

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock



Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory	6 th June 2016	May 2016	May 2015	May 2017	D McLaughlin

Related Documents and Location

1. Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
2. Pastoral Care Policy
3. Positive Behaviour Policy
4. Special Educational Needs Policy
5. Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
6. eSafety Policy
7. Policy for the Acceptable Use of Computers and the Internet
8. iPad Acceptable Use Policy
9. DE Guidance and Circulars (Appendix 1)
10. School Improvement Plan 2015-2018

All policies are available on the College Website and Private Folders.

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1. Introduction

Mission Statement

“Our Lady and St Patrick’s College, Knock cares for young people in a way that encourages them to develop to their full potential within a supportive Christian community. We seek to prepare our pupils to play an active and responsible role in society, and to use their talents for the service of others.”

In this College we recognise the right of every individual to be educated and to educate in a safe and caring environment. We seek to uphold that right and to provide such an environment for students and staff alike.

Bullying is a complex, multi-faceted problem which can be found, in varying degrees, in almost every school. It can have a negative impact upon the physical and mental health of both the target of bullying behaviour and the person displaying bullying behaviour. Any form of bullying, including cyberbullying, is contrary to the College’s Mission Statement and Aims, and will not be tolerated in the College. Everyone in the College has a responsibility to contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect for all.

This policy is written in consultation with students, parents and staff.

2. Aims

1. To provide a safe and caring environment for all students.
2. To raise awareness and promote understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour.
3. To ensure students and parents know how to raise a concern about bullying.
4. To encourage students and parents to report bullying to a member of staff.
5. To ensure an appropriate and consistent response to all reported instances of bullying.
6. To provide support for students who are bullied.
7. To support those students who display bullying behaviour to adopt positive attitudes and behaviour.
8. To promote self-respect, confidence and self-esteem amongst all students.
9. To develop assertiveness and self-protection skills.

3. Definition of Bullying

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 states that,

“Bullying includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,*
- (b) any other act, or*
- (c) any combination of those,*

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.”

4. Scope of the Policy

The College is committed to preventing bullying involving a registered student at the school:

- On the premises of the College during the school day;
- While travelling to or from the College during the school term;
- While the student is in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the College;

- While the student is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the College and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the College;
- While the student is using personal and/or College equipment (e.g. ICT/ College iPads) for electronic communication.

Bullying and cyberbullying incidents which occur outside school hours are primarily the responsibility of parents. However, if inappropriate activity occurs outside school hours with the intention of having a negative effect on any member of the College community, and this is brought to our attention, the College will use its resources to work with students, parents and outside agencies (if appropriate) and will endeavour to keep all students safe and offer support where appropriate.

5. Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour, but not all unacceptable behaviour can be considered bullying. Bullying usually has three key elements:

- It is repeated behaviour that happens over a period of time;
- It involves an imbalance of power;
- It is intentionally hurtful behaviour.

Bullying behaviour can involve:

- Name calling;
- Spreading rumours;
- Making fun of someone;
- Making offensive comments;
- Making racist, sectarian, homophobic or transphobic comments;
- Isolating/excluding a student;
- Making a hurtful comment about someone's disability;
- Stealing or damaging someone's property;
- Pushing, kicking, hitting or assaulting another student in any way;
- Using texts, emails, Internet chatrooms, instant messaging or social media sites to cause hurt to someone.

The above list is not intended to be a totally comprehensive list of the types of bullying which may occur but rather a list to illustrate the types of behaviour with which we are concerned.

6. Responsibilities

We aim, by means of the good relationships between staff and students, to promote a culture of openness and an environment in which all students feel comfortable about reporting and discussing bullying.

All members of staff

All members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and caring environment within the College. They must listen to and take seriously any report of bullying. They must deal with any bullying incident in the appropriate manner or refer the matter to the relevant Tutor, Head of Year or Head of School.

Students

Students have a responsibility to respect the rights of every other individual in the College. Students must treat all others with respect and must not engage in bullying behaviour. They should report bullying of which they are aware to a member of staff.

