

Anti-Bullying Policy



**St Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School
Killester, Dublin 5**

Date ratified by Board of Management:	May 2013
Last reviewed	September 2018

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement:

St Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School, Killester aims to provide an all-round education in a Christian environment. We seek to:

- enable each student to reach her full potential
- to accept responsibility for her own actions
- to respect the rights of others
and
- to make a positive contribution to the building of a better world.

Core Values

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the Environment

The following document is The Anti-Bullying Policy prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- The Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

and in keeping with:

- St Mary's Holy Faith, Killester, **Mission Statement** and **Core Values** (see above)

1. St Mary's Holy Faith Killester has developed this 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*** published by the Department of Education and Skills in September 2013.

2. St Mary's Holy Faith Killester Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students 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 students 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;**
- **Effective supervision and monitoring of students;**
- **Supports for staff;**

- **Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies);**
and
- **Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.**

3. Definition of bullying.

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.

In St Mary's the following forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable:

Physical:

This includes pushing, shoving, pulling hair, damaging personal property, deliberate obstruction, throwing objects and making threatening gestures.

Verbal:

This includes name-calling, mocking, abusive language, rumour-spreading, abusive phonecalls.

Psychological:

This includes intimidation and isolation.

Sexual:

This includes snide remarks with sexual undertones, use of gestures, sexual graffiti, inappropriate touching and homophobic bullying

Racial:

This includes mimicking accents, racist comments regarding colour, ethnic background, sneering at cultural differences, name-calling.

Relational:

This includes planned organized hostility, deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, identity-based e.g. homophobic, transphobic, targeting Travellers, those with disabilities or those with special educational needs.

Cyber-bullying:

This includes bullying by use of text messaging, e-mail, social network sites, instant messaging and other on-line technologies.

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.

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

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Teachers who are members of St Mary's Anti-Bullying Team

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. St Mary's Holy Faith Killester in keeping with its **Mission Statement** and **Core Values** undertakes to focus on developing students' awareness and understanding of bullying, including causes and effects. This will be implemented by using a variety of strategies and programmes, including the following:

- SPHE and CSPE programmes in the Junior Cycle
- Most-recently developed PDST resources
- UP2US anti-bullying programme – to be delivered by the **Anti-Bullying Team** to all 1st Year and all 2nd Year students
- Connect with respect (safe use of social media) from the **Garda Schools' Programme**
- **Dedicated Friendship Week** where a variety of initiatives/events will focus on anti-bullying themes in all subject areas
- Use of **student-produced posters** around the school, promoting the school's zero tolerance stance with regard to bullying and encouraging students to report incidents of bullying
- Use of **Year-group assemblies** to discuss the school's Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of **Student Council** and **Prefect** meetings to make them aware of anti-bullying procedures within the school
- **In-service for staff** on issues related to the Anti-Bullying Policy within the school e.g. use/misuse of social media and cyber-bullying
- Regular **communication** with parents regarding the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Using the **Parents' Association** as a forum for discussion/review of the school's Anti-Bullying policy.

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:

- Anyone (students, parents, third parties) may report bullying incidents to any teacher (or ancillary staff member) who then makes a report to the relevant Year Head(s)
- Very serious cases will be referred to the Principal e.g. students who are being bullied on a regular basis, students who are very distressed, students who have been assaulted or who have been threatened with assault
- The Year head(s) may seek information and advice from the following: Class Tutor(s); Anti-Bullying Team; school Counsellor; outside agencies; educational psychologist; Gardaí

- The victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be interviewed by the relevant teacher(s)
- Witnesses may be interviewed by the relevant teacher(s)
- Written statements will be taken by the relevant teacher(s)
- Parents/guardians of the victim(s) and of the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed
- Many bullying incidents may be resolved by explaining to the bullying student(s) what is wrong with the behaviour, by obtaining an agreement to stop this behaviour and by issuing an apology to the victim
- In cases where bullying behaviour requires sanctions the school's Code of Behaviour needs to be deployed. (see Code of Behaviour-Serious misbehaviour - Bullying and Extreme misbehaviour-persistent bullying) . These examples are dealt with by the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year head. Sanctions may include
 - In-house suspension
 - Being placed on report
 - Suspension (in line with the NEWB guidelines)
 - Expulsion (in line with the NEWB guidelines)
- The relevant teacher will record the bullying behaviour and will keep any/all records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the matter.
- Where the relevant teacher feels the bullying behaviour has not been addressed within 20 days or whenever he/she considers the bullying behaviour is of a serious nature, the behaviour will be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal
- Where a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying problem has been dealt with they will be referred the school's complaints' procedures.

7. The school's programme of support for students affected by bullying is as follows. Examples of supports which may be put in place for the victim and the bully include:

- Speaking with Year Head(s)/Anti-Bullying Team member
- Meeting with school Counsellor or external agencies, or both
- Invite the victim and the bully to a meeting with a mediator to afford them the opportunity of resolving the issue themselves
- Bully to sign an agreement undertaking to change behaviour
- If suspended, the bully's return to school is dependent on certain conditions being met
- The Year Head(s) will follow up on progress.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Students

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 students or staff or the harassment of students 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 _____ [date].

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, provided to the Parents' Association and a copy will be provided to the general body of parents and students on request. A copy of this policy will be made available on request to representatives of the Department of Education and Skills and to representatives of the patron body Le Chéile.

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, provided to the Parents' Association and a copy will be provided to the general body of parents and students on request. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available on request to representatives of the Department of Education and Skills and to representatives of the patron body Le Chéile.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 1

This document has been drawn up in consultation with the school community using the templates provided by the Department of Education and Skills in its publication ***Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (September 2013)***.

Submissions were received from the Student Council and from a dedicated **Anti-Bullying Team** from among the staff:

Mairéad Burke
Regina Harte
Deirdre Lalor
Kenneth Kavanagh
Norma Pratt

The following publications were also consulted to guide the drafting of this document:

- ***Action Plan on Bullying – Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills*** (January 2013)
- ***Schools for Health in Ireland – framework for developing a health-promoting School (Health Service Executive)***
- ***Webwise Information Advice for Schools*** (www.webwise.ie)
- ***Up2us – Anti-Bullying Teachers’ Handbook***
- ***Coolschool Programme***
- ***Bullying – a Practical Guide to Coping for Schools (Michelle Elliot)***

Appendix 2

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach students what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve students in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive affirmation.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of students with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to students when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines
- Explicitly teach students about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage students to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with students who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in student-friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.

Appendix 3

Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of student being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class _____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

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

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

School grounds	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<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) & refer to types listed in policy)

Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Racial	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relational	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual	<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 (specify)
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8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

9. Details of action taken

Signed _____
(Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4

Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Please indicate Yes or No as appropriate below by ✓ in the relevant box	Yes	No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?		
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?		
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?		
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?		
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all students?		
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?		
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?		
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?		
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?		
Has the Board received and minuted the Principal's periodic summary reports?		
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?		
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?		
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?		
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?		
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?		
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?		
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?		

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix 5

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board of Management of **St. Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School, Killester, Dublin 5** confirms the following:

The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].

This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department of Education and Skills: ***Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools***.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed: _____
Principal

Date _____