Anti-bullying Policy

2020 / 2021

St. Michael's College
Listowel, Co. Kerry

QUIS UT DEUS

Reviewed	Ratified by the Board of Management	Review Date
8th April 2021	13th April 2021	13th April 2022

SECTION 1:   Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Positive Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St. Michael's College has adopted the following Anti-bullying Policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Positive 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.

1.1. Legal Context

This policy is developed with reference to the requirements set out in the following Acts:

• The Equal Status Acts 2000-2011

• The Employment equality Acts 1998 – 2008

• The Safety, Health, and welfare at Work Act 2005

• The Education (welfare) Act 2000

• Education Act 1998

and cognisant of the guidelines in the following DES documents:

• Guidelines for Countering Bullying Behaviour 1993

• Developing a Code of Positive Behaviour: Guidelines for schools. NEWB 2008

• Action Plan on Bullying. DES 2013 and 'Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools' September 2013.

• A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers NEPS (2010b)

• Wellbeing in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention. Department of Education and Skills, Department of Health (2013).

SECTION 2: Philosophy of the Policy

2.1   Implementation

In implementing this Anti-Bullying Policy, the College is conscious of the philosophy outlined in the St. Michael's College Wellbeing Policy. This whole school approach has four main pillars of action as a basis to its implementation:

- It builds and reviews its policy and practice annually so that bullying is addressed effectively;
- It builds a positive and supportive school culture;
- It builds understanding and skills in the school community;
- It builds on collaborative partnerships between stakeholders - staff, students, families, the wider school community and external agencies and professional bodies.

2.2   Key principles of practice

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact 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 that:-
    - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
    - promotes respectful relationships across the school community; and
    - encourages students to disclose and discuss allegations of bullying behaviour in a nonthreatening environment.
- A school-wide approach;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that:-
    - build empathy, respect, and resilience in students; and
    - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- Effective leadership;
- 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.

SECTION 3: Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as an "…*unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time*" (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:-

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, and other forms of relational bullying

- name calling, teasing, deliberate inappropriate behaviour to cause insult

- cyber-bullying including sharing and liking of material on social media posted by a third party about a student

- 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 allegations 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 College's Code of Positive 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 College's Code of Positive 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.

Some of the different types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst students are defined in Appendix 4 of this policy document.

SECTION 4: Roles of School Personnel

All members of the school community have an obligation to report allegations of bullying.

The investigation of allegations will normally be conducted by the Class Tutor, the Year Head and/or the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal will be responsible for maintaining the formal record of all bullying allegations within the year groups that are reported. Year Heads will maintain records of investigations specific to their year group. The Principal will be involved in the implementation of sanctions which may require suspension or expulsion.

SECTION 5:   Whole school approach to prevention and education

We undertake a programme to develop a school climate that endeavours to avert allegations of bullying and to make our College a community where bullying will not occur. Where bullying does occur it will be dealt with appropriately.

5.1 Education and Preventive measures in general

5.1.1   College Programmes

- Teaching staff (SPHE teachers) will facilitate the delivery of the DCU FUSE programme with a focus on Anti-bullying and Online Safety. Students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year will engage with the FUSE programme

- At Junior Level, SPHE teachers will use aspects of the SPHE and the Wellbeing programme to raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour. This will be done in a structured way, with the teachers deciding on a series of classes for each group.

- At senior level, class teachers, RE teachers and the Guidance Counsellor will address the topic of bullying and mutual respect.

- First year students will be informed that the College does not tolerate bullying and of the procedures for dealing with bullying. This will be done through the 1st year S.P.H.E. programme and the STEPS Induction Programme. Each programme will work to establish the ethos of reporting bullying;

- The Student Connect Mentoring Programme will encourage Transition Year/5th year students (mentors) to provide support for 1st year students to help them in adapting to their new environment. (c.f. policy on Mentoring for details of this programme);

- A cross-curricular approach will be developed in the College to cover the issue of bullying (both traditional bullying and online bullying) with each year group in a variety of subject approaches, in particular the issue of cyber-bullying;

- Key respect messages will be displayed in all classrooms, in the assembly area and around the school. Student involvement will be encouraged in the development of such messages;

- All students will be taught about the appropriate use of social media.

