

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

The governors and staff of Holy Cross College are committed to creating and maintaining a safe, secure and happy environment for all our students and staff. Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse which can cause emotional and physical distress and is not tolerated. We strive to create a positive and nurturing ethos where everyone is treated with mutual respect and positive relationships are promoted. From time to time pupils may experience bullying behaviour from others, in spite of our caring ethos, our nurturing environment and effective discipline policy. All staff (teaching and non-teaching) collectively work together to create an anti-bullying culture and to ensure incidents of alleged bullying are investigated and dealt with swiftly and effectively.

This policy has been developed in line with current Government guidance and legislation:

- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (N Ireland) 2016
- DE Circular2003/13
- Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland Order) 2003
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour 2001

This policy has been developed through consultation which involved all members of the school community; pupils, parents/carers and all school staff. (See Appendix 1)

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection, Learning Support, Pastoral Care, Guidance, Positive Behaviour, Discipline Referral, Mobile Phones and E-Safety Policies.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To protect those who are experiencing bullying behaviour; their needs are paramount.
- Amend the behaviour of the pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour.
- To promote a whole-school approach to raising awareness of bullying.
- To ensure all pupils are free from fear and worry.
- To create an atmosphere where pupils feel confident about speaking out if they feel they are experiencing bullying behaviour from others.
- To develop and implement a programme and strategies to prevent bullying taking place.
- Set down clear procedures to be followed in investigating bullying incidents.
- Ensure pupils and parents know who they can talk to if they feel unsafe in school.

The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed every two years and training for teaching staff, undertaken by Team Leader for Guidance, will take place on a two year cycle.

Training will also be provided to non-teaching staff, canteen staff and supervisors as part of Child Protection Training.

PRINCIPLES

Principles and values which Holy Cross College upholds:

- Students have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- The pastoral needs of all children are paramount and the children's needs, should be separated from their behaviour, whether they are experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour from others.
- When bullying concerns are identified the school will work in a positive way to achieve the necessary change.
- Students who are experiencing bullying behaviour will be reassured and supported
- Students who engage in bullying behaviours will be supported and encouraged to accept responsibility to change their behaviour.
- Parents have a right to know their child is safe.
- Staff will ensure school rules are implemented fairly and consistently.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying behaviour is:

“... wilful, unprovoked, repeated, behaviour which is intended to make another feel hurt, uncomfortable, frightened or threatened” (Bullying UK)

Examples:

<p>Physical Bullying Kicking Head butting Hitting Spitting Pushing Punching Biting Scratching Tripping Grabbing Choking Interfering with another's property etc</p>	<p>Emotional Bullying Talking negatively about someone Exclusion/Isolation Threatening Ignoring Spreading rumours Damaging someone's reputation Writing nasty notes Spoiling someone's work Telling lies on someone etc</p>	<p>Verbal Bullying Name calling a person or family member Laughing at someone Shouting at someone Making inappropriate remarks e.g. of a sexual nature Commenting negatively on a person's appearance Teasing Being sarcastic Swearing at someone etc</p>	<p>Non Verbal Bullying Giving 'dirty' looks Glaring Intimidatory glances Making signs behind another's back Writing something nasty Exclusion/Isolation etc</p>
<p>Cyber Bullying Misusing technology to make negative comments or harass another i.e. via social media, text message, e-mail or phone call etc</p>	<p>Racist Bullying Any form of abuse relating to race, colour or religion</p>	<p>Homophobic Bullying Any form of abuse relating to gender or sexual orientation.</p>	

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Not all pupils will tell that they are being bullied for fear of reprisal, guilt, embarrassment or fear of not being believed. It is essential that all staff know the signs to be aware of, viz.

