

BEDFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A TRULY UNIQUE JOURNEY

‘One body in Christ’

Policy last reviewed:	September 2019
Policy due for renewal:	September 2020
Committee responsible:	Inclusion
Lead member of staff:	J. Hopkins
St Thomas More School	

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

St Thomas More Catholic Teaching School

Rationale

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

As a Catholic Christian Trust of schools we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment free from oppression and abuse. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. We believe that respect for individuals and positive relationships between all members of our school community are central to its wellbeing.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti – discrimination laws with a single Act. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber – bullying by providing a specific power to search for and if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Criminal law does not specify bullying as a criminal offence in the UK, however it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications; could be a criminal offence for example under the Protection from Harassment 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. The school may need to seek assistance from the police if an incident is considered to be a criminal offence.

All types of bullying are unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated. Bullying is defined in full in appendix 1.

AIMS:

We aim to work towards prevention of bullying by creating a safe environment, which promotes trust, confidence, justice and fairness for all, by consistently:

1. Recognising bullying and raising staff and pupil awareness about this
2. Dealing with bullying quickly and effectively when it occurs
3. Involving parents/carers actively in solutions and outcomes
4. Providing strategies for dealing with bullying/intimidating situations
5. Identifying appropriate support programmes for pupils and their parents/carers

OBJECTIVES

- 1a. Ensure relevant staff training is in place so that any type of bullying is recognised
- 1b. High quality anti –bullying education to be part of the PHSE Programme
- 1c. All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers to know the school policy on anti-bullying
- 1d. Policy to be on each school's website, in pupil's organisers / planners and should feature in induction procedures to each school
- 2a. Have clear reporting systems in place that reflect best practice (Appendix 2 – school specific)
- 2b. Have standardised school procedures for monitoring and recording of incidents of bullying that provide a detailed breakdown of incidents affecting different groups
- 3a. Parents/carers of victims and alleged bullies to be informed of all reported incidents of bullying behaviour and steps taken to resolve the incident(s)
- 3b. Parent information evenings on social media bullying to be provided

- 4a. All staff to present effective models of behaviour that define expectations for all members of the community
- 4b. Create an ethos and environment where pupils can raise bullying issues confidently and safely
- 5a. All pastoral meetings to include an item that addresses those at risk of bullying behaviours either as a perpetrator or as victim
- 5b. Support programme for both bully and victim to be readily available to support changes to behaviour
- 5c. All parties involved in incidents of bullying to be mentored to support changes in behaviour

Race, Gender and Disability Equality Monitoring

1. Does this policy have any implications for race, gender and disability equality?

Yes, because we need to ensure that all pupils of whatever ethnic background or gender or disability feel safe.

2. If 'yes', will it advantage or disadvantage any particular group

No - *all students, regardless of background or ability will be treated equally.*

3. How will this policy if relevant, promote good relations?

By improving self-esteem of all students, good race relations are encouraged.

Success Criteria

- Incidents of bullying are extremely rare
- Incident resolution is rapid and effective (refer to case studies in assessing this measure)
- Surveys of bullying at school show that the school is effective in challenging bullying and dealing with bullying

Appendix 1:

Definition

“Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying” (Torfaen definition 2008)

Bullying is behaviour which:

- Is deliberately hurtful
- Deliberately makes another person feel uncomfortable, distressed or threatened
- Is repeated over a period of time
- Makes those being bullied feel powerless to defend themselves
- Can include racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour.
- Bullying based on disability, ability, appearance or circumstance

There are four main types of bullying:

- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
- Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, threats. Making racist, religious sexist or homophobic based comments or graffiti
- Indirect: Being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting. Demanding money or personal belongings from someone
- Cyber: Types of cyber bullying include:
 - Text message bullying
 - Picture/video clip bullying via mobile phone cameras
 - Phone call bullying
 - E-mail bullying
 - Social Media
 - Bullying via websites
 - Misuse of blogs
 - Instant messaging
 - Misuse of associated technology, i.e. Camera and video facilities

Other forms of bullying include:

Homophobic/Biphobic/Transphobic (any incident which is perceived by the victim as being the result of negative attitudes towards an individual’s sexuality.)

Sexist (any incident which is perceived by the victim as being the result of sexist attitudes of the perpetrator)

SEN/Disability (any incident which is perceived by the victim as being the result of their SEN or disability).

Racism (any incident which is perceived by the victim as being the result of racial identity).

Appendix 2:

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

For students:

These things have been suggested by students.

If you are being bullied:

- Tell someone you trust
- Try to ignore the bully
- Try not to show that you are upset
- If possible avoid being alone in the places the bullying takes place
- Try to be assertive
- Walk away quickly and confidently, even if you do not feel that way inside
- Your safety is more important than your possessions. If you are in danger do not hold on to them.
- Be proud of who you are.

Friends:

- Listen and talk it through
- Try to be sensitive
- Try not to leave them on their own
- Persuade them to talk to an adult

Bystanders:

- Even if you do not take part in the bullying but see it and walk away, you are ignoring your responsibilities.
- Get help
- Give sympathy to the person being bullied

For staff:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Always report and record incidents of bullying
- Don't make premature assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts-several pupils saying the same the thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- Adopt a problem solving approach with all pupils involved which helps to move the pupils forward and away from a cycle of blame
- Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed

For parents/carers and staff:

Recognising the signs:

Someone who is bullied may:

- Be frightened of walking to and from school
- Insist on being driven to school
- Be unwilling to go the school
- Regularly have books or clothes damaged
- Have possessions "go missing"

- Continually “lose money”
- Begin doing badly in schoolwork
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches etc.
- Ask for money or begin stealing money
- Become withdrawn
- Have noticeable and prolonged changes in mood
- Become distressed/bad tempered
- Have loss of appetite
- Attempt or threaten to harm themselves

Intervention:

For parents/carers

Any of the behaviour above may indicate other problems. However, if you become aware of and are concerned by any of this behaviour and think your child is being bullied

- Encourage him/her to talk about the problem
- Reassure him/her of your support
- Try to listen calmly and not over react
- Attempt to find out where and when the bullying takes place. Is there a pattern?
- Contact the Head of Year to discuss the problem
- Work with the Head of Year to support your child within or outside school
- If the bullying takes place outside school consider reporting the matter to the police

For staff

All members of staff, teaching and non- teaching, should deal with any incident of suspected or observed bullying by

- Talking to the pupil and giving reassurance
- Taking appropriate action at the time
- Producing a written statement of what has happened and the action taken
- Reporting the incident to the Head of Year
- Log incident on the Behaviour Log

The Head of Year will

- Arrange for support and reassurance of the pupil
- Interview the persons responsible for the bullying
- Contact parents/carers where necessary
- Take any appropriate disciplinary action
- If necessary, refer the matter the Head Teacher
- Work with pupils, parents/carers and other staff to support those involved and prevent further bullying.

Consequences for bullies

- Giving a verbal or written apology
- Official warnings to cease offending
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term external exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Prevention

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PHSE, tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school and needs to be used in conjunction with:

- Behaviour for Learning policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Safeguarding Policy