5.1.2 School Culture

At St. Michael's College, we aspire to promote and embed the following characteristics in the culture of the school:

- Actively promoting the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school;
- The modeling of respectful behaviour by *all* members of the school community ;
- Addressing, in as far as possible, the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school-this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling to students with a disability;

- Using Merit Notes (on Compass) and the School Awards Scheme at the end of the academic year to promote positive behaviour;
- Noticing and acknowledging desired respectful behaviour by providing positive feedback.

5.1.3 Supervision   *(with reference to section 8 of the DES policy template)*

- 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.

- Highlight and teach school rules in student friendly language
- Supervisors should walk around the corridors and enter the classrooms during supervision periods.
- Supervisors should be alert to students who are constantly alone.
- Supervisors should disperse students clustering around toilet areas and ensure that students use the toilet block assigned to them.

5.1.4 Consultation/Whole–School Community

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community;
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour;
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through the formal curriculum, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Students will be provided with

opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions;

- Ongoing professional development to support staff awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on students' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.

- Review meetings, will be held for all relevant teachers to ensure that the policy is being implemented;

- Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers;

- Promotion of an Anti-Bullying Code for the school (this Code was previously developed by the Student Voice Team at the College) - this Code is visible on the walls in each classroom and is included in the student's journal

- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures – including a dedicated area in the school on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Cairdeas Week and parent/guardian seminars; and student surveying (eg. sociograms) as needs arise

- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In this way students will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be clear to all students that when they report allegations of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

- Parents will be advised and encouraged to contact the Principal, Deputy Principal, or any relevant teacher at the school if they suspect their son is being bullied.

- Address issues of access to technology in the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

- The school uses the support of www.childline.ie / www.teenline.ie / www.al-anon-ireland.ie / www.reachout.com / www.aware.ie / www.spunout.ie / www.belongto.org / www.education.ie / www.shpe.ie / / www.hse.ie.

5.1.5   Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula at Junior Cycle and the RSE programme in Junior school and the Wellbeing Programme in senior school.

- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes e.g. Cool School Lessons, On My Own Two Feet, Web Wise, cyber bullying resources, Up2Us, Lockers, SPHE.ie

- The school links with Community Gardaí in relation to issues around personal safety.

- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of Additional Educational Needs students with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in 'Sexual Orientation advice for schools".

5.2 Cyberbullying

5.2.1 Definition:

'Cyber Bullying refers to bullying which is carried out using the internet, mobile phones or other technological devices'. (p.3 *A Guide to Cyber Bullying* - The Office for Internet Safety).

A section on cyber-bullying has been included in this policy since a number of key differences between traditional bullying and online bullying have been identified and require a difference in approach:

- Cyber bullying can happen at any time and in any place and for many young people, home is no longer a safe haven from bullying;
- Online communication between young people is often hidden from adults. Young people are increasingly communicating in ways that are unknown to adults and free from supervision;
- The anonymity that the Internet affords has particular consequences. In most cases, cyber bullies know their targets, but their targets do not always know the identity of their cyber bullies. This can lead to children and young people being suspicious of, and alienated from, all their peers;
- Young people posting messages on the Internet do not feel as responsible for their actions as they might otherwise. They are not immediately confronted with the consequences of their actions and they do not fear being punished for them. The nature of the medium means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. Young people may not be aware that the nature of cyber bullying provides for a permanent record of the bullying offence which could impact them in the future;
- Young people are often fearful of reporting allegations, as they fear that adults will take away their mobile phone, computer and/or Internet access.

5.2.2 School Response

Allegations of which the school has been made aware of will be treated in accordance with the principles and procedures of this Anti–Bullying Policy, the College's Code of Positive Behaviour, the Child Protection Policy, the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy, the Health and Safety Statement and the Policies on Dignity in the Workplace, and other relevant policies.

As part of the whole school approach, the following preventative measures are in place at the College:-

- There is a cross curricular education programme covering the following issues: the principles of netiquette the legal consequences of prosecution. The damaging effects of cyber-bullying for the victim and for the aggressor's reputation
- All social network sites are blocked on student Wifi.

