

St. David's C.B.S., Artane, Anti-Bullying Policy

1. 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 David's CBS School 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.
2. 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;
 - 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;
 - Supports for staff;
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. 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,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Class Teacher
- Year Head
- School Counsellor
- Class Tutor
- Any teacher with whom you feel comfortable telling.
- Home School Liaison Person
- Deputy Principal
- Principal
- Friend in School

- Transition year Buddy system

Note: Malicious or False accusations of bullying will be considered as serious incidences of misbehaviour.

How To Tell:

- Direct approach to a teacher/class tutor etc e.g. on the corridor, in the yard or before or after class.
- Get a parent or friend to tell on your behalf or to phone the school.
- Use the confidential questionnaire.
- Anti-bully Box, available in Deputy Principals Office. Students may leave a **signed** note in the box.
- Friendship Website
- Send an email to Principal via School website.

N.B. Parents are encouraged to contact the school.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

We implement the Department of Education and Skills “Cool School” Anti Bullying Programme in St David’s CBS.

This programme includes the following strategies;

The whole school, including the Teachers, Pupils and Parents are involved in the formation of the school’s Anti-Bullying policy.

Students and Parents on admission to the school sign an Anti Bullying contract and are informed about the Cool School Anti Bullying Programme.

A Friendship week is organised by the Staff and Students each year during which

- The Cool School Student Curriculum is taught **by the class tutor.**
- A Confidential Questionnaire is administered **by the class tutor.**
- Consultation with 1st year Parents prior to their son coming into St. David’s CBS.

- The class tutor **takes responsibility for administration of** the confidential questionnaire to each class at least once a year. This questionnaire is designed to identify and then help any students having problems with bullying.
- **The class tutor takes responsibility for acting on information garnered from the confidential questionnaire.**
- The school's Anti-Bullying Policy will be circulated to new staff members in St. David's.
- All students are made aware of the anti-bullying policy in their school journal.
- Parents of incoming first years are encouraged to inform the school of any ongoing bullying incidents at the induction meeting & Coffee morning meetings throughout the school year with HSLO, Class Tutor and Year Head.
- All parents are encouraged to inform the school if they have concerns about bullying.
- Visual reminders throughout the school building and in classroom, reinforcing Anti-Bully in our school.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows

Where teachers become aware of an incident of bullying the following general procedures will be used:

- A year-head, class tutor or subject teacher may deal with an incident of bullying if they feel they can resolve the situation.
- Any staff member may refer a bullying incident to the Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.
 1. The student / all involved will be listened to by the person to whom the incident is reported.
 2. The incident will be investigated.
 3. Where possible, two teachers will be present during the investigation of a serious incident.

4. Where it is clear that a bullying incident has occurred, depending on the seriousness of the offence, the problem will be resolved according to the following agreed sanction system:

- Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal, having investigated the incident, will choose from among the following:
 - Give a serious talk to the students involved in the bullying behaviour and seek an apology
 - Give a verbal warning and seek an apology
 - Refer to anti-bullying agreement signed by the parents/ guardians as a condition of admission to the school.
 - Where a class has an Anti-Bullying Agreement. This may also be referred to.
 - Speak to the class about bullying.
 - Speak to the parents/guardians.
 - Elicit the support of the parents/guardians (e.g. through a verbal or written agreement).
 - Ask the students involved for a written account of the incident.
 - Refer the student/students for support or counselling.
 - Restorative Justice Session with Deputy Principal.

Where bullying behaviour does not improve, implement sanctions in accordance with the school discipline policy:

- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Letter of apology, Verbal Apology, Written account of how victim would feel in a bullying situation.
- Payment for damage done where appropriate.
- Suspension and seek agreement regarding future behaviour on return to school. (Records are kept of all suspensions and students are seen by the school guidance counselor on return to school following a suspension.)
- Exclusion from school.
- Informing appropriate authorities e.g. Juvenile Liaison Officer/Gardaí.

- Refer the matter to the Board of Management

Privacy

Generating, circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and pupils where such circulation undermines, humiliates causes offence or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of school discipline and may result in disciplinary action. As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a pupil or pupils where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

How Victims will be supported in School:

- Teacher will talk in a supportive way to the victim
- Teacher will talk in a supporting way to the parents of the victim
- Refer the victim to a counselling programme, where appropriate
- Encourage victim to talk to as many people as possible: friends, parents, etc.
- Encourage the victim to make friends and stay with friends. Friends are a good protection against bullying

Help for the Offender:

- Teacher will talk to the offender/offenders' parents in a supportive way
- Help the offender to realise that his behaviour is unacceptable and is causing distress
- It would be useful to find out why the student is involved in bullying behaviour
- Where appropriate, refer the offender for counselling.

Sanctions Agreed in Relation to Bullying:

Aims:

To ensure there is no ambivalence with regard to the rights of each student to a safe and secure learning environment

To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ .

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. 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 where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____

Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

(Principal)

Date: _____

Date:

Date of next review: _____

Appendices:

Appendix 1:

How New Staff, Pupils, Parents are Made Aware of Practice in the School:

- New staff will be informed via the teachers handbook
- New parents a) at a meeting of new parents and b) an abbreviated copy of the anti-bullying policy in their son's homework journal
- New pupils a) class tutor will inform each class and b) an abbreviated copy of the anti-bullying policy in their homework journal
- Anti-Bullying policy on schools website.

How Bullying Measures will be evaluated:

- New information arising from a confidential questionnaire or bullying sociogram will confirm the usefulness of this method to a staff member
- Class tutor/subject teacher will know if there is a different atmosphere after a specific anti-bullying impact (such as anti-bullying week/project on bullying/S.P.H.E. module on bullying etc)
- The reoccurrence or non-reoccurrence of bullying following school personnel intervention will point to the failure or success of the steps taken

- From time to time bullying will be discussed at staff meetings, assessing the current level of bullying, raising awareness and prompting fresh initiatives.

Appendix 2:

Cyber Bullying:

Cyber-bullying is deliberately hurting someone's feelings using information and communication technology such as;

- Emails
- Mobile phones
- Instant messaging
- Social networking sites
- Chat rooms
- Blogs
- Online gaming sites
- Online polling sites

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CYBER-BULLING

- Hide your personal details.
- React appropriately to hurtful or nasty messages.
- Block the sender of hurtful or nasty messages.
- Set networking sites and profiles to "PRIVATE".
- Save nasty links, texts, messages and emails.
- Never open messages from someone you don't know.
- Always ask permission before revealing someone else's details.
- Only give details to trusted friends you know in real life.
- Do not give your password to anyone (with the exception of parents/guardians)
- Change your password often.
- Follow netiquette – communicate clearly, use emoticons and be polite.

ALWAYS REPORT CYBER-BULLYING IMMEDIATELY TO A TRUSTED ADULT

Link: www.stdavidscbs.ie/careerguidance ; Guidance Articles