Parents

Parents have the right to expect that the College is a safe and caring environment for their children. They have a responsibility to ensure that their children respect all others in the College. Parents should monitor their child's use of the Internet and mobile devices. Parents should report any alleged bullying of which they are aware to the relevant Tutor, Head of Year, Head of School or Vice Principal (Pastoral).

College Prefects and Mentors

Prefects, Senior Prefects and Year 13 Mentors have a responsibility to report to a relevant Tutor, Head of Year, Head of School or Vice Principal (Pastoral) any alleged bullying which they witness or of which they are aware. Prefects and Senior Prefects are expected to maintain a well-ordered environment on school buses to and from the College. They must be particularly vigilant while travelling on school buses since this is an area where bullying may occur.

7. Curriculum

We provide opportunities and preventative messages through the curriculum to raise awareness of bullying. It is made clear to students that all instances of bullying, including bullying related to a student's disability, are unacceptable and will be treated seriously. The issue of bullying is included in:

- The Personal Development Programme
- The EFL Programme
- The Mentor Programme
- Learning for Life and Work
- Religious Education
- English and Drama

Anti-bullying messages are also actively promoted through College assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week, Focus of the Week, Safer Internet Week and visits from outside speakers.

8. Dealing with Bullying Incidents (Procedure)

Since bullying incidents vary greatly it is impossible to set down a rigid procedure for dealing with every instance. However, a member of staff who becomes aware of a bullying issue should follow the procedure detailed below.

- Listen carefully to all the students involved.
- Carefully record the details, including the motivating factors.
- Assure the victims(s) that the matter will be dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Inform the relevant Tutor(s) who, in turn, will inform the Head(s) of Year in every instance.

Where further investigation is required the Tutor/Head of Year/Head of School should:

- Question any witnesses.
- Keep a written record of all interviews and details.
- Decide on the appropriate action/sanction in consultation with the Tutor/Head of Year/ Head of School.
- Inform parents, if it is appropriate to do so, taking into account the seriousness and frequency of the bullying.
- Offer counselling to all involved if it is appropriate.
- Support and advise the student(s) concerned.
- Focus on making the child displaying bullying behaviour aware of the hurt he/she is causing.
- Facilitate a reconciliation if appropriate.
- Continue to monitor the situation for a period of time.

9. Sanctions for Students Engaging in Bullying Behaviour

A range of sanctions will be used as appropriate:

- Reprimand and warning
- Sanction essay
- Remuneration for damage to the property of another student
- Lunchtime detention
- After-school detention
- Attendance at school during INSET training/student holidays
- Removal of privileges (extra-curricular activities/school trips)
- Not permitted to represent the College on sports teams/extra-curricular activities
- Disciplinary meeting with the Principal and Vice Principal
- Alternative transport arrangements
- Suspension/Expulsion

10. Support for Students Experiencing or Displaying Bullying Behaviour

A range of support may be used as appropriate:

- Liaison with Tutor/Head of Year/Head of School/Vice Principal (Pastoral)
- Support from a senior student (Mentor/Prefect)
- A reconciliation if appropriate
- Counselling if appropriate

11. Training for Staff

Training to support staff and governors in responding to allegations of bullying will be provided as deemed necessary by the Principal of the College.

12. Procedures for Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy

The implementation and effectiveness of the policy is monitored by means of:

- Feedback from Student Councils;

- Student and parental questionnaires;
- Discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings;
- Consultation between Heads of School and Vice Principal (Pastoral) to quantify reports of bullying and to monitor how effectively incidents have been dealt with.

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Heads of School review the policy each year to inform and support improvements in practice. Any recommendations for change are made to the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) prior to consultation with students and parents.

Students and parents are encouraged to contact the Vice Principal (Pastoral) at any time to express their views on the policy.

Signed: *Mr Leo O'Reilly*
(Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: *6th June 2016*

Signed: *Mr Dermot G Mullan*
(Principal)

Date: *6th June 2016*

Related Documents

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999)

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001)

NIABF: Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour (2013)

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016