5.2.3 Reporting procedures and investigation

- A student who believes he has or is being subjected to Cyber Bullying as well as any student who has reason to believe a fellow student is being subjected to Cyber Bullying should immediately report the matter to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head or Class Tutor.
- The Deputy Principal or the relevant Year Head shall investigate any reports of such conduct which they receive in line with the general procedures outlined in this Anti-Bullying Policy. Any member of the school community who is found to have engaged in cyber bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline and sanctions.
- In relation to allegations which occur within the school and within school hours, the College's Code of Positive Behaviour will apply. In relation to allegations of cyber-bullying which occur outside the school and outside school hours, the school will engage with such allegations in so far as they impact on life within the school and in accordance with the provisions of the College's Code of Positive Behaviour. Where the school considers that any such allegations have a wider and more serious consequence, they will be reported to the Gardaí and the school will advise parents/guardians of this avenue of approach.

5.3 Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying   *(with reference to section 6.5 of the DES procedures)*

5.3.1 Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying - Definition

"*Homophobic and transphobic bullying is a specific type of bullying which is targeted at those who are, or who are believed to be, LGBT* (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender)." (Action Plan on Bullying: Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills; January 2013)

5.3.2 Strategies and Prevention

In line with the general approach of this policy specific prevention strategies to target Homophophic Bullying are as follows:

1. Identify key staff for support

2. Link with LGBT youth services

3. Be sensitive to the needs of students who regard themselves as being transgender.

4. Make links with youth groups

5. Support LGBT staff

7. Tackle anti-LGBT language, allegations and graffiti on school grounds.

8. Include LGBT topics across the curriculum

9. Tackle anti-LGBT allegations in the classroom

SECTION 6:   School Procedures

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, intervention strategies may vary. On a case specific basis, the College will refer to Rigby's six major methods of intervention (Rigby, 2014), as appropriate, to address the bullying behaviour. These methods of intervention and practical steps of how best they may be utilised are outlined in the PDST Anti-Bullying Support Material:-

1. The Traditional Disciplinary Approach
2. Strengthening the Victim
3. Mediation
4. Restorative Practice
5. The Support Group Method
6. The Method of Shared Concern

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including students, parent/guardian) understand the school's approach to investigating and dealing with bullying from the outset.

The approach will be consistent with the following:

6.1 Reporting bullying behaviour

6.1.1 By Students:

Students will be encouraged to report any allegations or allegations of bullying to any teacher, who in turn will inform Year Head and the Deputy Principal. The teacher will record the details on an Allegation Form on COMPASS, which will be shared with the Year Head and the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal will have responsibility for formally filing the allegation using the Reporting Log. The Deputy Principal will deal with the issue, with the assistance of the Class Tutor and the Year Head, if necessary. As per the DES guidelines, the Deputy Principal, as relevant teacher, should be informed of all allegations of bullying.

6.1.2 By Parents/guardians:

Parents/guardians will be informed that they should report any allegations of bullying to the Deputy Principal. The role of the parent/guardian, in this process, is vital.

6.1.3 By Staff:

Allegations of bullying reported to subject teachers should be forwarded to the Class Tutor, Year Head and/or the Deputy Principal.

6.2 Investigating Reported Allegations

In accordance with our policy, all allegations of bullying received will be investigated. The veracity of the complaint must be established. Separate interviews are advised with the students involved and any witnesses. Allegations should be investigated outside the classroom. In the case of group/gang bullying, each member will be interviewed separately, taking a written account of the individual versions. This should be followed by an interview of the group so as to crosscheck the various accounts, if required. A record of all interviews should be kept. The Deputy Principal will maintain a log of interventions in relation to bullying situations.

6.3 Responding to the Allegation   *(in compliance with section 6 of the DES policy template 2013)*

6.3.1 Principles underlying our response – Restorative Practice:

We work with both the student engaged in bullying behaviour and the student(s) who have/has been victimised separately, establishing for each that the behaviour is unacceptable. It is important for the student who has been victimised that the unacceptable nature of the behaviour is validated and their suffering and hurt acknowledged. It is important also that the student who engages in such behaviour is encouraged to understand the hurtful nature of that behaviour and the necessity to change it.

We endeavour not to label the student as a bully or a victim, since this is to reduce the individual to a behaviour or a state. We work with the understanding that each student has the capacity to change and adapt behaviour to live a freer and fuller life.

We work on the belief that both the student who has been victimised and the student who has engaged in the bullying behaviour may have issues and concerns that need to be listened to and addressed. We believe that both students require help to move on. We work to establish a working peace between both parties - to give each the space to lead their separate lives within the school in safety and without fear. We work to help both parties to improve their self-esteem

so that the student engaged in bullying does not need to bully and the student victimised learns to stand up for themselves. We believe that there must be consequences for behaviour which breaks the Code of Positive Behaviour at the College.

6.3.2 Stages of Response

As already highlighted, we take an incremental approach to addressing bullying at the College. Our approach utilises four stages:

a) An informal stage where the emphasis is on developing the awareness of all parties of the effects of bullying and an understanding of the dynamics involved.

b) Restorative Practice - This phase focuses on restoring the relationships between the parties involved with a view to establishing good relations based on mutual respect.

c) Use of the Code of Positive Behaviour and sanctions - the use of sanctions will be determined by the seriousness of the situation and the response to the interventions at 1 and 2 above.

d) Referral to the Board of Management - This stage is reached only after the previous interventions have not been successful in addressing a situation, or in rare allegations where the issue is of a degree of seriousness as to warrant this response.

The Informal Stage (Stage 1):-

The response strategy is determined by the seriousness of the situation and by the stage in the bullying process at with we have become aware of it. If the process of bullying is identified early enough, a resolution may be arrived at quite easily and quickly. However, if the allegation is very serious or the pattern is well established by the time it is unearthed or reported, it takes longer to unravel and to move to a resolution. In general, a pastoral approach is adopted at first, giving the help and understanding to both parties in order to establish peace or to reinstate good relations.

Towards resolution (Using Restorative Practice) (Stage 2):-

St. Michael's College utilises the Restorative Practice Model which is espoused in our Code of Positive Behaviour. (This model is recommended by the Action Plan on bullying DES 2013, p.87 and the Ombudsman Report p.29).

In approaching a resolution, we understand that resolution will mean different things in different situations: for some it may be reconciliation between friends, for others, it may be an

agreement to go their separate ways and to tolerate each other. We proceed with the understanding that the student who has been victimised must be consulted on the desired outcome to redress the imbalance of power. In general, interventions will only be made with the prior knowledge of the student who has been victimised. However, on occasion it may be necessary for the school authority to intervene unilaterally, if it is judged necessary in the best interests of health and safety and the wellbeing of the students. Both parties will only be brought together to establish an agreement when things have moved on sufficiently and when the student who has been victimised is ready for such a meeting. A follow-up meeting between both parties may be desirable to assess progress. It is important for both students to recognise that the dynamic between them is being monitored. The principles outlined in the Restorative Practice Model are utilised in this stage of the response.

The use of disciplinary measures (Stage 3):-

Any consequences to be imposed are generally held over until the situation has moved on significantly in terms of resolution. If it is appropriate, the student involved in bullying should be made aware of how he/she has breached the Code of Positive Behaviour and what sanctions are to be enforced. In accordance with the Code of Positive Behaviour, sanctions will be enforced according to the seriousness of the issue. Students who have been found to have been engaged in bullying behaviour will be asked to acknowledge their role and the hurtful nature of the behaviour and to apologise to the victim. The format of this apology may change from situation to situation, but in each case should be witnessed and noted by the Deputy Principal.

Referral to the Board of Management (Stage 4):-

Should the behaviour persist or indeed escalate, or as it becomes clear that the previous interventions have failed to encourage or support a change of behaviour on behalf of the students involved in bullying, the situation will be referred to the Board of Management in accordance with the disciplinary procedures outlined in the relevant sections of the Code of Positive Behaviour at the College. In considering any such referral, the Board will have regard to whether or not the student in question has acknowledged his/her role in and the hurtful nature of the bullying behaviour. Should an allegation be of a sufficiently grave nature, it may be appropriate to implement stage 4 of this process without recourse to the proceeding stages of the process.

