DIOCESE OF Bath&Wells
Living and telling the story of Jesus

Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Guidelines for Parishes

Diocesan Stance

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. The Diocese of Bath and Wells is committed to promoting dignity and respect at work for all who serve in it. Abuse, harassment and bullying – however rare - will not be tolerated.

Harassment and bullying can exist in our churches and local communities, and this can seriously affect relationships and working lives by creating stressful, intimidating and unpleasant environments. For this to occur is offensive in itself and profoundly unacceptable in communities that profess the belief that we are all made in the image of God and all called to share the life of Christ.

The Diocese with the support of local churches is therefore committed to:

- Building a culture of positive relationships in local communities
- Understanding what bullying and harassment is
- Eliminating bullying and harassment where it occurs

In order to achieve these goals, the Diocese is asking all Parochial Church Councils to read these guidelines and adopt the statement of intent for their parish to help prevent and tackle bullying and harassment.

What is bullying?

It may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour that serves to undermine, humiliate or disparage the recipient.

What is harassment?

Unwanted behaviour related to a relevant protected characteristic (related to sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and age), which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or insidious but it is always unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. It can take many forms, including face-to-face or written communication including email or telephone conversations.

What are the effects?

If left unchecked bullying and harassment can make people feel anxious and humiliated, they may also feel angry and frustrated at being unable to cope. Others may become ill, frightened, stressed and/or experience a loss of self-confidence and self-esteem.

Actions

It is recommended that all PCCs:

- Read through these guidelines and the statement of intent
- Ratify the statement of intent for your parish, circulate its contents and display in a prominent position to promote awareness
- Ensure that where negative behaviours occur that these are challenged

For further guidance in tackling bullying and harassment please contact our Human Resources Team:

Human Resources
The Diocesan Office, Flourish House, Cathedral Park, Wells, BA5 1FD
Tel: 01749 670777
recruitment@bathwells.anglican.org

Prevention of Bullying and Harassment

Statement of Intent by the Parish of _ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, EASTON-IN-GORDANO__

Dated: _____

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. The priest, wardens and PCC of this parish will seek to ensure that the working environments within their sphere of control are supportive towards all our clergy, Readers, employed staff, volunteers and laity. This includes adoption and implementation of this statement of intent, and being prepared to challenge inappropriate behaviour and take action if such behaviour is evidenced or observed.

Our Parish has adopted the following principles:

- A commitment to promoting dignity and respect for all.
- Zero tolerance of bullying and harassment
- That nobody should be made to feel unwelcome or alone

The following are examples of behaviour that are acceptable and unacceptable in our community.

The behaviours that we wish to model in our parish are:	The behaviours which are not welcome in our parish are:
☑ Actively listening to others ☑ Apologising when something goes wrong ☑ Promoting inclusiveness ☑ Dealing with conflict constructively ☑ Demonstrating a willingness to co-operate and work together ☑ Forgiveness when things go wrong ☑ Providing support and help to others ☑ Respecting the authority and decisions of others ☑ Speaking up for others ☑ Thanking and recognising the effort and contribution of others ☑ Treating others with dignity and respect ☑ Valuing the opinions of others	⊗ Being hostile to others or making them feel unwelcome ⊗ Causing distress, offence or humiliation to others ⊗ Constantly criticising others' work or efforts ⊗ Constantly highlighting errors/mistakes made by others ⊗ Ignoring or excluding individuals ⊗ Ignoring the views of others ⊗ Making of malicious and unfounded allegations of others ⊗ Making insulting or abusive comments about others ⊗ Pointing fingers, invading personal space, blocking or barring the way of others ⊗ Shouting at or being abusive to others ⊗ Spreading rumours/gossip about others

	⊗ Threatening violence or physically attacking others ⊗ Unwelcome sexual advances ⊗ Using malicious or insulting language ⊗ Withholding information from others to isolate them

Everyone in the community is charged with the following responsibilities in order to ensure the prevention and tackling of bullying and harassment in our parish:

- Behaving in ways which support a non-hostile environment for ourselves and those around us
- Being supportive of others
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour and speaking up for others
- Taking action where we observe or have evidence that someone is being bullied or harassed.

If someone feels they are being subjected to inappropriate behaviour they should:

- Talk to the individual who they feel is behaving inappropriately to them. It may be that the person is unaware of the effect that they are having on you. You may want to discuss with them the following points:
  - A clear description of the behaviour that's causing problems.
  - The feeling that this behaviour evokes, for example, 'I feel upset,' or 'I feel hurt.'
  - What your needs are: 'I want to feel included,' 'I want to be respected.'
  - A request for a specific action that is reasonable and practical, for example, 'When we're in meetings, I would like you to include me,' 'When you talk to me, I would like you to use my name.'

- Where this is difficult or doesn't resolve the issue you may wish to get someone else to act on your behalf, for example by speaking to the priest or churchwarden or lay pastoral assistant where they exist. Mediation involving a third neutral person can help to resolve conflict and concerns at an early stage to prevent matters escalating by attempting to reach an agreement about how those involved will interact in the future which might include an agreement to modify behaviour.

- If a member of clergy or Reader is the perpetrator and it has not been possible to resolve the matter locally then you could contact the relevant Archdeacon.