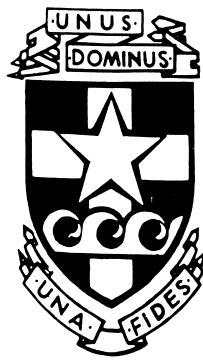


# Holy Faith Secondary School Clontarf



## Anti –Bullying Policy

Holy Faith Secondary School, Clontarf is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for Girls under the Trusteeship of Le Chéile, a Catholic Schools Trust.

Holy Faith Secondary School, Clontarf aims to provide an excellent, all round education in a Christian environment. Through a learning community of faith and justice, based on respect, we seek to form integrated and self-reliant persons, who will be moved to work for a better world.

Our objectives are

- To pursue excellence in all areas of school life, academic, creative and practical.
  - To nurture a friendly and caring environment which allows each student to develop her own natural talents and gifts.
  - To recognise our responsibility towards the wider community and develop a spirit of service.
  - To offer opportunities for the spiritual development of each member of the school community.
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 Holy Faith Secondary School, Clontarf, 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 including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
    - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

- Supports for staff;
  - 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 is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Examples of bullying behaviours may relate to the following areas:

- Verbal
- General and physical behaviour
- Cyber
- Racial
- Sexual
- Homophobic
- Relational
- Political
- Religious

See Appendix 1 for behaviours which the Holy Faith School community has identified as being inappropriate and unacceptable in our community. This list was devised in consultation with staff, students and parents.

#### 4. Who to tell?

- Year Head
- Member of Care Committee
- Guidance Counsellor
- Parent
- Friend
- Principal/Deputy Principal
- Class teacher
- Tutor
- Learning support teacher
- Sports coach
- Member of Prefect executive
- Class Prefect
- Member of the student council
- Caretaker
- School secretary

It is important that targets of bullying behaviour tell someone. It is only by telling that the bullying can be addressed. The purpose of telling is not to get someone into trouble but to make the behaviour stop.

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Members of the Care Team
- Year Head
- Deputy Principal
- Principal

#### 5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

- The Mission Statement of the school states that Holy Faith aims to ‘nurture a friendly and caring environment...’
- Our school code of behaviour states that “Bullying breaks the School Code of respect, because if you hurt, threaten or frighten someone, you are not treating her / him with respect. Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated”
- The school promotes a proactive approach to bullying and an environment where it is ‘safe to tell’
- Publishing and publicising the Anti-Bullying Policy
- The full policy will be available on the website
- Students sign an Anti-Bullying Agreement on registration and renewed annually.
- Anti-Bullying Agreement is sent to parents and printed in school journals
- The Anti-Bullying Agreement is posted on all classroom walls
- Having designated periods each year when the anti-bullying programme is taught.
- A designated committee coordinates the Anti Bullying Programme and information sent to parents.
- Through the school curriculum, the school is proactive in preventing bullying.

- Through programmes such as: SPHE, CSPE, RSE, Cool Schools Programme and the Pastoral Care system, awareness of friendship and bullying is raised.

The drawing up and implementing of the policy is inclusive, involving staff, parents, students and Board of Management

Students can:

- Be proactive in preventing bullying
- Promote and embrace an atmosphere of inclusion and respect
- Not take part in bullying behaviour
- Report incidents of bullying
- Respect the procedures put in place by the policy
- Participate fully in all activities and lessons related to the anti-bullying policy

Parents can:

- Give feedback
- Get involved in policy development
- Familiarise themselves with the policy
- Support the school and its policies

Teachers and other staff can:

- Support the Care Committee and Year Heads
- Familiarise themselves with the policy
- Implement the policy
- Follow through
- Give feedback / suggestions
- Be proactive

Who to contact:

Any class teacher / year head / deputy principal / principal / coach / class prefect or member of the care committee.

All reports will be:

- Taken seriously
- Investigated thoroughly
- All those involved on either side of the incident will be helped as far as possible

(NB. Secrecy cannot be guaranteed, but reports will be dealt with in a confidential and discreet manner. It may be necessary to draw on the expertise of other staff eg guidance counsellor, year head, Deputy Principal or Principal, but, every effort will be made to be discreet and only forward information on a need to know basis.)

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:

### How to Tell

- Approach any of the above directly at an appropriate time e.g. teacher after class, prefect at lunch time etc.
- A note can be handed up with homework
- A confidential questionnaire will be administered twice a year.
- A parent or friend can tell on your behalf
- Parents/Guardians should inform the school of any incidents of bullying behaviour by contacting the Year Head, Principal or Deputy Principal
- Bystanders can approach/accompany the target to any of the above directly at an appropriate time regarding incidents of bullying.
- Approaching a staff member

Staff members should respect all reports no matter how trivial they may appear.