6.3.3 Involvement of Parents/guardians

Following the four pillars outlined in Section 2.1 above, the College believes that it is essential to involve parents/guardians of both the student who bullies and the student victimised. Parents/guardians will be contacted by the relevant personnel. Parents/guardians will be made aware of developments in the investigation and courses of action to be taken. It is important that parents/guardians are made aware of developments so that they can be given an opportunity to discuss the strategies being considered. Parents/guardians themselves are encouraged to be proactive in contacting the school with any information their son(s) tell them regarding bullying allegations – as detailed in 6.1.2 above.

6.3.4 Complaints procedures

- Should a parent/guardian be unhappy with the response of school personnel to an allegation of bullying, they should, in the first instance complain to the Principal.
- If they are not satisfied with how the complaint is dealt with at that level they should contact the Board of Management.
- If not satisfied with the Board's response, a complaint may be forwarded to the Ombudsman for Children.

Parents/guardians will be informed of this right by the College and of the process for doing so. Procedures for complaint within the College follow the agreed procedures for complaint as outlined in the procedures for Voluntary Secondary Schools, 2000.

6.4 Referral of serious cases to TUSLA

In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where "the allegation is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult TUSLA with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan".

Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, be referred to TUSLA and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

The schools Safeguarding Statement also provides that where school personnel have concerns about a student but are not sure whether to report the matter to TUSLA, the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) must seek advice from TUSLA.

SECTION 7: Supporting Students

All in-school supports, and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
- Student Connect Mentoring Programme
- Class Tutor/Year Head system
- Student Support Team

If students require counseling or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the student affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. Students should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all allegations of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher. The Guidance Counsellor is also available to support all parties affected by bullying. Students may access support in rebuilding relationships, developing self-esteem, resilience and implementing positive coping strategies in both the formal and the informal curriculum. In cases where the College has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a student, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

SECTION 8: Supervision and Monitoring

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.

8.1   Oversight

8.1.1. Periodic summary reports to the Board of Management

At least once per academic term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

(i)   the overall number of bullying cases reported since the previous report to the Board and

(ii)   confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the students involved.

SECTION 9: Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the College 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.

SECTION 10: Adoption:

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 13th of April 2021.

SECTION 11: Communication

This policy is available to school personnel/parents/students, published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Trustee if requested.

SECTION 12: Implementation

12.1   Implementation of the policy continues in the school according to the DES anti-bullying procedures. A standardised checklist to be used in undertaking the review is included in Appendix 2 to these procedures. It should be noted that 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.

The College must put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.

12.2 Review 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 Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be   made available, if requested, to the Trustee and the Department (Appendix 3).

Signed: _____   Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: _____   Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 1

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. 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 *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' council?	
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 pupils?	
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 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 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 (by the bullying recording template) 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_____   Date_____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed_____   Date _____
Principal

Ratified by the Board of Management on 13 April 2021

Appendix 2

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

To: _____

The Board of Management of St. Michael's College 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 13 of April 2021.
- 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. (Appendix 2 of the school policy)

Signed_____   Date_____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed_____   Date _____
Principal

APPENDIX 3   TYPES OF BULLYING

'Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools' DES 2013

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

∗   **Physical aggression**: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking. and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

∗   **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

∗   **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".

∗   **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

∗   **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often namecalling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive

voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

∗ **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books, and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

∗ **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

The grounds for bullying can include but may not be limited to the following

• Gender – being male or female (The European Court of Justice holds that discrimination against a transsexual person constitutes discrimination on the grounds of sex)

• Marital status, being single, married, separated, divorced or widowed.

• Family status – being pregnant or having responsibility as a parent in relation to a person under 18 years, or as a parent or the resident primary carer in relation to an adult with a disability, who needs care or support on a continuing, regular or frequent basis.

• Sexual orientation –being heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual or transgender.

• Religion - having religious beliefs or having none; the term 'religious belief' includes religious background or outlook. Age – applies to persons over 18 years

• Disability - 'disability' is broadly defined. It covers a wide range of impairments and illnesses. It covers all physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities

• Race - includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin.

• Membership of the Traveller community- people who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified by both Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as having a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland (Equal Status Acts 2000-2011).