

The Sacred Heart Language College



Anti-Bullying Policy

***Confident in God's love for us,
we commit ourselves to His service***

Reviewed Autumn 2021

Context

Our mission statement is encapsulated in our belief that 'Confident in God's Love for Us, we commit ourselves to his service'. At The Sacred Heart Language College we are committed to ensuring that all are of equal worth, secure in the knowledge that all are created in Christ's image. Our actions are governed by our living testament to the Gospel values of justice, fairness, respect and equality. These beliefs underpin our commitment to disability equality.

The Sacred Heart Language College believes that all students: should have the right to feel safe, secure and cared for, and should have access to appropriate support, care and education which includes the support to manage their emotions and their behaviour including taking account of, and for their responsibilities.

Policy Ratified by Governors: Spring 2013

Signature:  (Chair of Governors)

Policy Reviewed: Autumn 2021

Signature:



Maria Barrett, Chair of Governors

Policy Statement

The school believe that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment and to be treated with respect by all members of the community.

At The Sacred Heart Language College we are totally committed to the personal well-being of all girls and therefore have zero tolerance of all behaviours that can be deemed to be bullying or peer on peer abuse.

LEADERSHIP AND REPORTING

The school's senior member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection also leads on bullying. Her responsibilities include:

- leading on the development of policy and procedures to prevent and address bullying;
- leading on provision of training, support, advice and guidance to staff;
- providing particular support to Heads of Year and Form Tutors in addressing incidents of bullying;
- maintaining and evaluating a log of all bullying incidents and reporting to governors annually.

DEFINITION

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. Peer on peer abuse, as explained in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021, needs to be considered bullying and reported in the same manner. It can be:

- **PHYSICAL:** A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
- **VERBAL:** Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It often involves spreading rumours or nasty sarcasm/teasing
- **EMOTIONAL:** A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
- **RACIST:** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **SEXUAL:** Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **HOMOPHOBIC:** Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **HOSTILE TO A PARTICULAR RELIGION AND/OR CULTURE:** Because of perceived or actual differences in faith and ways of living.
- **TARGETED AT THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR SPECIAL NEEDS:** Involving crude taunts about appearance, ability, emotional isolation etc.
- **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT:** Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.
- **CYBERBULLYING:** Pupils may be harassed or victimised through the misuse of technology, e.g. the use of internet chat rooms to post offensive messages, threatening or hostile emails, mobile threats by text messaging or calls, inappropriate videos/photographs posted on You Tube etc. Staff may also be subject to offensive, derogatory, humiliating and/or abusive materials posted on websites.
- Changed definitions of consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos which were previously known as sexting.
- Prejudiced and discriminatory bullying which is based on stereotypes and incorrect information.

PREVENTION

The school seeks to prevent bullying in the following ways:

- Promoting good citizenship at assemblies and throughout Pastoral Curriculum Time and Personal, Social and Health Education programme (PCT & PSHE) as well as the curriculum and teaching that bullying is both anti-Christian and wrong.
- Encouraging pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- Encouraging pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- Using opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the PCT, PSHE programme and assembly schedule.
- Not using teaching materials or equipment which give a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- Organising the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide supervision at key times.
- Maintaining a firm but fair discipline structure with rules that are few, simple and easy to understand.
- Treating bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.
- Having an effective complaints process and dealing quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Never assume the attitude of "it can't happen here".

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

When bullying / peer on peer abuse is identified, it will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly as follows:

The school will take steps to investigate allegations and, where bullying is confirmed, to identify the perpetrator.

In the case of cyber bullying action will be taken to remove offensive materials.

Support will be provided to the victim in one or more of the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose;
- informing the victims' parents/guardians;
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it, and if necessary some sessions with the counsellor;
- arranging for them to be escorted to and from the School premises (if necessary);
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

The bully will be helped in one or more of the following ways:

- by making clear that this is inappropriate behaviour and providing them with the opportunity to discuss why they have behaved as they did with the help of the Form Tutor and the Head of Year;
- by reflecting on the Code of Conduct and identifying why their behaviour is inappropriate;
- by monitoring their future behaviour via one of the mechanisms deployed within the school as described by the Behaviour Management Policy such as Link Book Report or Special Report;
- by contacting the parents of the bully and enlisting their help and support;
- by considering the possibility of invoking the help of external agencies if appropriate, e.g. Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or counselling;
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying;
- by continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible via the PSHE curriculum and elsewhere as appropriate such as assemblies.

Disciplinary action may include:

- warning the bully officially to stop offending and placing her on monitoring procedures;
- informing the bully's parents/guardians;
- exclusion from the school premises at break and/or lunch times;
- arranging for them to be escorted to and from the school premises;
- for repeat or serious offences, suspension for a fixed period (one or two days) and placing on a written contract, suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or permanent exclusion.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

All parents and pupils are surveyed on a three yearly cycle using an external questionnaire compiled by Kirkland Rowell. Specific questions are asked regarding (i) the incidence of bullying in the school and (ii) the school's response to any such incidences. In addition the safety and well-being of pupils will be a focus of discussion as part of our Pupil Focus Group programme, our pupil voice meetings and parental surveys at key parents' meetings. The results are presented to pupils, parents and governors at the appropriate meetings. Any concerns that this monitoring highlights will inform future action to ensure that all are enabled to thrive as part of a positive learning community.

The policy is reviewed every two years.

