

Upholding Respect & Dignity for All

Anti - Bullying Policy - Student Version

In our Mission Statement We Say

The Mission of the Belvedere College Community - Jesuits, Staff, Parents, Present Students and Past Pupils - is to ensure that graduates of the College, by their relationship with Jesus Christ and through living Gospel values, shall be persons for others in leadership and example in the pursuit of a just world.

Belvedere Says

- The School is committed to ensuring the respect of us, the students and everybody in the Belvedere Community, and protecting our dignity.
- We have a right to work, study, and engage in co-curricular activities without harassment, intimidation, or bullying.
- With this right, however, comes the responsibility to respect the right of everyone else to work, study, and engage in co-curricular activities without harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The School Is Asking Us To Help Each Other In These Ways: -

- Recognise this responsibility to each other - watch our own behaviour.
- Be sensitive to the well-being of everybody.
- Be protective - help each other now, not later on.
- Be vigilant and watch out for each other - prevention is better than cure.

Bullying - What? Why? Who? How? Where / When?

We define Bullying as any form of harassment or inappropriate behaviour. This includes physical, emotional, psychological, racial or sexual harassment of any kind, or any threat of such abuse.

Bullying is negative behaviour, which can be direct or indirect, verbal, non-verbal or physical, initiated by one or more persons against another or others in a systematic and on-going manner (1). Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour can also be described as bullying if they are unjustified and serve to intimidate on an on-going basis (2).

1. Systematic and Ongoing

This means that the negative behaviour is normally a repeated, deliberate pattern of behaviour, over time.

2. Isolated Incidents

Those who research bullying have found that a once-off deliberate act of bullying can be enough to frighten someone for a long period of time. It is included so that the bully(ies) is / are held accountable for his / her actions.

Why does Negative Behaviour Occur?

Anyone can suffer from bullying, for any reason or for no reason at all. Some common reasons noted for bullying are -

- Physical appearance - disability, accent, lisp, stammer, colour of hair, size, etc.
- Academic ability or performance - whether high or low, perceived sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, family status, membership of the Travelling Community.

Who is Protected by the Policy?

It is recognised that inappropriate behaviour can occur within a school community at any level.

- Student / student.
- Student / staff member (teaching or non-teaching).
- Staff member / student.
- Staff / staff.
- Inappropriate behaviour can even arise in the parent / teacher or teacher / parent relationship.

How does Negative Behaviour Occur?

Some common examples of bullying among student on student / student on teacher / teacher on student are listed below.

- **Physical**
Pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, “messing fights” or severe assault.
- **Verbal - Slagging and Name-Calling**
Personal, persistent, demeaning / hurtful or insulting remarks, gestures, or name-calling, sarcasm / sneering, unwelcome comments about appearance / background.
- **Through Technology**
Phone, email, internet, mobile phone or text messages.
- **Intimidation**
Highly aggressive body language. Threatening or abusive language / gestures / expressions. Tone of voice or “looks” is used.
- **Isolation**
Deliberate exclusion or ignoring of a person by a group.
- **Damage to Property**
Interfering with, vandalising, breaking, stealing, or hiding personal property.
- **Financial - Extortion**
Demands for money accompanied by threats.
- **On Grounds of Disability**
Jokes about a person’s condition, imitation and mocking, or removal of technical aids needed by the disabled person.
- **How can Bullying Damage People?**
The effects of bullying cannot be over-emphasised. It can cause victims to feel isolated and rejected.

Bullying – How Do I know if I am Being Bullied?

Some of the damaging effects of bullying include -

- Increased anxiety / stress.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Lack of motivation / energy.
- Deteriorating school work.
- Anxiety about going to school / missing.
- Loss of confidence / self-esteem.
- Changes in eating patterns - lack of appetite / comfort eating.
- Increased likelihood of abuse of alcohol or other drugs.
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Depression.
- Problems with sleep - changing sleeping patterns / bedwetting / nightmares / sweats.
- Stomach / bowel disorders.
- Changes of mood / behaviour.
- Panic attacks.

When and Where does the Policy Apply?

The Policy applies at all times including -

- At school, or at any location where staff or students represent the school.
- At social functions, sporting events, field trips, or school trips where staff or students represent the school.
- Any form of communication (writing, telephone, texting, email, etc.) in any school-related activity.

What Do I Do if I'm Being Bullied?

1. Confide to get help. Note the key facts for yourself -

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> What happened? | <input type="checkbox"/> When? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Who did what? | <input type="checkbox"/> Who else was there? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Where? | |

2. Do not blame yourself - the bully has the problem, not you.
3. Keep calm - respond quietly, minimise your reaction.
4. Do not hit back - violence in return can be very dangerous.
5. Act now - reporting is the responsible and courageous thing to do.
6. Tell someone you feel you can trust - Parents / Prefects / Form Tutor / Year Head / Teachers / Staff / Chaplain / Pastoral Care Team.

What Do I Do if I See Someone Else Being Bullied?

1. Act now.
2. In our school, there is no such thing as an innocent bystander.
3. If you notice worrying changes in someone else's behaviour - confide to get help.
4. Note the key facts for yourself.
5. Tell someone you can trust.
6. Report any incident calmly and discreetly.

What Do I Do If I Realise MY Behaviour is Causing a Problem?

1. Act now - stop!
2. Confide in someone – ideally speak to your parents or to your Form Tutor.
3. Acknowledge that what you have done is wrong.
4. Apologise for your behaviour.
5. Assure the person(s) involved that it will not happen again.

What Will the College Do About It?

The College's Commitment to the Students

1. All cases will be treated seriously, investigated with care, and with all possible confidentiality.
2. Sensitivity and respect will be shown to both the person making the complaint, and to the subject of the complaint.
3. Every effort will be made to resolve a complaint informally. If this is not possible, a formal process will begin.
4. If a complaint is proven to be genuine, disciplinary action up to and including long suspension or expulsion will be taken.

The College will go about dealing with any and every incident with seriousness, care, sensitivity, and respect to all involved. It will put in place a system to investigate and resolve each complaint. (See below)

The full *Fair Play for All* policy is available in the Headmaster's Office. The policy also contains special references to sexual harassment and racial harassment.

The Informal Process

1. Those making the complaint will be given privacy and with all possible confidentiality.
2. The College will try to deal with complaints informally at first. Failing this, the formal process will begin.

The Formal Process

1. Those involved will be spoken to separately. The College takes very seriously any attempt at intimidation during the course of an investigation.
2. The facts will be established straight away i.e. time, date, place of the incident, and details of the incident itself.
3. If a "gang" of people is involved, they will be interviewed one by one, and then as a group.
4. A written account of all discussion and investigations will be made.
5. If it turns out that the accused HAS been bullying, they have broken the rules of the College which already exist.
6. In this case, action will be taken. This action, according with these same rules, can be up to and including long suspension or expulsion.