

St Bede's Catholic Middle School recognises there is a need to safeguard the welfare of all those within the school community and to encourage a culture of co-operation, acceptance and harmony both within and outside of school.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We have high expectations of all pupils, staff and parents and strive to create a school community in which all children can fulfil their potential.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at St Bede's Catholic Middle School. If bullying does occur, all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The school actively implements its Anti-Bullying Policy and has clear pathways for reporting, which are known to all members of the school community.

Information for children

What can you do if you or someone you know are being bullied?

The first thing you need to do is tell an adult you trust.

It is really important that you do this as soon as possible. If anything, or anyone is worrying you, speak to an adult as soon as possible. Don't just hope it goes away.

If the adult is a member of our school staff, we will work with you, your parents and carers and the people who have upset you to make sure this stops.

If you don't feel you can speak to someone in school, speak to someone else you can trust. This might be a friend, parent, carer or other family member - maybe even a sports coach/dance teacher. If the adult is not a member of our school staff, ask them to speak to us at school. We will work with them, you, your parents and carers and the people who have upset you to make sure this stops.

If you would rather not talk to an adult face to face, you can email the school iamworried@st-bedes.worcs.sch.uk, you can send a message to a member of staff on epraise or put a message in your worry box in the classroom. If you want to tell parents or carers but are unsure about talking to them face to face, you could write them a letter or, if you have a phone, tell them over text message.

The most important thing is - TELL SOMEONE YOU TRUST.

If the bullying doesn't involve you - it is still VERY important you tell someone. Even if you aren't sure.

Use any of the ways described above to report bullying you have seen or heard. The adults you report this to will investigate what you have seen and heard fully to make sure all children are safe and happy.

What is Bullying?

We define bullying as: “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

Bullying can be physical or emotional and it can take many forms (for example, cyber-bullying). Immediate physical safety and stopping violence are a priority; however, bullying can also occur because of prejudice against particular groups.

We consulted with pupils to ask their view and opinion about bullying. These are some of the responses we received:

“It’s like when someone is hurting someone else and they carry on doing it, the next day, the next day and the next day after that”

“Bullying is not treating people how you want to be treated. Bullying is constant and repetitive.”

The following are examples of bullying behaviours:

- **Verbal** *e.g. name-calling, making offensive comments, taunting*
- **Physical** *e.g. kicking, hitting*
- **Emotional** *e.g. spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, excluding people from groups*
- **Cyber** *e.g. inappropriate texting/emailing, inappropriate use of MSN/Facebook e.g. sexting*
- **Written** *e.g. ridicule through drawings and writing e.g. on planners/PC’s*
- **Incitement** *e.g. encouraging others to bully*
- **Extortion** *e.g. demands for money or personal property*
- **Damage to Property** *e.g. theft of bags, tearing clothes, ripping books*

This is by no means a comprehensive list of reasons and behaviours and some evolve at different times.

Impact of Bullying

Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on young people’s lives.

Some of the effects are:

- Poor school attendance
- Lower academic achievement
- Low self-esteem and poor self-worth
- Lack of confidence

- Anxiety
- Loss of identity
- Feelings of guilt
- Long term mental health difficulties

Some Signs of Bullying

- Reluctance to attend school
- Poor school performance
- Behaving out of character
- Missing or damaged belongings
- Self-harm
- Increased episodes of illness (real / imaginary)
- Having unexplained cuts and bruises
- Refusal to say what is wrong
- Becoming aggressive and bullying other children
- Become quiet and withdrawn.

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

What we will do about Bullying as a school?

- Ensure the whole school community understands bullying and its consequences.
- Appoint a designated member of staff as anti-bullying officer.
- Appoint an anti-bullying Governor.
- Ensure that there are clear and consistent pathways for reporting incidents of bullying which are known to all members of the school community.
- Implement a consistent system for recording incidents of bullying.
- Develop a preventative approach to bullying. Students will be encouraged to recognise that not only do they have rights; the choices they make bring responsibilities.
- Review the anti-bullying policy annually in consultation with the whole school community.
- Identify and make safe, areas in school where bullying could/has been known to occur.
- Be aware of factors which may cause some children to be more vulnerable than others.
- Work in partnership with the police should there be bullying incidents where a crime has been committed.

- Foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable. This can be done by:
- Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all staff.
- Work in school which develops empathy and emotional intelligence.
- Any incidents are treated seriously and dealt with immediately.

Cyber Bullying

What is cyber bullying?

