

**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, the Board of Management of De La Salle College, Dundalk has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school’s overall Code of Behaviour. **This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.**

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

**(a) 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;
* **We want De La Salle College to be a place where**:
* Pupils, teachers and parents treat each other fairly and with respect
* Bullying behaviour is not tolerated
* People feel safe and are able to report bullying without being afraid
* People stand up for and support one another
* Every student & staff member’s personal space is respected

**(b) Effective leadership**

The management and staff of this school take the issue of bullying very seriously. As outlined in our code of behaviour “students have a duty not to offend others by using abusive or offensive language. Any form of verbal or physical intimidation is unacceptable ”. To help counter this issue the school at all times tries to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated and all breaches are treated seriously.

**(c) A school-wide approach**

We hold a whole school approach to guard against bullying.

This includes student to student; staff to student; student to staff; staff to staff

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

**(e) 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;

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

**(g) Supports for staff**

**(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**

**(i) 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.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

**Types of Bullying Examples of bullying behaviour unacceptable in De La Salle College include (but is not necessarily limited to) the following:**

• **Physical:** e.g. fighting, pushing, tripping others.

• **Psychological:** e.g. isolation, exclusion, intimidation, aggressive body language, extortion and damage to another person’s property.

• **Relational** : This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying, e.g. spreading rumours about a student, rallying friends against a student, etc.

**Behaviours include:**

• Whispering in company so as to exclude another.

• Malicious gossip.

• Isolation & exclusion.

• Ignoring, turning others against a student.

• Excluding from the group.

• Taking someone’s friends away.

**• Racial/Identity-based:** e.g., commenting on others race, colour, ethnic background, accent, religious beliefs, membership of the Traveller Community or other identity-based bullying such as bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

• **Sexual:** e.g. sexual harassment including comments, unwelcome touching or malicious comments about someone’s sexual orientation.

• **Verbal:** e.g. name calling, hurtful “slagging”, jeering.

• **Homophobic and Transgender** :Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual/gender orientation Taunting a person of a different sexual/gender orientation

Name calling e.g. Gay, queer and used in a derogatory manner

Physical intimidation or attacks/threats

• **Cyber** :

Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls.

Abusive text messages.

Abusive email.

Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures e.g. Facebook, Twitter and others.

Any misuse of Information and Communication Technology.

Video recording without the person’s permission Taking/sending photographs by electronic device. Creating sites about a particular person.

Spreading rumours.

Breaking confidence.

The above bullying may often take the form-

• **Group bullying:** When more than one person engages in bullying another. In such cases there is usually a “ring leader” who would direct or encourage others.

• **One-to-one bullying:** One pupil bullying another.

• **Staff to student bullying:** Teacher bullying a pupil.

• **Student/s to staff bullying:** Pupil/s bullying a teacher who it must be remembered is as vulnerable to bullying as a pupil might be.

• **Staff to staff bullying:** De La Salle College have adopted the “Dignity in the Workplace” Charter (Have we?)

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

|  |
| --- |
| Principal  Deputy Principal  Year Heads  Form Teachers  Care Team /Student Support Team personnel  Guidance Counsellor |

**Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-

bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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| **School-wide approach**   * 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 pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions. * Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils’ lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention. * School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community. * Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school. * Involvement of the students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. mentoring, prefects, YSI projects and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support. * Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying Code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school. * The school’s anti-bullying policy to be discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s to be given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school . * The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school on the promotion of bullying prevention; parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; student surveys as required; regular year group assemblies by Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads etc. * Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. * Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.: * Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class. * Hand note up with homework. * Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school. * Anti-bully box * Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf. * Administer a confidential questionnaire to pupils. * Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place. * Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents. * The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils’ use of mobile phones. * The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. FUSE, PDST Anti Bulying Supports, BeLonGTo [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org)   **Implementation of curricula**   * The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes. * 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. * Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at post- primary level. * The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.   **Links to other policies**   * Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, ICT/Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance Policy. |

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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and

Post-Primary Schools):

**6.8.9. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

**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);**

**The school’s procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

**Reporting bullying behaviour**

* Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
* All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
* Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

**Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach**

* In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
* Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
* Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
* Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
* All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
* When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
* If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other’s statements;
* Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;

It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

* In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
* Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
* It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

**Follow up and recording**

* In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;

- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;

-Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;

-Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

* Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
* Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school’s complaints procedures.
* In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Pupils.

**Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school’s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

**Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

* All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
* While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
* The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

**Informal-determination that bullying has occurred**

* If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
* The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

**Formal-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal. These should be in line with the school’s Code of Behaviour.

e.g. Physical assault or the threat thereof, Cyberbullying or the threat thereof, Requesting and sharing of inappropriate images, Use of PEDs to take photos or recordings of any individual in the school community without their permission and the subsequent use of these images/recordings to embarrass or humiliate other students/staff members, Repeat of verbal or any other form of abuse that has already been dealt with.

**\*This list is not exhaustive.**

These behaviours represent serious breaches of the school’s Code of Behaviour and may result in sanctions ranging from suspension to referral to the school’s Board of Management for sanction up to and including permanent exclusion.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. Decisions around record keeping should be noted in this policy.

Year Heads and Principal should keep such records securely. They should be retained in line with GDPR regulations.

**Established intervention strategies**

* Teacher interviews with all pupils
* Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
* Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
* No Blame Approach
* Restorative interviews
* Restorative conferencing
* Peer mediation where suitable training has been given.

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

(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

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| * All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.   - Pastoral Care system  - Mentoring/ Peer mentoring (La Sallian Leaders)system  - Tutor/Year Head system  - Care Team     * If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. * Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher. |

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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [date].

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_