

# Anti-Bullying Guidelines

## St. Paul's College 2014 - 2017

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **St. Paul's College** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the Framework of the School's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

In conjunction with our Code of Behaviour, it aims to provide a safe, caring and positive school environment where all students can develop to their full potential. The caring and Christian/Catholic ethos of our school is promoted by all in the school community.

The aim of St. Paul's college is to ensure that the school maintains a positive climate, where students, teachers, ancillary staff and parents are valued within the school.

### Scope

The ethos of our school encourages mutual respect, care and consideration for others. Our goal is to provide and maintain a positive, safe and secure environment in which everyone can work and learn.

To this end, the aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will enhance the ethos where bullying of any form will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with this policy. *It is expected that members of the wider community, with which the College engages on a regular basis, will also recognise bullying when it occurs and report it to the college authorities.*

### Best Practice

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which-
  - Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - Promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

## Best Practice

- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
  - Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Support for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
- (including use of established intervention strategies);
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

## Definition

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

***Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, (verbal, psychological or physical), conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.***

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- Identity-based bullying such as bullying based on a person's sexuality (LGBT), racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special education needs.
- The following are some of the types of behaviour that may be considered bullying. **Please note that this list is not exhaustive.**
  - Physical aggression
  - Intimidation
  - Cyber-bullying
  - Name calling
  - Damage to property
  - Extortion

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

**However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.**

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

## **Prevention**

It is recognised that everyone is a leader in terms of modelling behaviour. Respectful behaviour needs to be seen between the adults in the school as they are the primary role models. All members of the school community have a role in identifying bullying behaviour. The wider community (including office staff, canteen staff, the caretaker etc.) will be encouraged to report bullying behaviour to the school.

The College will endeavour

- To develop a culture
  - (i) Of trust and respect across the school community
  - (ii) That celebrated difference
  - (iii) Of reporting concerns about bullying including cyber-bullying.
- To provide an environment which encourages pupils to raise their concerns with any staff member.
- To identify times and locations where bullying is more likely to take place and take appropriate action.

## **Raising awareness of and understanding the nature of bullying**

- All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected bullying.
- New members of staff be they whole time, part time or substitute will be given copies of the anti-bullying policy and code of behaviour.

## **Provision of information**

- A friendship week will be held each year.
- Posters re bullying will be placed on college notice boards.
- Teachers will be encouraged to raise awareness of bullying with their students, in particular use of inappropriate words which may label groups and cause offence.

This may be particularly relevant in PE, CSPE, Religion and SPHE classes.

## **Effective Supervision and Monitoring**

- Identifying hot spots and hot times
- Adequate supervision at break-times
- Separation of students according to age and year
- Adequate lines of communication to facilitate and encourage reporting

## Investigation

- It is made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying that they are behaving responsibly. These procedures are intended to reassure any student who is being bullied that he/she will be listened to and his/her case will be dealt with seriously.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the Tutor or Year Head immediately if they suspect or know that a child is being bullied. Parents are encouraged to keep a record of any incidents of bullying noting who, what, when and where.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated by the appropriate Year Head. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.
- The Primary aim for the Year Head in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as it is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).

The Year Head shall use the college recording from (Appendix 1)

- The investigation will endeavour to establish
  - the veracity of the incident/s
  - the intent and extent of the incident/s
  - the seriousness of the incident/s
  - the effect/s of the bullying behaviour on the person/s
- Investigation of incidents of alleged bullying will be conducted in a manner that affords full rights to those concerned in accordance with natural justice.
- No absolute guarantee of confidentiality can be given to a person making a complaint.
- Parents will be informed of their child's involvement in incident/s of proven bullying.
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Persons involved in or witnessing alleged incidents of bullying will be asked to write an account of the incident. This does not necessarily imply that these persons have engaged in bullying behaviour.
- A record of bullying incidents will be maintained by the Deputy Principal in a designated 'Bullying Incident file'. Written accounts and notes made during the investigation will be given to the Deputy Principal who will store them in the 'Bullying Incident' file.
- Those who have been subject to bullying will be supported through the Pastoral Care structures in the school.
- Those who have been found to have engaged in bullying will be encouraged to recognise the inappropriateness of such behaviour and the seriousness of its effects on others.

Following investigation, if the Year Head, in his/her professional opinion, establishes that bullying has occurred;

- He/she will discuss with the Principal and Deputy Principal the most appropriate sanction to be applied. As part of that discussion the following will be considered.
  - The health and safety of the student who was bullied
  - Preservation of the anti-bullying ethos of the school
  - Prevention of further occurrences
  - Reconciliation between parties to the bullying incident
  - The effect on the person/s who were bullying.
- Retaliation against students or others, following or during an investigation, will be regarded as a very serious breach of discipline.
- Following the above intervention, the Year Head will monitor the situation for a period of not less than 4 weeks to establish;
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
  - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
  - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.

### **Support**

All staff shall be made aware of the college policy and their responsibilities at the beginning of each academic year. Students who have been bullied or who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be monitored on a regular basis following the initial 4 week period and in addition, they will be referred to the Pastoral Care Team.

### **Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

### **Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in 2014.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association.

A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Principal)**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next review:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1

### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour


### 3. Source of bullying concern/report (Tick relevant box(es))\*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Location of incidents (Tick relevant box(es))

Yard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus/Coach	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

### 6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))\*

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

--

### 9. Details of actions taken

--

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

## Prevention and Response to Bullying Behaviour

### Points to Note:

1. **Best Practice:** Positive School Culture / school-wide approach / understanding of impact of bullying / prevention strategies / effective supervision / consistent recording and ongoing evaluation and review
2. **Definition:** *Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, (verbal, psychological or physical), conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.*
3. **Types:**
  - Physical aggression
  - Intimidation
  - Cyber-bullying
  - Name calling
  - Damage to property
  - Extortion

Please note that ‘**placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour**’.

4. **Prevention:** Develop a culture of trust and respect / celebrate difference / encourage reporting / model good behaviour / identify times and locations where bullying may occur
5. **Raise Awareness:** Inform staff re responsibilities / inform new staff / organise friendship weeks / use appropriate posters / maintain awareness throughout the year
6. **Investigation:**
  - Use appropriate form.
  - Primary Aim is to resolve. Inform parents.
  - Get accounts written up and file appropriately.
  - Give copy to Deputy-Principal.
  - **Refer to Pastoral Care team.**
  - Apply sanction.
  - Monitor situation for not less than 4 weeks to assess if bullying has ceased and issues have been resolved and relationships restored where practical.
  - Provide appropriate support to injured party(ies)
7. Be aware of importance of prevention and encourage reporting of incidents through constant reference at assemblies and class meetings. Inform re school ethos and culture and that St. Paul’s College supports a friendly, safe and caring school environment.