

St Benedict's Catholic College



Anti-bullying policy

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1. Introduction

The governors value the good relationships between all members of the college community and expect that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. The governors consider that a child should be treated as being bullied simply because they perceive that they are.

We believe that for everyone to benefit from our learning community, St Benedict's Catholic College should be a place where students, staff, helpers, families and other visitors are made to feel welcome and comfortable and where everyone is treated with respect in an atmosphere free from intimidation.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, neglect and abuse and that their well-being is of paramount importance. St Benedict's Catholic College aims to ensure good relationships between, and good behaviour towards, all members of its community and that learning and personal development takes place in a climate of trust, safety and confidence.

The college has a system of rewards which aims to motivate and encourage students as well as helping to build individual self-confidence and self-esteem. St Benedict's Catholic College values everyone's unique contribution to our community.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all students and all staff have a duty of care, to ensure our students are protected from harm.

The college recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside college which spills over into college and we will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying. The college aims to promote emotional literacy, defined as people being able to 'recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express their emotions' (Sharp, 2001).

We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others.

Bullying is unacceptable in this college and will not be tolerated.

2. What is bullying? (including definition, roles, styles, signs and symptoms)

Definition of Bullying

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online." (*Anti Bullying Alliance, 2020*)

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

(*Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2014, p. 4*)

"Bullying is any behaviour which is perceived by the targeted individual or any other person, as intending to hurt, intimidate, frighten, harm or exclude. It is usually persistent and an abuse of power, leaving the targeted individual feeling defenceless."

(*Essex County Council definition*)

At St Benedict's we recognise that there is no "hierarchy" of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. We understand that bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually bullying.

3. Guiding principles for preventing and tackling bullying

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The college will:

- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the college and accepted across the community
- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur
- Raise awareness of anti-bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our PSHE programme and related activities
- Provide support for all members of the college community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and students to support the implementation of the policy across the college
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds

4. Aims of the policy

We aim to create an environment where students can grow and flourish without fear. Each student has the right to be safe in and out of college and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable.

We aim:

- To ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied
- To demonstrate that the college takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the college and during off-site activities
- To clarify for all students and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is paramount
- To promote an environment where students feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying
- To promote positive attitudes in students (including conflict management training)
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and the need to be alert to signs of bullying
- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular training

5. Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

The college 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
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience
- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns
- Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the student council
- Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour
- Train all staff including teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff to identify all forms of bullying, follow the college policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents)
- Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying from occurring
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied

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- Work with other agencies and the wider college community to prevent and tackle concerns
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive college ethos

6. Involvement of students

We will:

- Regularly canvas students' views on the extent and nature of bullying
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in college
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have
- Design opportunities for students to play an active role in showcasing their views and supporting the anti-bullying ethos of the college

7. Liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats
- Ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively
- Ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the college gates that give rise to bullying
- Ensure that parents work with the college to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline

8. Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse

St Benedict's Catholic College has an up-to-date Child Protection policy and Safeguarding policy that should be referred to in relation to this matter.

9. Evaluation and monitoring the effectiveness of our approach

This policy is a working document and will be updated as new guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.

The Principal and the Senior Leadership Team will regularly monitor behaviour reports and data to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the college's strategies. These reports will also enable patterns to be identified. The Principal will report to the governing body.

Monitoring of the policy will involve consideration of the following data; any reduction in the number of incidents referred for attention; monitoring individual victims/bullies with a view to improved circumstances; positive feedback from parents, students and staff; monitoring of the willingness in students to report instances of concern; tracking of incidents to inform future decisions on availability of network and infrastructure that can access the internet.

10. Confidentiality

Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidentially but that their best interests will be maintained at all times and without exception.

11. Links with other policies

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This Policy links with a number of other policies, practices and action plans including:

- Cyber bullying policy
- Behaviour for learning policy
- SEND policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Use of Physical Intervention policy
- Whistle Blowing policy
- Complaints policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- Confidentiality policy
- e-Safety (Online Safety) and Acceptable Use policies (AUPs)
- Curriculum policies such as PSHE and citizenship and computing
- Mobile phone and social media policies
- Allegations against college staff policy
- Code of Conduct of employees
- Disciplinary policy, teaching staff
- Community Cohesion policy
- Staff ICT Acceptable Use policy

12. Complaints and monitoring

All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the college's complaints procedure.

The Governing Body of the college will consider bullying issues and their implications for this policy on an annual basis. For this item, the Principal will report upon levels of bullying during the past year, training undertaken by college staff and governors and any changes in legislation or national/local guidance.

13. What informs our policy

This policy takes due regard of the following documents:

- DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies" March 2017 and it is recommended that schools read this guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- Equality Act 2010
- School support for children and young people, DFE, 2014
- The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools, April 2011
- Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence – An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools" (64/2000), DfE, 2000
- Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DFE 2020

APPENDIX 1

Four main types of bullying can be identified:

Physical Hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings

Verbal Name calling, teasing, insulting, racist remarks, writing or sending unkind notes or messages, including cyber-bullying (see later in policy)

Emotional/ Being intentionally unfriendly, excluding individuals from social groups, tormenting looks,

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Indirect spreading malicious rumours, family feuds brought into college

Online Use of email, social networking sites, internet chat room misuse, mobile phone messaging to spread rumours, make malicious comments.

Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race or colour, religion or belief or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying of a sexist, sexual and transphobic nature
- Bullying of adopted children
- Bullying using electronic forms of contact (cyberbullying)

Roles within bullying

Different roles within bullying have been identified:

- Those relying on social power, dominating others, often with group support (ring leader)
- Others joining in and therefore afraid of ring leader (associates)
- The awareness of a silent majority that bullying is taking place, but feeling unable to do anything about it (bystanders)
- Those who try to stop bullying (defenders)

Styles of bullying include:

- Intimidation and rude gestures
- The 'look' – this is given as an example of non-verbal bullying
- Threats and extortion
- Malicious gossip and exclusion from the group
- Telling tales with the express purpose of causing trouble
- Threatening texts or messages in chat rooms

Signs and symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a student:

- Is unwilling to go to college
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens self-harm
- Cries himself/herself to sleep at night or has nightmares/ bedwetting
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go missing
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is frightened of travelling on public transport to or from college
- Is frightened of walking to or from college; or
- Changes his/her usual routine

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate person.

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Some useful agencies / resources

Websites and resources that offer support guidance and strategies for children, young people, schools and parents/carers to prevent all forms of bullying:

Anti-bullying alliance

This site offers information and advice and resources on anti-bullying. It is intended to be a one stop shop where teachers can download assembly materials, lesson ideas and information including those for Anti-Bullying Week. This site brings information, advice and resources together from more than 65 of its members, which include charities Childline, Kidscape, Mencap and the Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL). It has a site called Hometown for children and young people about dealing with all forms of bullying.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Anti-bullying network

An Anti-Bullying site based at the University of Edinburgh dedicated to promoting a positive school ethos. It has advice for students, teachers, parents, on all aspects of bullying, including homophobic, racist and cyber and good case examples of schools in the region that have tried out various strategies to reduce bullying, organised under specific headings. Schools may find these useful for ideas and to adapt.

www.antibullying.net

British Youth Council

The BYC brings young people together to agree on issues of common and encourage them to bring about change through taking collective action.

www.byc.org.uk

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)

A government agency that is dedicated to promoting online safety for children who may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation in chat rooms. It works with a number of charities and police across the UK and has a website for secondary age students called 'thinkuknow'.

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Childline

This provides a 24 hour helpline for children and young people being bullied in the UK. Children and young people can call 0800 1111 to talk about any problem. It is a major charity that is now housed with NSPCC. It provides training in peer support for students and schools and has a range of publications and downloadable resources for children, parents and teachers.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Childnet International

This is a charity that aims to make the internet a safer place for children and is dedicated to internet safety. It is concerned to prevent abuse on the internet and cyber bullying. It has advice for children and parents and has some useful resources for teachers of ICT at Key Stage 3 on internet safety. It is located in South London (Brockley).

<http://www.childnet.com>

Department for Education

This link has very useful definitions and training suggestions for a whole school approach to prevent bullying.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Enable

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Bullying is the main reason that children with disabilities move from inclusive to special schools according to research done in Scotland. This website gives schools guidance and advice on how to include children with disabilities and prevent bullying.

<http://www.enable.org.uk/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission

This has examples of anti-harassment policies and links for educational establishments to websites that provide relevant information on different aspects of bullying.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Family Lives

This is a charity dedicated to support parents on all issues related to parenting and has a very helpful section on bullying.

<http://www.familylives.org.uk/>

Headliners

Headliners is a UK-wide news agency producing news, features and comments by young people for everyone. It encourages young people to express their views through story, journalism, photos and images on all issues including bullying that affect them.

<http://www.headliners.org/>

Insted

This provides consultancies for schools, local authorities and government departments, and for community and voluntary sector on cultural diversity and race equality. It features stories and storytelling, multi-faith education, Islamophobia, Jewish education and Israel studies. There is a useful section to download for staff training on bullying related to race, religion and culture.

www.insted.co.uk/insted.html

Kidscape

Kidscape is committed to keeping children safe from abuse. It is the first charity in the UK established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse it provides information, good resources and training for children and young people under the age of 16, their parents/carers. It offers a range of courses for professionals. It also provides courses in assertiveness training, ZAP, for children and young people and develops their confidence and skills to resist bullying and forms of abuse.

www.kidscape.org.uk

NSPCC

The NSPCC works tirelessly and promotes public campaigns to stop cruelty to children. There is advice on a number of issues related to bullying, child protection, and abuse. Kids Zone which contains details for their child protection helpline for young people who have problems at home or are being bullied.

www.nspcc.org.uk

School's Out

Information and resources, advice and training to tackle homophobia in schools.

www.schools-out.org.uk

Young Minds

Young Minds aims to promote the mental health of children and young people through a parent's information service, training and consultancy, advocacy and publications. Its site provides basic information on a range of subjects including bullying.

www.youngminds.org.uk