



## **Bullying Policy**

### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy relates to all students in the College while they are under the care of the school, be that on the school grounds itself or during events outside the school under school supervision.

*As long as you're a member of the College community—you will not bully any other member.*

It is expected that students will adhere with the spirit of this policy at all relevant times. The Code of Behaviour in relation to bullying must be adhered to as it is an aspect of the College's Code of Behaviour.

It is affirmed in the the school's Mission Statement that "...every effort is made to create a safe and secure environment...for the students". Arising from that aim, it is an objective of this policy to see to it that the student environment will be free from every type of bullying, as far as it is possible to reasonably do that in the context of the available resources.

### **Philosophy and Objectives**

Giving due recognition to the various negative effects that bullying has on students, the school's management regards bullying as a very serious matter.

### **Aims/Objectives**

In concrete terms, what is likely to be achieved by this policy? The objectives listed below are the probable objectives:

- The creation of a school ethic that empowers/encourages students to expose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- The fostering of awareness in relation to bullying, which is said to be a type of anti-social behaviour, among the school management, teachers, students, parents/guardians
- The creation of a school ethic that recognises, includes and respects the diversity of students across the nine grounds encompassed by the equality legislation
- Ensuring that the school's Social, Personal and Health Education stimulates awareness of the factors that accompany bullying behaviour and that it develops knowledge, skills and appropriate behaviour
- The implementation of practical steps to prevent incidents of bullying, e.g. ensuring comprehensive supervision and monitoring by which a close eye can be kept on all school activities
- The development of procedures in relation to reporting and recording incidents of bullying behaviour

- The development of procedures in relation to investigating incidents of bullying behaviour, and to dealing with them
- The development of a support program for those people affected by bullying behaviour, as well as those who resort to bullying behaviour
- Working with, and through, various local agencies to act against every kind of bullying and every kind of anti-social behaviour

### **The Provisions of this Policy**

The College management’s understanding of bullying is that it consists of ongoing threatening behaviour on the part of an individual or a group, whether it be verbal, psychological or physical.

Harassment/sexual harassment is recognised as bullying. Even though individual threatening incidents are taken seriously and will not be tolerated, those cases will be dealt with outside the scope of this policy through the normal disciplinary procedures.

### **Harassment**

Any kind of uninvited behaviour covered by any one of the nine grounds listed in the equality legislation and which has as its objective or its result that the dignity of the person is violated and that it creates an atmosphere that is threatening, hostile, degrading or aggravating to the victim.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Any kind of uninvited behaviour, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical, which has as its objective or its results that the dignity of the person is violated and that it creates an atmosphere that is threatening, hostile, degrading or aggravating to the victim.

The nine grounds are gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Travelling Community.

<b>Type of Bullying</b>	<b>Examples of Physical, Verbal or Psychological Behaviour</b>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any one of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racial bullying and so on</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Teasing</li> <li>• The development, display or distribution of written words, pictures or other material which have as their objective the intimidation of another person</li> <li>• Graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gestures</li> <li>• Staring</li> <li>• Invasion of private space</li> <li>• A combination of the types listed above</li> </ul>
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silent telephone calls</li> <li>• Insulting/vile telephone calls</li> <li>• Insulting text messages</li> <li>• Insulting e-mails</li> <li>• Insulting messages/blogs/pictures from websites</li> </ul>
Homophobic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The spreading of rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person who has a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Gestures e.g. gay, queer, lesbian</li> </ul>
Racial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, bias, statements or insults based on colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or Traveller background</li> </ul>
Relational	<p>This relates to manipulating relationships as a means of bullying, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation and exclusion</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding a person from the group</li> <li>• Taking a person's friends away from them</li> <li>• 'Bitching'</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Revealing something told in confidence</li> <li>• Speaking loudly enough that the victim will hear</li> <li>• Staring</li> </ul>
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome statements of a sexual nature</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>

### Information Campaign

The students will be informed about the College's policy in relation to bullying and the issue will be kept current throughout the school year through a program of events at different times.

The staff will remain vigilant for the signs of bullying and will be kept informed in relation to the matter. All school activities will be monitored and supervised as far as possible according to resources.

Parents will be informed about the College's policy in relation to bullying and they will be encouraged to actively support it and they will be invited to participate in its development and review.

### **Reporting Bullying Incidents**

Practices will be put in place, as specified below, to give formal recognition to incidents of bullying, to investigate and to deal with them.

The Head Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher will be immediately informed in relation to serious cases.

The parents of those bullied and the parents of the bullies will be informed and given an opportunity to discuss the situation and to give their children support before the school takes any further steps.

If it is found to be appropriate, every effort will be made to find a way to satisfy the needs of both sides so that a resolution may be found and that further bullying may be avoided.

In the case of an allegation of bullying against a member of staff, that person, and the Head Teacher if necessary, will be informed.

### **The procedure for dealing with bullying**

The following is the procedure to be used:

- Make a report of the bullying to any one of the teachers (for example, after class, in the form of a note with homework, seek the help of a parent)
- The teacher will deal with the case as appropriate (What happened? Where did it happen? At what time? Who was involved? Who else saw/heard what happened), or
- The case will be referred to the Head Teacher/Class Teacher
- The Head Teacher/Class Teacher will consult with the parents of the student who is being bullied and the parents of the student who is doing the bullying
- Counselling will be provided to the student who has suffered bullying
- Counselling will be provided to the student who has carried out the bullying. Penalties will be applied. The severity of the penalties will depend on the seriousness and the frequency of the bullying.
- The staff and the Head Teacher will carry out ongoing monitoring on cases of bullying.

### **Monitoring Procedures**

Reports of cases of bullying that come to light will be brought up at ordinary meetings of the teachers.

The Head Teacher will give updated reports.

### **System of Review**

This Policy came into effect on 12 April 2011.

The Bullying Policy will be reviewed at the end of the year and its effect will be considered.

Amendments will be considered, discussed and published.

The policy will be comprehensively reviewed after three years.