Policy Ratified by Governors: Spring 2013

Signed:



James Coyle (Chair of Governors)

To be Reviewed: Annually

Reviewed: Summer 2018 (07/06/2018)

Reviewed Autumn 2021

Appendix: Guidance to Pupils and Parents

CONTEXT

The school believe that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment and to be treated with respect by all members of the community. Furthermore, all pupils have the responsibility to treat others in the community with respect.

At The Sacred Heart Language College we are totally committed to the personal well-being of all girls and therefore have zero tolerance of all behaviours that can be deemed to be bullying or peer on peer abuse. We promote good citizenship at assemblies and throughout the curriculum and teach that bullying is both anti-Christian and wrong. Bullying is not tolerated in this community and when identified and confirmed, pupils and parents can rest assured that it will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly. Information is given to pupils through Pastoral Curriculum Time (PCT), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and assemblies to help them understand that peer on peer abuse is unacceptable.

INTRODUCTION.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the victims and the bullies. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating or threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING / PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY NECESSARY?

The School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Everyone at The Sacred Heart Language College has the right to be treated with respect, however, we recognise that with a large number of pupils there is the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. Our School actively promotes good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is WRONG and will not be tolerated.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

a). PHYSICAL

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

b). VERBAL

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It often involves spreading rumours or nasty sarcasm/teasing

c). EMOTIONAL

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.

d) RACIST

Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

e) SEXUAL

Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

f) HOMOPHOBIC

Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality

g) HOSTILE TO A PARTICULAR RELIGION AND/OR CULTURE

Because of perceived or actual differences in faith and ways of living

h) TARGETED AT THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR SPECIAL NEEDS

Involving crude taunts about appearance, ability, emotional isolation etc.

i) DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.

j) CYBERBULLYING

Pupils may be harassed or victimised through the misuse of technology, e.g. the use of internet chat rooms to post offensive messages, threatening or hostile emails, mobile threats by text messaging or calls, inappropriate videos/photographs posted on You Tube etc.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

- a. Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- b. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG**.
- c. Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d. If bullied in person, stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e. Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f. Fighting back may make things worse. Talk to a teacher or parent/guardian.
- g. If bullied through the anonymous use of technology, save the offensive material and show it to someone who will help you - ideally your parents in the first instance.
- h. Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
- i. If you do not feel you can talk to a member of staff or your parents, ask for an appointment with a peer counsellor (Heart to Heart) or the school counsellor.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

- a. **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b. Tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c. Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

AS A PARENT:

- a. Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b. Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c. If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d. It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse
- e. Reassure your own daughter there is nothing wrong with her. It is not her fault that she is being bullied
- f. Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- g. If cyber-bullying occurs outside school hours involving pupils, contact the school. We are committed to dealing with such incidents in order to demonstrate our commitment to eradicating bullying amongst the school community.

The school seeks to deal with bullying in the following ways.

- a) Organising the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide supervision at key times.
- b) Using any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other e.g. the PSHE programme and assemblies.
- c) Dealing quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- d) Reviewing the School Policy and its degree of success on a two yearly cycle.
- e) Continuing to have a firm but fair discipline structure with simple rules that are easy to understand.
- f) Not using teaching materials or equipment which give a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- g) Encouraging pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- h) Encouraging pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- i) Treating bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.
- j) Maintaining and evaluating a log of all bullying incidents. This log is maintained in Student Services and evaluated by our Senior Designated Child Protection lead (R. Soroohan) and reported to Governors on an annual basis.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED.

If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken.

We support the victim by:

- offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher or another teacher if they choose;
- informing the victims' parents/guardians;
- offering continuing support when they feel they need it, and if necessary some sessions with the counsellor;
- arranging for them to be escorted to and from the School premises (if necessary);
- taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

We help the bully by:

- making clear this is inappropriate behaviour and providing them with the opportunity to discuss why they have behaved as they did with the help of the Form Tutor and the Head of Year;
- reflecting on the Code of Conduct and identifying why their behaviour is inappropriate;
- monitoring their future behaviour via one of the mechanisms deployed within the school as described by the Behaviour Management Policy such as Link Book Report or Special Report;
- contacting the parents of the bully and enlisting their help and support;
- considering the possibility of invoking the help of external agencies if appropriate, e.g. Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or counselling;
- taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying;
- continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible via the PSHE curriculum and elsewhere as appropriate such as assemblies.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS

We use the following 7 step approach.

1. The bully will be warned officially to stop offending and placed on monitoring procedures.
2. We will inform the bully's parents/guardians.
3. They may be excluded from the School premises at break and/or lunch times.
4. We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
5. If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended for a fixed period (one or two days) and then placed on a written contract.

6. If they then carry on they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days).

7. If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion. Cross reference with: Policy for Acceptable Use of ICT Systems.

CYBERBULLYING OF STAFF:

Offensive, derogatory, humiliating and/or abusive materials posted on websites about staff will be followed up by SLT in order to:

- remove the offensive materials on behalf of staff;
- identify the perpetrator where this is possible. The latter will then be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedures, as outlined above.

MONITORING OUR SUCCESS IN THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING AMONGST PUPILS:

All parents and pupils are surveyed on a three yearly cycle, using an external questionnaire compiled by Kirkland Rowell. Specific questions are asked regarding (i) the incidence of bullying in the school and (ii) the school's response to any such incidences. In addition the safety and well-being of pupils will be a focus of discussion as part of our Pupil Focus Group programme and pupil voice meetings. The results are presented to pupils, parents and governors at the appropriate meetings. Any concerns that this monitoring highlights will inform future action to ensure that all are enabled to thrive as part of a positive learning community.