



St. Louis High 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 (National Education Welfare Board), the Board of Management of Saint Louis High 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 by the Department of Education and Science.
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
 - Support 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

3. 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.

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.

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

The class teacher/subject teacher/staff member who observes or to whom an incident is reported, will record on a R.B.B. (Recording Bullying Behaviour) form an alleged bullying incident.

This form will be given to the Year Head who will conduct a more in-depth investigation if deemed necessary and appropriate sanctions and support given.

The Guidance Counsellor will provide support as appropriate to the victim/s and perpetrator/s of bullying.

If the matter is not resolved, or if necessary, the matter will be investigated and dealt with by the Deputy Principal/Principal.

The Board of Management will be given a report by the Principal at least once in every school term, setting out the overall number of bullying cases investigated and confirming that all the cases have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures.

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:

All students will participate in an SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme in each of the junior cycle years, where the issues of cyber-bullying and identity based bullying will be addressed. This education programme will continue during Social Education classes in each of the senior cycle years.

Teachers of SPHE and Social Education classes attend in-service courses on a regular basis, which deal specifically with cyber-bullying and identity based bullying, thus ensuring that the topics are covered in a comprehensive and sensitive manner.

Staff will be provided with guidelines for dealing with reports of bullying and harassment.

Students will be encouraged to use respectful language and respectful behaviour in class and around the school.

Students will be encouraged to participate in the wide range of extra - curricular activities on offer, in order to develop their own self-esteem and assertiveness skills and to contribute to creating a positive and supportive atmosphere in the school.

Students will be made aware of the importance of reporting any bullying incidents and the importance of promoting an atmosphere of openness and tolerance among the whole school community.

Students will be supervised during the school day including breaktime and lunchtime.

Students will be positively encouraged to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. There will be follow up and follow through with students who ignore the rules.

The school system of awards will promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.

The school will promote good “netiquette” and personal online safety through awareness of the AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) and each student will sign an agreement to accept the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Responsible Use Rules.

The school will provide all necessary information about the Anti-Bullying Policy at meetings for incoming 1st Year Parents/Guardians and other general meetings of parents as appropriate. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be posted on the School Website.

The school will involve parents/guardians and the Parents’ Council in awareness - raising campaigns around social media.

The school will involve students through the student council in promoting an Anti-Bullying culture and a “telling” culture which will dispel the culture of secrecy often associated with bullying and harassment.

Key respect messages will be displayed around the school and in classrooms.

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:

St. Louis High School has a clear and consistent approach to effectively deal with incidents of bullying within the school.

Students are reminded through SPHE classes and assemblies that all cases of bullying must be reported to a teacher/ staff member.

Once an alleged incident of bullying *is* observed or reported, the teacher/staff member records the incident on the RBB form. The teacher/staff member will pass on all the information to the Year Head who will carry out a thorough investigation of the incident if deemed necessary.

If the accusation of bullying is upheld, parents will be informed and the perpetrator will receive an appropriate sanction in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. The Guidance Counsellor will

also be informed in order to provide support to the victim and / or the student responsible for the bullying.

The Year Head in turn, is responsible for informing the Deputy Principal/Principal of the outcome of the investigation.

All incidents of bullying are carefully recorded on a standard RBB form, given to the Year Head who files a copy in a secure central location where they can be accessed by the Principal /Deputy Principal. The Principal will provide a report each term to the Board of Management on incidents of bullying.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

Clear procedures are in place which ensure all members of the school community are aware of how incidents of bullying are investigated and resolved.

Staff members will adopt a calm, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents.

All members of the school community will be encouraged to report any alleged incident of bullying.

Parents and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and to assist the school in resolving an alleged incident of bullying. It is hoped that this approach will help to resolve issues and restore relationships as quickly as possible.

Investigation of incidents will take place outside the classroom setting as appropriate to ensure confidentiality.

Investigations will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for every student.

If a number of students are involved, each student will be interviewed individually and then as a group *as* necessary.

Students may be requested to write an account of the incident.

In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, parents will be informed and asked to attend a meeting thus affording them the opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support actions to be taken by the school.

When a student has been found to have engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to her that she is in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and that an appropriate sanction will apply.

In cases where bullying behaviour has been determined by the relevant teacher, the details must be recorded on the standard form (RBB form) for recording such incidents.

In cases where the staff member considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days he/she consults with the Year Head. If he/she is not satisfied that the matter has been dealt with appropriately they record their concerns on the RBB form for the attention of the Deputy Principal / Principal. In determining whether a bullying incident has been appropriately addressed, the relevant staff member must take the following factors into account:-

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
- Whether the issues have been successfully resolved
- Whether the relationship between relevant parties has been restored.
- Any feedback from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the in-school management team.

When parents/guardians are unhappy with the way an incident has been investigated or dealt with they should be advised about to the school's complaints procedures.

When parents/guardians have exhausted the school's complaints procedures and are still dissatisfied they should be advised that they have an option to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

8. 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.

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of 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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **6th March 2014**.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Council. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____