- Cyber bullying includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology.
- It can take many forms, but can go even further than face to face bullying by invading
- home and personal space and can target one or more people.
- It can take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others.
- It can include threats and intimidation, harassment, defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images.
- It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect.

Cyber bullying may be carried out in many ways, including:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages;
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips via mobile phone cameras;
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible;
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name;
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chat-room;
- Unpleasant messages sent during instant messaging;
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook)

In some cases, this type of bullying can be a criminal offence.

If this is the case, the incident will be passed to the police.

Prevention of Cyber Bullying

Understanding and information

- Mrs Gallinagh and Miss Brown will oversee the practices and procedures outlined in the e-safety policy and monitor their effectiveness.
- Mrs Gallinagh and Miss Brown will ensure that the school maintains details of agencies and resources that may assist in preventing and addressing bullying.
- Staff will be trained to identify signs of cyber bullying and will be helped to keep informed about the technologies that children commonly use.
- Pupils will be informed about cyber bullying through curricular and pastoral activities.
- Pupils and staff are expected to comply with the school's Acceptable Computer Use Policy.
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.

Practices and Procedures

- Positive use of ICT will be promoted and the Acceptable Computer Use Policy will be kept under review as technologies develop.
- CPD and INSET may be used to help staff develop their own practices and support pupils in safe and responsible use of ICT.
- The school will encourage safe use of ICT, emphasising, for example, the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts.
- The school will promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and all members of the school community will be informed how cyber bullying can be reported.
- Confidential records (MyConcerns) will be kept of all cyber bullying incidents.

Responding to cyber bullying

Cyber bullying will generally be dealt with in the same way as other bullying incidents as described in this policy. A cyber bullying incident may include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a response.

Key differences may be:

- Impact: possibly extensive scale and scope
- Location: the anytime and anywhere nature of cyber bullying
- Anonymity: the person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is
- Motivation: the perpetrator might not realise that his/her actions are bullying
- Evidence: the subject of the bullying will have evidence of what happened
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Reporting and Recording of all bullying incidents

All negative behaviour, comments and derogatory remarks are recorded on the school's Safeguarding System (MyConcerns) as an on-going record of behaviour.

How we approach the victims of bullying - All cases are treated on an individual basis

- Ensure that there are clear pathways for reporting bullying
- Ensure that victims are listened to
- Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs – pastoral support and interventions
- Ensure victims are consulted, and kept involved and informed
- Ensure parents/carers are consulted and kept involved and informed

*Please see the Anti-Bullying Policy

How we approach those accused of bullying – All cases are treated on an individual basis

- Ensure that perpetrators are listened to acknowledging that they are sometimes themselves victims of bullying and abuse.
- Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs.
- Ensure perpetrators are consulted, are kept informed and involved
- Ensure parents/carers are consulted and kept involved and informed
- Implement appropriate sanctions
- Implement appropriate learning programmes for example:
 - counselling/pastoral support

Involving the Police and Other Outside Agencies

In some cases, the police maybe contacted for a consultation with them to determine the next steps. The police can advise the school on whether the incident is a criminal matter or a case for the school to investigate and resolve. If the school has concerns that there may be child protection concerns with an incident, the school's child protection policy will be adhered to and relevant agencies will be contacted.

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

On 6th March, Miss Stewart and Mrs Wintle took 10 pupils from across Years 5,6 and 7 to Heathfield Knoll School in Kidderminster to complete Anti-Bullying Ambassador training in order to become ambassadors within St Bede's Catholic Middle School. The pupils had a great time playing games, watching video clips and mixing with pupils from other schools. They learnt about what bullying is, how they can help support

people who are on the receiving end of bullying behaviour and have started to come up with ideas for fundraisers and an anti-bullying campaign within our school.

The pupils were a credit to St Bede's, exhibiting all the necessary qualities for an ambassador role. Well done to them all! They have all now received their official Ambassador certificates and have been formally introduced to the school. Watch this space for news of our future campaigns and fundraisers!

A special mention has to go to Freya, who has been selected as our Ambassador representative and who will be required to speak to the Diana Award Aftercare team on a regular basis to update them on our campaigns so far!

Most recently, the school have signed up to the Anti-Bullying Alliance Programme: All Together. We will be using material and guidance from this to help support Anti-bullying in school.

For further advice and information, please see the links below:

Anti-bullying Alliance www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk

Childline www.childline.org.uk

Parentline Plus www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Anti-bullying network info@antibullying.net

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Diana Award Anti-Bullying Programme

Youngminds - Bullying

National Bullying Helpline

This Morning - Bullying helplines