

St. Dominic's National School

Mountain Park,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.
Phone: 01-4512443

Principal: Séamus Vaughan
Deputy Principal: Máire Meenan

E-Mail: secretary@stdominicsns.ie

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 Saint Dominic's National 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.
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.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - Supports for staff; (see outside agencies booklet)
 - 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.
- Additional information on different types of bullying and their impact and indicators that may be observed is set out in the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. (Attached Appendix A)

4. Who will deal with accusations of bullying?

In these procedures, the member of the teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher. A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school.

A relevant teacher dealing with bullying will firstly deal with concerns in class or refer to the support teacher to help. They will speak to the relevant parents (Bully & Victim), inform the Principal. The relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist to resolve the issues and restore the relationships of the parties involved. A relevant teacher may bring a concern directly to the Principal. The Principal will inform the Board of Management of any cases of Bullying in the child protection oversight report. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

Our school's prevention and awareness raising measures are appropriate to the type of bullying and take into account the age and gender of the pupils involved. The school has partaken in a Self-Evaluation workshop (Shield Our School), available to view in the school office and an action plan has been put in place. See Appendix B.

5. **The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based) that will be used by the school are as follows**

- Effective practice includes prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. As self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour, our school will endeavour to provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- Prevention and awareness raising measures will deal explicitly with cyber-bullying. The best way to address cyber-bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. Prevention and any awareness raising measures should focus on:
 - educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour
 - how to stay safe while on-line
 - developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying
 - educating parents about prevention and awareness

The school-wide approach and the role of parents as outlined in Section 6.3 are of importance in this regard. The prevention and awareness raising measures also takes into account the scope for cyber-bullying to occur as a result of access to technology from within the school.

Our school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN, and joins up with other relevant school policies and supports and should ensure that all the services that provide for such pupils work together. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include:

- improving inclusion
- focusing on developing social skills
- paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary
- Cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

Our teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.

- Class and School Rules
- S.P.H.E. programme
- RSE programme
- Stay Safe programme
- Walk Tall
- Friendship Fortnight
- Circle Time
- Webwise
- Discipline For Learning
- Accord (4th, 5th and 6th)
- E-Safety (Internet safety talk) – 4th, 5th & 6th class

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:

While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding the same.

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken; and the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The relevant teacher will use the following record keeping methods:

- Aladdin will be used to record Classroom behaviour (RED cards).
- Aladdin will be used to record yard incidents.
- Recording template
- Support teacher or co-ordinator to analyse repetitive incidents that constitute bullying.

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

- 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
- In cases of extreme physical bullying.

In the circumstances listed above, the recording template, see Appendix C, must be completed in full and retained in the child's personal file and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template does

not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

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

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied is in place. (See section 5)

Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. (See outside agencies booklet)

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour is also part of the schools intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour may need assistance on an ongoing basis and are referred to the Support Teacher. For those with low self esteem, opportunities are developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. (See outside agencies booklet) Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers or post them in the Incident Post Box located in each block.

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 18th November 2020

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, pupils and parents will be notified of the policy and its availability through the school website 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: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 18th November 2020