions belonging to another person. Before borrowing an item, pupils will always ask for the owner's permission first. Children must be clear that taking something without the owner's consent will be interpreted as stealing.

Categories of Bullying

- Race (racist bullying)
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or bi-phobic bullying)
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN), disability or any other vulnerable group
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to home, family or another personal situation

No category of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

Reporting bullying

If a student is being bullied, they are encouraged not to retaliate.

The young person should not delay in telling someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents in college using the methods described here:

Report bullying by speaking to a member of college staff – such as a form tutor, head of year, pupil support any teacher or member of the college support staff (e.g. Cover Supervisors, Lunch-time supervisors, Site staff,)

Report bullying by email or via the college web-site:

- Emailing: e-tellusbox@stbcc.org
- College Reception (Tell Us box)
- On the college website – Students section: 'Report an Issue'

If urgent advice and guidance is required out of college hours, young people are encouraged to call 'ChildLine' 0800 1111 to speak with someone in confidence.

Reporting – roles and responsibilities

STAFF: All college staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in our efforts as a college to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the pupils involved and inform a relevant member of the pastoral team.

SENIOR STAFF: The Senior Leadership Team and the College Principal have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the college upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people.

PARENTS AND CARERS: Parents and carers are encouraged to continue to be aware of the potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness, lack of communication or other unusual behaviour.

Action to take if a case of bullying is suspected or experienced

Action for Parents and Carers: Parents and carers should tell their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to take non-aggressive steps to protect themselves and to build resilience. Parents and carers should not delay in reporting an incident of suspected or experienced bullying to the college either in person, or by phoning or emailing the college office. If it is ever necessary to report an incident, please ensure that the college is informed of any subsequent incidents so that staff can work in partnership with the young person and home, to reach a resolution.

Action for all pupils: Young people should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If any young person is a witness to a bullying incident, or perceived bullying incident, they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult.

Responding to bullying

Rationale: In order to resolve any form of suspected or experienced bullying, dual responsibility between college and home is assumed so that a working partnership between the child, college staff and parents or carers can be established.

When bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:

- Staff will record suspected bullying on an incident reporting form and also record the incident centrally on the college IT system. All incidents reported will be investigated by studying all evidence and patterns of behaviour. Staff will make contact with home, in a timely manner to agree a plan of action.
- Support will be offered from the college pastoral team to any young person who is the target of suspected bullying.
- Staff will also pro-actively respond to the bully, who may also require support from the college pastoral team.
- Staff will assess whether any other authorities or agencies (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of school. In every case, if outside agencies or authorities are likely to be involved, parents or carers will be contacted, again in a timely manner.
- Designated college staff (Heads of House) will monitor incident reporting forms and information recorded on the college IT system. Termly reports summarising this information, will be scrutinised by the College Principal and will be shared with the governing body, in an anonymised format.

Bullying outside of the college

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. There is the potential for bullying to take place on the way to and from college, before or after college hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' well-being beyond the college day. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of college and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on the college IT system and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for pupils and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language to ascertain if a pattern of use by an individual or group is emerging.

Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the head teacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

College initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

The college will use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- A nurturing environment is promoted at the college so that pupils feel safe. College staff strive to build positive relationships with the young people so they are more likely to reach out and ask for help if they have a concern.
- Whole-college and year group assemblies help raise pupils' awareness of bullying and derogatory language
- The PSHCE programme of study includes opportunities for pupils to explore and understand different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent it. The college will use a range of up to date resources to deliver the PSHCE programme content.
- Tutor time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for form tutors to target specific intervention and prevention strategies
- Whole college Collective worship, Holy Mass celebrations, form group prayers and reflections regularly promote inherent human dignity that we are all made in God's own image and likeness.
- Difference and diversity are celebrated across the college through diverse displays, books and images.
- The college values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the college, both in pastoral and academic settings
- Equality is promoted by taking steps to support young people who present as LGBTQ+ and to ensure that fellow students and staff fully respect all emotional, romantic and sexual orientations.

Positive Communication

- This policy is communicated clearly to the whole college community.
- It is available to view on the college website and hard copies are readily available.

Review

The college Principal is responsible for reporting to the governing body on how the policy is being enforced and upheld. The governors are in turn responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy via the report provided by the college Principal.

The policy is reviewed regularly.

Related policy: Equalities Act 2010 - **Single Equalities Scheme**

Date: December 2024

Review date: December 2026