



## St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School

### 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 (now TUSLA), the Board of Management of **St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar 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.

### **Scope of this policy:**

The Policy addresses bullying behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment. While it primarily addresses issues relating to bullying of students by other students, it applies also to bullying of students by staff members and bullying of staff members by students. Issues relating to the bullying of teachers or other school staff by parents, other staff members or members of management are addressed in the separate 'Dignity in the Workplace Policy'.

### **The policy applies:**

- During the school day (including breaks)
- While travelling to and from school
- During school hours
- During extra-curricular activities
- While students are on school trips or tours
- At all times when the students are in school uniform and/or are recognisable as students of the Grammar school
- To any behaviour of a bullying nature (outside school) which seriously impacts on a student's attitude to and participation in school and /or where the matter relates to the school's duty of care to a student
- To inappropriate behaviour using modern technology such as Texting, Internet, Social Media, mobile phones and others which may not yet have emerged when they are shown to adversely affect pupils of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School.

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, written, 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 is (are) as follows (If a student is being bullied they should report the bullying to any of the following members of staff: )**

- ❖ The relevant Form Teacher
- ❖ Any member of the Care Team
- ❖ The Principal or Deputy Principal.
- ❖ Any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable.
- ❖ Any Prefect.

**A report of bullying to any of the above members of staff may be made:**

- ❖ In person – before or after school or during breaks.
- ❖ In writing to any of the above members of staff.
- ❖ By email to a teacher’s school email address
- ❖ A parent may email the Principal ([principal@spcgs.ie](mailto:principal@spcgs.ie)), Deputy Principal (dp@spcgs.ie) or telephone the School Office (01-4543388) and ask to speak to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

**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:**

**Actions to prevent bullying behaviours**

The Grammar School will work proactively to ensure as far as it can that bullying does not take place. Bullying can be prevented by raising the awareness of all in the school community about the reality of bullying and its detrimental effects.

## **The Grammar School uses the following approaches to prevent bullying behaviours:**

- ❖ Teachers endeavour to create an atmosphere in the classroom where bullying is not acceptable. This ethos will be extended throughout the school at all times.
- ❖ Teachers use aspects of the curriculum to raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour including RE, SPHE, CSPE and PE and all other subjects where relevant.
- ❖ Form teachers discuss bullying behaviour with their form class at least once per term during the daily registration period.
- ❖ When discussing bullying behaviour, teachers and form teachers will stress to pupils the importance of reporting matters of concern.
- ❖ Visiting speakers will be invited to discuss bullying behaviour and its effects with both students and staff.
- ❖ There is ongoing Supervision and monitoring of students' behaviour, including locker areas, the school yard and corridors.
- ❖ A bullying Awareness week' will be organised each year to raise awareness of the issues involved.
- ❖ All school staff will treat students with respect and will continue to seek opportunities to enhance the self-worth of all students.
- ❖ Development of a common 'School Anti-Bullying Charter' for display in all classrooms.
- ❖ The use of questionnaires for students to elicit their experiences with regard to bullying behaviours.

**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**

**Reporting Bullying behaviour:**

**Bullying behaviour** should be reported to any of the persons listed below:

- ❖ The relevant Form Teacher
- ❖ Any member of the Care Team
- ❖ The Principal or Deputy Principal.
- ❖ Any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable.
- ❖ Any Prefect.

*The **Care Team** comprises:* The Principal, Deputy Principal, the School Chaplain, the Guidance Counsellor, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the Learning Support teachers.

**Noting and Recording Incidents of Bullying.**

- ❖ All reported incidents of bullying are to be recorded by the **staff member** to whom the incident was first reported.
- ❖ Reports should be passed on to the Form Teacher and Principal or Deputy Principal for further investigation.
- ❖ Access to these reports and details of subsequent investigations will be on a need to know basis and will be retained in line with the schools GDPR policy.

## **Procedures in dealing with bullying behaviours:**

The procedures for dealing with reports of bullying behaviour involve a number of steps:

### **Step 1**

Initial investigation of reported bullying will be carried out by the teacher to whom the incident was first reported or the Form Teacher or the Principal or Deputy Principal as deemed appropriate for the particular circumstances, severity of the allegations and number of individuals that may be involved.

The investigation will involve speaking with the complainant(s) and to those alleged of bullying. During these meetings notes will be taken as a record. All parties will be requested to give a written account of the incident(s) in their own words. Where appropriate, witnesses to the event(s) will be sought and written accounts requested of them also.

Complaints of bullying of or by a staff member will always be investigated by the Principal.

### **Step 2**

If the investigation determines that bullying has taken place, then the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. Restorative practice may be used if appropriate and is likely to be the preferred option in most circumstances. The parents/guardians of all concerned will be notified as appropriate.

### **Step 3**

Counselling will be offered to any or all students involved in a bullying scenario if deemed appropriate. This would follow discussion with their parents/guardians and with the students themselves.

### **Step 4**

In all serious cases of bullying or for repetitive bullying events the Deputy Principal and/or Principal will take charge of the investigation from the initial stages and any of the full range of sanctions noted in the Code of Behaviour may be applied.

**7. The Grammar School's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :**

- ❖ Students that have been involved in bullying will receive the utmost privacy and confidentiality. They will be given the opportunity of speaking with the Guidance Counsellor and any member of the pastoral care team will be available to talk to them.
- ❖ The school will address the attitudes of bullying within the school community through the administering of questionnaires to class groups (by SPHE teachers) annually.
- ❖ A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying, during Bullying Awareness Week.
- ❖ Bullying will be incorporated into SPHE and Guidance lessons for each class group within the Grammar School.
- ❖ In a case where sanctions need to be imposed, they will be enforced, as per the school's Code of Behaviour, by the Form Teacher, or the Principal.
- ❖ Following an investigated incident of bullying, Form Teachers, members of the Care Team and break-time Supervisors will monitor the behaviour of the students involved.
- ❖ Staff will be informed of all necessary developments in bullying incidents. They will be asked to monitor and observe the students or classes involved in specific incidents and to pass on these observations to the Form Teacher or member of Senior Management.
- ❖ Parents or guardians will be informed of all serious incidents and if necessary, they may be required to join in the restorative approach to resolving the issue.
- ❖ Training in resilience will be provided if appropriate.
- ❖ Any teacher that is concerned about potential bullying incident may seek further advice from Senior Management or from a member of the Care Team.

## **8. Links to Other Policies and to Subject Plans.**

This policy is consistent with other policies in St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- SPHE/RSE Policy
- Learning Support
- Admissions Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace

This policy links to the following Curriculum Plans :

- SPHE: the issue of bullying is dealt with in each of three years of Junior Cycle SPHE.
- Anti-bullying lessons, are taught by subject teachers and Form Teachers during Bullying Awareness Week.
- Other Planned events that address bullying issues are:
  - During Transition Year
  - Each Year during Senior Cycle SPHE.
  - Daily Registration time with Form Teachers
  - Weekly Assembly
  - Bullying Awareness Week.

## **9. 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.

## 10. 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.

11. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020

12. This policy has been **made available to the Trustees, school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.** A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and skills, if requested.

13. **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 and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Trustees and the Department.