



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**2016-2017**

### **RATIONALE**

St Fanchea's College is actively committed to developing mutually caring relationships between all members of the college community – pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff.

Our college is completely opposed to bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by in St Fanchea's. All members of our college community have a right to work, enjoy and learn in a secure and caring environment free from the threat of physical and psychological abuse, irrespective of gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. All members of our college community also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

### **POLICY AIMS**

- To prevent bullying and to create a safe, secure, learning environment for all pupils in the college.
- To develop a caring attitude in our pupils.
- To deal effectively with bullying if and when it occurs
- To involve staff, pupils, parent, non-teaching staff and college governors in the implementation of this policy.

### **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- To promote a school and classroom ethos which promotes respect for the individual.
- To encourage the belief that bullying is a serious issue that will not be tolerated.

- To encourage an ethos where victims and their friends speak up and tell, be listened to.
- To promote a willingness to treat incidents seriously however trivial they may appear at first glance.
- To act and be seen to take action when bullying is reported.
- To exploit curriculum opportunities to raise awareness and understanding of bullying issues.
- To develop a Pastoral Care Programme which contains strategies to deal with bullying.

## DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

St Fanchea's College recognises that Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our College. It recognises that bullying is a complex issue which is open to different interpretations. Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend herself. It can take many forms but the three main types are:

**Physical** – hitting, kicking, spitting, theft, damage to belongings, etc.

**Verbal/Non-verbal** – threats, name-calling, offensive text messages, etc.

**Indirect** – spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups, etc

Symptoms may include behaviour change such as withdrawal, lack of concentration, marked deterioration in school work or absenteeism. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline those involved in bullying behaviour.

## LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Pastoral Care Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, E-Safety Policy/E-Learning.

## PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

Questionnaires are issued to pupils, parents and staff.

At parent-teacher evenings parents have the opportunity to bring up issues with the Principal or Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.

During Anti-Bullying week pupils and staff are encouraged to focus on Anti-bullying issues.

## PROCEDURES

- Any teacher aware of bullying will inform the form teacher of the pupil(s) in question
- The form teacher will speak with the pupils in question, try to ascertain the facts and as tactfully as possible attempt to reconcile the parties involved
- The teacher will continue to observe the pupils involved and will enquire from pupils if bullying behaviour has ceased thus monitoring the situation and involving pupils in the process
- Where the bullying persists the form teacher will bring it to the attention of the Assistant Principal, Mrs R Duffy (Pastoral Care Co-ordinator) who will:
  - ❖ Investigate in the incident
  - ❖ Contact the parents of all the pupils concerned in the bullying incident
  - ❖ Request support from the parents in resolving the problem
  - ❖ Punish the pupil for bullying and impose further sanctions should the situation continue. This may include removing a pupil from her class for a period of time, detention for a period after school, possible suspension, possible expulsion.
  - ❖ Request the support and assistance from relevant professionals for both parties such as EWO, Education Psychologist, Counselling Service, PSNI or other agencies
  - ❖ Keep records at all stages

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

### Our Staff will:

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for other.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to pupils who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Class Teacher, Form Teacher, Mrs Duffy, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and Designated Teacher for Child Protection or in her absence Mrs Harron, Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection and Mr Collins, Principal.
- Follow-up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

**We expect our pupils to:**

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, **unless it is unsafe** to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

**ANYONE WHO BECOMES THE TARGET OF BULLIES SHOULD:**

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

**We ask our parents to support their children and the college by:**

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to the Class Teacher, Form Teacher, or Mrs R Duffy, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Co-operating with the college, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. Point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

**THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL**

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

## PREVENTATIVE INTERVENTIONS TO CREATE A BULLY FREE ETHOS

St Fanchea's acknowledges that there is no one specific strategy that can be employed to eradicate bullying, therefore one must address and deal with issues as they present. A suitable approach to dealing with less serious incidents is to:

- Talk to the pupil about how she feels, trying to ascertain who is involved without asking direct questions.
- Meet with pupils involved and those on the 'periphery'.
- Talk to pupils about how the victim is feeling but do not discuss issues or apportion blame.
- Aim to give the group responsibility in trying to arrive at a resolution rather than apportion blame.
- Ask pupils to suggest ways to make the situation better and in so doing help the bullied pupil feel more comfortable in their environment.
- Arrange a follow-up meeting to determine progress.
- Appoint a buddy to Key Stage 3 pupils with whom they can share concerns.

***At all stages, it is important that a written record be kept.***

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed by pupils, parents and staff by means of questionnaires, direct communication with parents and staff and through responding to incidents as they may present.

<p><b>This policy will be reviewed every year</b></p> <p><b>Date of next review – December 2017</b></p> <p><b>Principal .....</b>      <b>Date .....</b></p> <p><b>Chair of the Board of Governors .....</b></p> <p><b>Date .....</b></p>
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