

ST COLUMBAN'S COLLEGE PROPOSED ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Rationale

All pupils in St Columban's College have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. The staff of St Columban's College are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

All types of bullying are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school

All pupils have a responsibility to contribute in whatever way they can to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. We encourage anyone who is being bullied or who has witnessed bullying to come forward and talk about it. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and listened to.

School's Mission Statement

To provide a caring Christian Catholic environment, conducive to enjoyable learning, in which pupils are given opportunities to grow in confidence, self-esteem and to achieve challenging yet realistic goals

Definition of Bullying

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum defines bullying as 'the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others'.

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- It is repetitive and persistent.
- It is intentionally harmful.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- It causes distress

Forms of Bullying

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil.
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family.
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil.
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person

Links with Other School Policies

This policy is meant to link with and complement our policies on

- Pastoral Care
- Child Protection
- Behaviour policy
- Use of Internet Policy

Participation and Consultation

This will be carried out in consultation with all interested stake holders through

- Awareness raising programmes (Curriculum & parent information evenings)
- Obtaining the views of pupils, parents and whole school staff.
- Obtaining the views of elected student representatives e.g. class council, school's council or prefects
- Seeking the views of parents through distribution of the policy via e-mail/mail shots/publishing on the school's web page.
- Monitoring evaluation and review.

Responsibilities of Stakeholders

All stakeholders have a responsibility to ensure that all bullying incidents are dealt with

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Form teachers will discuss bullying with their form classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher or another adult about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Deal with suspected cases of bullying in accordance with the NIABF document 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour' (appendix1)
- Level 1 and 2 interventions should be dealt with by teachers. (appendix 2)
- Level 3 and 4 interventions should be referred to the Pastoral Vice-Principal or the Principal. (appendix 3)
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

- Keep records of any incidents that they have deal with. Provide these records to Year Heads and the Senior Management team so that a report can be made to the Board of Governors. (an example of record keeping , appendix 4)

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their suffering and that of other potential targets.
- Speak to parents/guardians, teachers or even get a friend to speak on your behalf.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their form teacher or other member of staff that they may feel comfortable talking to and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying.
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of displaying bullying behaviour, try to ascertain the truth. They should point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the children displaying bullying behaviour.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying

Preventative Measures

The Personal and Social Development Programme will cover the topic of Bullying in each year group at an appropriate level. Pupils will be encouraged to develop life skills that will enable them to recognise areas where bullying can occur and develop strategies for dealing with them. Pupils

are encouraged to develop empathy for those individuals that could be seen as 'different' and to recognise their own differences and in addition it is our aim that pupils will develop life skills. In this context the skill of dealing effectively with situations in which one feels threatened will be given appropriate emphasis.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Schools

The School will follow the procedures as laid out in the 'Effective Response to Bullying Behaviour' by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the form teacher who will inform the Year Head. Each Year Head will keep a record of all Bullying incidents which will be made available to the Principal for the report to the Board of Governors
- Initially the form teacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- The year Head will be kept informed and if it persists the Year Head will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- When deemed necessary; parents will be informed
- Disciplinary measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have exhibited bullying behaviour will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- If necessary informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Relevant agencies can be contacted for advice and support, these include the EWO, Behavioural Management Team, Educational Psychology, Pupil Personal Development Team.
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation.

Continuous Professional Development of Staff

This will happen in accordance with St Columban's staff development policy

Signature – Principal

Date

Signature – Chair, Board of Governors

Date

This policy will be reviewed annually

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2

Level 1 Intervention - Low Level Bullying Behaviour

Interventions at Level 1 are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to “get them back on track” while listening to and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying.

NEVER ignore low level bullying behaviour.

Staff should;

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with the school’s values.
- Identify possible consequences if the bullying behaviour continues.
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the bullied pupil.
- Talk with the pupil being bullied to explore whether he/she has in any way provoked the bullying behaviour.
- Help the bullied pupil to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support.
- Encourage reparation to be made, if appropriate.
- Monitor the situation carefully.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

Level 2 Interventions - Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour

While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is shift from individual support to group interventions. To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent and involvement of the pupil being bullied.
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability.
- Parental / carer consent and agreement from participating pupils.
- Carefully selected group membership.
- To take place in a suitable and comfortable environment.
- To be uninterrupted.
- To be facilitated in a positive manner, ideally by two adults whose roles may alternate allowing one to participate and one to observe.
- Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity.
- Decision and outcomes to be agreed and recorded, e.g. on a flipchart.
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- A solution focused approach to the situation.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- Regular meetings of the group.
- Regular meetings with the bullied pupil to assess on going effectiveness of agreed actions.
- To ensure regular feedback is given on agreed actions.

APPENDIX 3

Level 3 Interventions - Complex Bullying Behaviour

Interventions at Level 3 will often involve the Pastoral Coordinator, SENCO, and other senior managers, in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents to determine the way forward in affecting change. Schools may use their individual Risk Assessment procedures which will determine a plan of intervention and risk management that will be communicated to all.

This planning may occur through a multi-agency discussion, involving ELB Services and other external support agencies. The manner in which teachers and others are involved in planning and how they are kept informed about the implementation of the plans will vary.

Bullying at this level often involves complex group dynamics, where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying. Consequently

interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement. These will often require group interventions as discussed in Level 2 (see Support Group Method, and/or The PIKAS Method of Shared Concern, along with individual support and strength building programmes.

Level 4 Interventions - High Risk Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviours assessed as Level 4 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved. As such, the school's Child Protection policy and safeguarding procedures will need to be invoked. Advice and support will be available to schools through the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

In addition to safeguarding procedures and practices including referral to external support services, the school's interventions at Level 4 should continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

APPENDIX 4

Click [here](#) to view Appendix 4