



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 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.

"The role of the school is to provide the highest possible standard of education for all its students. A stable secure environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. As such, it is an issue, which must be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school – based measures and strategies through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour'.

The purpose of this policy is to seek to protect all members of our school community from bullying behaviour and to raise awareness among staff and students about how to respond appropriately to bullying behaviour.

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:

February 2024

- ✦ 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 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'.

This policy refers to all students at Saint Patricks Cathedral Grammar School. This also refers to students on exchange programmes and visiting students.

The policy applies at all times during the school day, from 8.30am (when school opens) until 6.15 pm (when school closes on a normal school day). The policy also applies to students engaging in extracurricular activities or who are on school

February 2024

business or school run events, which take place outside of normal school hours. (e.g. study, retreats, matches, tours etc.) This policy applies on the school bus to and from school and school events.

The policy may also apply to the behaviour of students outside of the hours mentioned above, if the behaviour impacts on the good reputation of the school, the school environment, the welfare of a staff member or on a situation which has already been managed at school level.

This policy takes effect from the date of ratification.

This policy is informed by Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying, Dept. of Education publication, December 2022. This document refers to the UN Convention on the Right of the child, ratified by Ireland in 1992, in which bullying is referred to as a "children's rights issue."

Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying is rooted in the following four key principles:

- Prevention: Through the generation of empathy and the provision of training which provides a foundation for knowledge, respect, equality and inclusion
- Support: Tangible and targeted supports based on a continuum of needs which provide a framework for school communities to work together.
- Oversight: Visible leadership creates positive environments for children and young people and all members of our school community .
- Community: Building inclusive school communities that are connected to society, and that support and nurture positive relationships and partnerships .

Definitions

"Bullying".

Cineáltas defines bullying as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

“The school community.”

The school community is defined as students, teachers, SNAs, a parents and guardians, management, secretarial, caretaking and other support staff. It also includes visitors to the school and 3rd level students on placement in our school.

“Parent (s) / Guardian (s)”

While appropriate efforts are made to include all interested parties, the school corresponds *in the first instance* with the first-contact parent / guardian, according to the directions given by the family on enrolment.

Relevant Teacher.”

This is the teacher with whom an initial concern of bullying / unwanted behaviour is raised or the teacher to whom this initial concern is referred through the school’s Pastoral Care Structure.

“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.”

Bullying is oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons. (Ken Rigby 1996).

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

February 2024

- At all times when the students are in school uniform and/or are recognisable as students at 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 LGBTQ+ 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.

February 2024

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 AntiBullying 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 OR Mentor

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), 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, LGBTQ+ 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 always extended throughout the school.
- ✦ Teachers use aspects of the curriculum to raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour including RE, SPHE, Guidance Related Learning, CSPE and PE and all other subjects where relevant.
- ✦ Form teachers discuss bullying behaviour with their form class at the beginning of a new academic year, and at least once per term during the daily registration period.
- ✦ Guidance Introduction Classes at the beginning of the year, highlights the bullying code of behaviour, with special emphasis in the Induction classes in Form 1. An Anti-Bullying Contract will be signed by all students as part of Admissions and reenforced with Parents and students working with their Form teachers.
- ✦ When discussing bullying behaviour, teachers and form teachers will stress to pupils the importance of reporting matters of concern and the means of reporting an incident.
- ✦ Visiting speakers will be invited to discuss bullying behaviour and its effects with both students and staff. Student led representatives form parts of many teams within the school and provide peer to peer learning about bullying, cyber-bullying and the effects. Examples such as The Amber Flag Team, Cycle Against Suicide Team, Mentors, The resilience Academy-(Pre-Covid), SHONA Project, FUSE DCU Anti-Bullying Programme, WEBWISE, TY led Darkness into Light Awareness/ Fundraiser, and Health and Happiness Week.

February 2024

- ✦ There is ongoing Supervision and monitoring of students' behaviour in curricular and extra-curricular activities, including locker areas, the school yard, corridors, and on school trips/events.
- ✦ A Bullying Awareness week' will be organised each year to raise awareness of the issues involved. Peer to Peer Ambassadors training will occur with Webwise.
- ✦ 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 about bullying behaviours. At the end of every school year, the guidance counsellor surveys students and parents about all aspects of wellbeing and careers. These findings are reviewed and implemented by Senior Management, Board and draws on priorities for the needs of the Guidance and Anti-Bullying Plans.

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 or Mentor.

February 2024

The **Care Team** comprises: The Principal, Deputy Principal, the School Chaplain, the Guidance Counsellor, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), the Learning Support teachers and Form 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. (Using the Bullying Recording Template in Appendix.)
- ✦ 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 conducted 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 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/Deputy Principal.

Step 2

February 2024

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.

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

- ✦ 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 or Guidance Counsellor.
- ✦ A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying, during Bullying Awareness Week/Health and Happiness and Cyber Safety Day.
- ✦ 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/Deputy Principal.
- ✦ Following an investigated incident of bullying, Form Teachers, members of the Care

February 2024

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/Safeguarding
- Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- SPHE/RSE Policy
- Learning Support
- Admissions Policy
- Guidance Plan
- 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.

February 2024

- 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.
- Cyber Safety Day
- Guidance Related Learning
- Induction Days at the start of Terms
- Guidance Profiles Sheets
- Annual Guidance Survey

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.

The Board of Management annually review awareness around the policy with all school staff through the means of a survey sent annually with the Policy.

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. LGBTQ+ 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 16th September 2021.
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.
14. This Policy will be reviewed and ratified on an annually basis after reviewing findings of surveys and meetings among the Pastoral Care Team.

Signed: Tim Gill, Principal _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX E**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 antibullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. 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.

	Yes/No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
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 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 periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
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 a parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any a parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation during the last school year?	
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 (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	

February 2024

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 _____ Date _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____
Principal

February 2024

NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTIBULLYING POLICY

To: Members of the A Parent Council
Members of the Student Council

The Board of Management of Saint Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School wishes to inform you that:

- 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's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed _____ Date
_____ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date
_____ Principal