Clyst Vale
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESPECT PARTICIPATE LEARN

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Owner	Paul Sutton
Approved By	Full Board with delegated responsibility to C, L & T
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Review Cycle	Annually
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Contents:

1. Statement of intent

Clyst Vale Community College is a Rights Respecting School and believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents. All staff, parents and students need to work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

• Education and Inspections Act 2006
• Equality Act 2010
• Protection from Harassment Act 1997
• Malicious Communications Act 1988
• Public Order Act 1986
• Communications Act 2003
• Human Rights Act 1998
• Crime and Disorder Act 1998
• Education Act 2011
• DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
• DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
• DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
• DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
• DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
• DfE (2024) 'Working together to Safeguard children 2023'

• DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
• Behaviour for Learning Policy
• Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
• Relationships and Sex Education Policy

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined by the DFE in an educational setting as "*any sustained action intended to hurt another person either physically, mentally or emotionally.*"

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful

- Repeated, often over a period of time

- Difficult to defend against

Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations. Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

• Students who are adopted.

• Students suffering from a health problem.

• Students with caring responsibilities.

• Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

• Students who are LGBTQ+ or perceived to be LGBTQ+.

• Diverse Ethnicities students.

• Students with SEND, neurodiversity, and disabilities

4. Types of bullying

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic/biphobic • Transphobic • Disability-based	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI)

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board Trustees is responsible for:
• Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any students on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
• The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
• Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
• Ensuring the school is inclusive.
• Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
• Appointing a safeguarding link trustee who will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:
• Dealing with very serious bullying incidents.
• Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
• Keeping a log of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
• Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
• Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Heads of Year are responsible for:
• Dealing with serious bullying incidents
• Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
• Providing a point of contact for students and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.
• Providing follow up support after bullying incidents.

Teachers are responsible for:
• Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
• Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
• Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
• Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the student's Head of Year of such observations.
• Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
• Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
• Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

Tutors are responsible for:
• Providing a point of contact for students and parents, making investigations alongside the Head of Year when bullying is alleged
• Logging details of the incidents including the type of bullying that occurs
• Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Parents are responsible for:
• Informing the College if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
• Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Students are responsible for:
- Showing respect to every person in the College and avoid saying or doing anything which will hurt others.
- Supporting College initiatives against bullying.
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

6. Statutory implications
The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility 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.
• Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of students to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA. Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
• Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
• The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
• Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

• Other forms of bullying such as repeated violence or assault, theft, harassment, intimidation and hate crimes will be discussed with the victim's parents as to whether it is appropriate to report the issue to the police.

7. Prevention

• The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

• All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

• All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the PSHE curriculum.

• Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in extracurricular events, e.g. house events, expressive arts events, sporting activities and leadership activities.

• Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

• The school operates an 'off and away' policy regarding mobile devices. This helps to minimise the risk of cyberbullying occurring at school.

• A safe place, such as Student Services/Additional Support/ Skille Room, will be available for students to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. • Form tutors will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

• Before a new student joins the school, particularly when this happens in-year, the DP – HOY will contact their previous school to gain relevant background information on them and any potential vulnerabilities. The tutor and Head of Year will implement a strategy to support the student in transitioning to the college. Where a new student is deemed vulnerable, this strategy may involve further observation or intervention on the part of the tutor, Head of Year or DSL.

• The school will be alert to, and address, any emotional health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

• The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. emotional health issues.

8. Signs of bullying:
Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:

• Being frightened to travel to or from school
• Unwillingness to attend school
• Repeated or persistent absence from school
• Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
• Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
• Decreased involvement in school work
• Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
• Missing possessions
• Buying food for other students
• Asking for extra money or stealing
• Cuts or bruises
• Lack of appetite
• Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
• Lack of eye contact
• Becoming short tempered
• Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Students who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour. Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a student is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:
• They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
• They have been the victim of abuse
• Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will record this on CPOMS, which will notify the student's Tutor, Head of Year, DDSL & DSLhe DSL.

9. Staff principles:
• The school should ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
• Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act as soon as they can when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one student towards another should always be challenged and should never be ignored.
• Staff should always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with other students, unless the student has

given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they should inform the DSL or a Deputy DSL as soon as they can.

• Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

10. Child-on-child abuse:

• The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

• To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate students about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the prevention section of this policy.

• All staff will be aware that students of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up", and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as "boys being boys", as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sending or receiving nudes or semi-nudes, upskirting, other forms of sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.

• Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a student has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a Front Door/MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub) referral may be made to children's social care services, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

• The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed.

11. Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target students, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories. Cyberbullying can include the following:

• Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
• Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
• Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
• Silent or abusive phone calls

• 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 chatroom • Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging

• Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook NB.
The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents. Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a student is cyberbullying others: • Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
• Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer
• Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
• Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:
• Possible extensive scale and scope – students may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
• The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying – students may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
• The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and students may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
• The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to students crossing boundaries without realising
• The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened – students may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator The school will support students who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

12. Procedures:
The school will deal with issues on a case by case basis and may take some of the following steps when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with by the member of staff who has been approached or by another appropriate member of staff
- An account of the incident(s) will be recorded and given to the Tutor/ Head of Year or member of SLT.
- If a student is injured, the student is seen as soon as possible for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- Students who are the victim of cyberbullying are encouraged to bring in (and print off if possible) any relevant evidence and should not delete offensive texts until seen by a member of staff.
- Students involved will be interviewed and, if appropriate, records will be kept.
- Tutors and other relevant members of staff will be kept informed.
- If appropriate, parents will be informed.
- If appropriate the school /DSL will report this to Devon County Council using the 'Bullying, Prejudice and Racism Incidents Report Form'.
- Appropriate sanctions will be implemented in consultation will all parties concerned.

13. Sanctions:

The following disciplinary steps can be taken in line with the school's behaviour policy:

- Warnings to cease offending
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises at certain times
- Internal Exclusion
- Fixed-term suspension
- Permanent exclusion

14. Support:
In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:
- Emotional support and reassurance
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident, and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents, where applicable, to ensure a continuous dialogue of support

• Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff if the situation escalates.
 • Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
• Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

• Students who are identified as the perpetrator will be helped by:
• Discussing what happened
• Discovering why the student became involved
• Establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change their behaviour
• Additional support to change the behaviour if applicable
• Receiving a consequence for their actions
• Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student if appropriate.

The Head of Year or Member of SLT will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities. Staff, particularly the Pastoral Team, will work with the victim(s) to build resilience. A restorative approach will be followed to offer resolution for all parties involved.
The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. The school will work with the students involved regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

15. Follow-up support:
The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their form tutor, or Head of Year. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged with parents after the incident.
Students who have been bullied will be offered ongoing support via their tutor or appropriate member of staff. The member of staff will check with the student to ensure the bullying has ceased. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

16. Bullying outside of school:
• Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
• The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate a student's conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.
• Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
• Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated at the school's discretion. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.
• The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

17. Record keeping:
 The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept regarding all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions. The Headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:
• Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain students that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
• Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
• Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates