Newbattle Abbey College
Colaiste Abaid a'Bhatail Nuaidh

DIGNITY AND RESPECT POLICY

Our Values

Inclusive



We actively promote and embrace diversity and we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity.

Caring



We act with compassion, integrity and respect at all times, whether supporting our students and visitors or working with our partners and colleagues.



Forward thinking

We look to the future in an ever-changing world, welcome new ideas and fresh approaches and act responsibly to protect the environment.

Empowering



We empower our students by unlocking opportunity and empower our staff by supporting their autonomy and confidence to make decisions and solve problems.

Collaborative



We work as a team to achieve our purpose and with our strategic partners to realise our vision.

1. Purpose

The Dignity and Respect Policy (the "Policy") sets out Newbattle Abbey College's (the "College") commitment to fostering a culture where all staff, students, and visitors are treated with dignity and respect. The College values diversity and aims to provide an environment that is inclusive, supportive and free from offensive, threatening, humiliating, or intimidating behaviour.

This Policy supports the College's strategic vision by embedding its core values—**Caring, Inclusive, Empowering, Collaborative, and Forward-Thinking**—into everyday practice. It reinforces the College's dedication to respect as the foundation for how we work together and make decisions.

The Policy ensures that any incidents or allegations of bullying, harassment, victimisation, intimidation or discrimination are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and resolved fairly.

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all members of the College community, including staff, students, contractors and visitors.

2.2 The Policy covers all activities and interactions associated with, or as a result of, being a member of staff employed by the College, or being a student enrolled at the College.

3. Objectives

3.1 The Policy is designed to:

- Promote a culture of dignity and respect for all.
- Support a thriving community where everyone feels valued, safe, and empowered.
- Encourage everyone to act as role models, fostering respect through their actions.
- Prevent behaviours that undermine the well-being of individuals, including bullying, harassment, victimization, intimidation and discrimination.
- Provide clear guidance on how to raise concerns and ensure that these are addressed promptly and effectively.
- Ensure compliance with legal, contractual, and regulatory obligations, including the Equality Act 2010.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 This Policy is supported by a range of related policies and procedures (see Appendix I) that provide a comprehensive framework for promoting and ensuring dignity and respect within the College.

4.2 All members of the College community are required to adhere to this Policy and related policies to uphold the standards of conduct and behaviour expected within the College.

4.3 This Policy represents the minimum standards for behaviour; where specific legal, regulatory, or governance requirements exist, these will take precedence.

5. Policy Statement

Newbattle Abbey College is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

5.1 All members of the College community will:

- Treat others with dignity, respect and consideration at all times.
- Positively promote inclusivity and equality.
- Avoid engaging in any behaviour that could be perceived to be offensive or disrespectful.

5.2 The College will:

- Ensure all staff and students understand their roles in promoting dignity and respect through training and awareness activities.
- Take all reports of inappropriate behaviour seriously and respond promptly.
- Provide support to individuals affected by unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, harassment, victimisation, intimidation or discrimination.
- Investigate complaints and allegations fairly and take appropriate action where necessary.

5.3 Examples of unacceptable behaviour can include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks, or offensive language.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- Unnecessary and upsetting written or verbal communication.
- Intimidation, threats or coercion.
- Exclusion or isolation of individuals.
- Spreading malicious rumours or knowingly making false allegations.

Further guidance can be found here: Discrimination and bullying | Acas

Such behaviour can take place in any context, including online and via social media.

6. Compliance/Review

6.1 Failure to adhere to this Policy may result in disciplinary action under the appropriate procedures. Where required, incidents may be referred to external authorities such as the General Teaching Council Scotland or, in certain instances, the police.

6.2 This Policy and its associated policies will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain accurate, relevant, and aligned with the College's values and legal obligations.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 The Board of Directors
The Board provides strategic oversight to ensure the College maintains a culture of dignity and respect. Board members themselves are bound by the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges and the principles of conduct in public life in Scotland.

7.2 The Principal
The Principal is accountable for ensuring this Policy is implemented effectively across the College.

7.3 Managers and Leaders
College managers must actively promote the principles of this Policy, address complaints and grievances promptly, and ensure compliance within their areas of responsibility.

7.4 All Staff and Students
Everyone is responsible for adhering to the Policy, modelling respectful behaviour, and reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour.

7.5 External Contractors and Visitors
Contractors and visitors must comply with the Policy when engaging with the College community.

8. Breach of the Policy

All members of the College community are expected to adhere to the principles outlined in this Policy.

8.1 Addressing Breaches Informally
If a breach of this Policy occurs, staff and students are encouraged to address the matter immediately and informally where possible and appropriate to do so. This could involve:

- Speaking directly with the individual(s) involved to explain that their behaviour is unwelcome or inappropriate.
- **For Staff:** seeking support from a line manager or senior colleague for guidance on how to address the issue appropriately and constructively.
- **For Students:** seeking support from the Student Wellbeing and Support Team on how to address the issue appropriately and constructively.

8.2 Addressing Serious Breaches
If the breach is serious, or if informal attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful, staff and students should address or escalate the matter as follows:

- **For Staff**: staff should report the issue to their line manager and/or to a member of the senior management team. The issue will be handled according to the appropriate policy or procedure.
- **For Students**: students should report the issue to a member of the Student Wellbeing and Support Team or to the Curriculum Manager. The issue will be handled according to the appropriate policy or procedure.

8.3 Investigation and Action

Serious breaches will be investigated promptly and fairly, in accordance with the relevant College policies and procedures. Appropriate action will be taken, which may include disciplinary measures for staff or students found to have breached this Policy.

The College is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled sensitively, confidentially, and without fear of victimization for those who raise concerns.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

Title:	Dignity and Respect Policy
Lead Officer:	Depute Principal
Date last reviewed	February 2025
Next Review date:	February 2028
Approved By:	Board
Date first approved:	February 2025

Appendix I

Policies and Procedures Relevant to Dignity and Respect

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Student Code of Conduct