St Columba's National School
North Strand
Dublin 3

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-bullying Policy

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of St Columba's N.S. 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 was published in September 2013. 3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf (assets.gov.ie)

This document should be read in conjunction with all other school policies and in particular with the school's Code of Behaviour and the Child Safeguarding policies.

1. 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;*

    b) Effective leadership;
    c) A school-wide approach;
    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.*

    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.

2. 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
- 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
- physical abuse of the person or their possessions.

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.

3. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) the class teacher in the first instance and escalated as appropriate to the principal teacher. Where necessary the Board of Management may be asked to assist in the resolution of serious incidents of bullying (See Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying procedures for primary and post primary schools 3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf (assets.gov.ie)).

4. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) which may be used by the school are as follows (See Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying procedures for primary and post primary schools 3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf (assets.gov.ie)). This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, apart from Stay Safe Programme which is a mandatory programme in primary schools.

    - Stay Safe Programme (Mandatory programme)
    - SPHE Curriculum
    - Walk Tall Programme
    - Follow-Me Programme Visiting speakers such as Community Garda, Focus Ireland etc. (In accordance with DES circular 42:18)
    - Webwise resources
    - Support by SNA team during non-class times & strategy based social skills programmes by SET team
    - Weaving Wellbeing
    - Welcome to Wellbeing
    - Good Manners Challenge
    - RSE Programme
    - Different Families; Same Love
    - HTML Heroes
    - Informal Buddy structures

5.   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 6.8.9 of the Anti-Bullying procedures for primary and post primary schools 3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf (assets.gov.ie)).

6.   The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (See Section 6.8.15-17 of the Anti-Bullying procedures for primary and post primary schools):
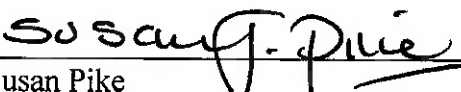
The education and prevention strategies programmes are outlined in point 4 above. They focus on promoting self-esteem, safe practice and how to deal with episodes of bullying or attacks on self-esteem in a general context. In the event that bullying relates to a "specific identity-based" focus, advice, guidance and support will be given with input from appropriate external support groups.

7.   **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.

8.   **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 trans-gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in November 2018 and reviewed and ratified in October 2019.

It was reviewed with the assistance of PDST on 24th October 2022 and approved by the Board of Management at a meeting on 15th November 2022. It was further reviewed on 26th September 2023.

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

Signed: _~~Susan Pike~~_   Date: 26-9.23
Dr Susan Pike
Chairperson of the Board of Management