### Noting and Recording:

- Records will be kept of all incidents of bullying and the action taken to resolve them.
- A disclosure report form should be completed and given to the relevant year head and/or member of the Care Committee for filing or further investigation.
- The members of the Care Committee are responsible for maintaining files.
- Records will be held securely in a filing cabinet in the Year Heads office.
- The records will be kept as long as all the students involved in the incident are in the school and for seven years after they have left.

Only the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head and Care Committee will have access to the files.

### Procedures to deal with reported incidents:

- The teacher who takes a report should inform the student that it is being dealt with. If the teacher passes the responsibility on to the student's Year Head, member of the Care Committee, Deputy Principal or Principal the student will be informed of this.
- The student reporting the incident can be protected from victimisation by ensuring there is appropriate confidentiality. The student should also be monitored by teachers in class (Year Heads will liaise with the relevant teachers.) Class prefects might assist by monitoring the class at lunch time.
- Confidentiality can be maintained by investigating incidents "outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying, in an attempt to get both sides of the story" (DES, 1993)

The following procedures for investigating and resolving bullying provide guidelines for initial, subsequent and persistent/serious incidents of bullying behaviour. It is important to note that in the case of a serious report, disclosure or incident of bullying, this must be reported to the Year Head / Principal immediately.

Initial report / disclosure of bullying behaviour :		
Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction may include
Year Head liaising with Care Committee member.  Support of Guidance Counsellor where appropriate.	Speak to all students involved separately and try to resolve the issue.  Fill in Incident Report form. Keep copies of all forms. Attach any student statement. Follow Up Form may be completed by Year Head and/or Care Committee member.  Possible further investigation through sociogram / class observation / questionnaire. Progress of target, bully, and others involved will be monitored.	Serious talk with student(s) to point out inappropriate behaviour and the effects of this behaviour.  Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable.  Verbal warning. Student(s) involved warned to stop.  Seek verbal agreement re future behaviour.  Outline a fair outcome if appropriate e.g. apology, return of property etc.  Parents contacted informally.

Subsequent report / disclosure of bullying behaviour*:		
Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction may include
Year Head  Member of the Care Committee may be involved	Year Head or member of care Committee investigates the reported incident.  Fill in incident Report form. Keep copies of all forms. Attach any student statements. Follow Up Form to be completed . Record kept of all incidents and procedures followed. Principal / Deputy Principal informed. Parents of all students involved are informed. Possible further investigation through sociogram / class observation / questionnaire. Progress of target, bully, and others involved will be monitored by the Year Head.	Serious talk with student(s) regarding behaviour and future behaviour.  A written agreement is drawn up and signed by students and parents/guardian re future behaviour.  Letters of apology may be drawn up where appropriate.  All involved may speak separately with school counsellor .  Detention.  Behaviour report.  Loss of Privilege .

Where bullying behaviour persists / serious incident of bullying:

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction may include
Principal / Deputy Principal.  Year Head.  Member of the Care Committee may be involved.  Incident may be referred to the Board of Management at the discretion of the Principal.	Fill in Incident Report form. Speak to all students involved separately and try to resolve the issue.  Parents and student meet with Principal / Deputy Principal.  Keep a record of all incidents, form and procedures followed and feedback to Year Head.  Possible further investigation through sociogram / class observation / questionnaire.  Progress of target, bully, and others involved will be monitored.	Detention / Suspension  Loss of privilege.  Conditions are set regarding student's future behaviour during the meeting with parents Contract is drawn up and signed.  Counselling offered  Behaviour is recorded on student's file/record.  Referral to child psychologist / Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer Contact with other support agencies  The future of the student in the school may be considered.

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

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Guidance Counsellor
- Year head system
- Care team
- Pastoral care system

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

**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.

- Supervision of corridors at break times, before and after school by teaching staff
- Teaching and coaching staff supervise class and sporting activities



- In the absence of a staff member, another staff member will supervise the group
- Class prefects assist in monitoring class behaviour of juniors in classrooms at lunchtime

During the consultation process, students identified the following as areas/times where bullying may occur:

Corridors, toilets, cloakrooms, stairways, unsupervised class times, break times, yard, sports, outings and buses have been identified as possible risk areas. Students have identified outside St.Vincent's hall, laneways and social outings.

Involvement of teaching staff:

It is encouraged that all staff be willing to participate in class observation and filling of sociograms where suspected incidents are being monitored.

Be punctual at supervision times.

- Be vigilant and observe dynamics when interacting with students.
- Implement and promote the policy.

Non teaching staff:

All members of staff must be familiar with the policy and the school code of behaviour, must implement them and report any incidents or reports they are aware of.

The schools statement on Responsible Internet Use is given to all staff and students at the beginning of each year.

Student use of the computer room must be supervised by a teacher at all times.

Students must be familiar with the school's policy on internet use as a means to counter any possible bullying behaviour.

## **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 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

**11.** This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request 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, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request 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.

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Date of next review: November 2016

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