

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

DEFINITION

***Bullying is defined as any malicious or hurtful unprovoked attack (either physical or psychological) on another person who is not able to defend herself in the situation.**

Bullying behaviour may include fighting, pushing, name-calling, extortion, spreading rumours, leaving people out on purpose, and general intimidation, but the above conditions (*) have to apply if it is to be called Bullying.

AIMS

- To create an environment where pupils are happy, confident, involved, responsible and safe.
- To promote concern and respect for each individual member of our school community where every pupil is able to enjoy her learning and leisure free from any kind of intimidation.
- To ensure that procedures for dealing with instances of bullying are clear and consistently followed, using the current discipline structure in the school.
- To create the culture of a 'Telling' School. Bullying is too important not to report.
- To raise awareness of bullying and how it affects lives.

POLICY

Our School, as a community of faith, committed to Christ and the Gospel values, will encourage all members of our community to show respect, concern and mutual support for one another at all times.

We will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if these were not intended to hurt.

Girls will be encouraged to support one another by telling of all instances of bullying to a member of staff, a friend or a parent.

Bullying will be dealt with seriously by all staff at this School.

RECOGNISING THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Seeking out members of staff at break times, rather than mixing with other girls. Loners thus become easy targets.
- A decline in standard of work.
- Reluctance to go to a particular lesson.
- Reluctance to attend school.
- Fear of walking to or from school.
- Frequent visits to school office reporting headaches/stomach aches.
- Loss of or damage to books/equipment/uniform.
- Change of personality – unusually withdrawn/distressed.
- Showing signs of unusual tiredness.
- Frequent loss or/unusual requests for money.
- Bruises/scratches.

It is important that staff are aware that it is generally a combination of several of these elements that could indicate bullying. One sign does not necessarily mean that a girl is being bullied.

PROCEDURES AND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- Staff should recognise signs of bullying and deal effectively with bullies and victims once identified
- Anti-Bullying strategies will be a regular agenda item at meetings of the School Council
- Induction of new pupils to the school, particularly on entry into Year 7 will include time devoted to explaining school policy on anti-bullying behaviour
- Pupils should be encouraged to support one another by 'Telling' of bullying incidents

- Year 7 pupils will be allocated a 6th Form Mentor who will actively promote a 'telling' culture in the school
- All pupils in KS3 will be allocated a 6th Form Prefect who will actively promote a 'telling' culture in the school
- All reported bullying will be investigated by the PDC within 24 hours of the complaint and details checked where possible by questioning witnesses. Written records will be kept on file of investigations
- Throughout the investigation, the victim must feel supported and must feel that she was right to report the incident. The 'bully' will also need support
- The girl being bullied and the 'bully/bullies' should be interviewed again at set intervals to ensure that the bullying has stopped. These interviews should be recorded in writing
- Teaching practices and the curriculum will support anti-bullying ethos of the school community
- Pastoral Programme will raise awareness, challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, and promote strategies for supporting the school's anti-bullying policy
- Persistent offenders will be dealt with firmly. Temporary and even permanent exclusion must be perceived by all members of the school community as a possible outcome for persistent bullies
- Pupils will be encouraged to contribute to the regular review of the anti-bullying policy. This is to be done via discussion in tutor periods and the School Council
- Parents of bullies and victims will be informed and encouraged to work in partnership with the school in promoting anti-bullying ethos
- Engage in anti-bullying week every year.

All instances of unkindness towards others will be considered a serious breach of the school's mission as a Catholic School