- changes in pattern of route to school
- developing a pattern of illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches etc
- having possessions missing
- damaged clothing
- unexplained bruising or cuts
- asking for/beginning to steal money
- crying for an unexplained reason
- signs of anxiety or distress e.g. having nightmares, not eating etc
- self-harm/attempted suicide
- poor attention and concentration in class
- change in mood – becoming quiet, withdrawn, anxious
- deterioration in behaviour/school work
- increased school absences/school refusal

PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Awareness raising programmes, e.g. Personal Development programme, outside agencies giving talks (EA, PSNI etc) presenting dramas to year groups, leaflets to pupils/parents (e.g. cyber bullying, self-harm etc)
- Survey/questionnaires distributed to pupils, parents and whole school staff
- Obtaining the views of elected student representatives i.e. school's council, senior and junior
- Staff training on anti-bullying
- Monitoring evaluation and review

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Responsibilities of Staff

Holy Cross staff will:

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes (e.g. via PD programme or form period) so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is experiencing bullying behaviour and to the pupil displaying bullying behaviour and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to pupils who have experienced bullying behaviour, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying behaviour to Form Teacher/ Year Head/ Head of School and/or the designated teachers for Child Protection, the two VPs.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying behaviour, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect Holy Cross pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is experiencing bullying behaviour, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying behaviour, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Any pupil who is experiencing bullying behaviour should not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to his/her own suffering and that of other pupils who may potentially experience bullying behaviour.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying behaviour;
- Advising their children to report any bullying behaviour to the Form Teacher, initially, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying behaviour.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying behaviour and informing the school of any suspected bullying behaviour, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying behaviour. Try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying behaviour, both for the pupils who are experiencing bullying behaviour and for the pupils who are experiencing bullying behaviour.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying behaviour.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- Promoting and maintaining an ethos which encourages consideration and respect for others, promotes positive behaviour and is firmly based on the values of Holy Cross College.
- The Principal/ Vice Principals, Heads of School, Heads of Year, Form Teachers and Guidance Team, with all staff, working towards reducing the number of incidents of bullying behaviour in Holy Cross College; being vigilant to signs of distress and bullying behaviour at all times.
- Having a common set of School Rules and Code of Behaviour, up-dated regularly and shared with all pupils, staff, parents and other stakeholders. They will be made available annually in the Student Planner, Staff Information Book and Pastoral Care leaflets sent to parents.
- Identifying key staff to monitor and co-ordinate incidents: Principal/Vice Principals, Heads of School, Heads of Year, Form Teachers, with support from Guidance Team.
- Having in place clear procedures where staff in referral chain deal with incidents and keep appropriate records.
- Proactive use of Peer Mentors from the sixth form working with Year 8 students
- Staff training on procedures for dealing with and monitoring incidents of reported bullying behaviour.
- Communicating the policy and procedures to everyone in the school community.
- Educating pupils about the boundaries of appropriate behaviour towards others by addressing bullying behaviour via anti-bullying 'designated month', personal development lessons and resources, talks from outside agencies, drama productions, focus at assemblies etc.
- Implementing ICT lessons on cyber bullying and e-safety.
- Ensuring effective supervision of locations within Holy Cross where bullying behaviour is likely to occur and highlighting to pupils, with the support of parents, the importance of appropriate behaviour when travelling to and from school.
- Liaising with outside support agencies e.g. Social Services, Child Protection Service, EA, PSNI to support those experiencing bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour.
- Encouraging a strong sense of belonging to Holy Cross through participation in extra-curricular activities.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Referral Chain in Holy Cross for reporting and responding to incidents of bullying behaviour.

<i>Form Teacher</i>
<i>Head of Year</i>
<i>Head of School</i>
<i>Vice-Principal</i>
<i>Principal</i>

Support from *Guidance Team, external agencies e.g. Counselling Service, EWO, GP, Social Services, Child Protection Service, Educational Psychology, Behaviour Support, EA, PSNI etc.*

Holy Cross College will work in a restorative way to achieve the necessary outcome i.e. it is intended that the person responsible will learn from what has happened and will amend his or her behaviour. Education and awareness-raising are effective ways of challenging bullying behaviour and encouraging individual pupils to take responsibility for his/her own actions.

Steps of Procedure

- Instance of bullying behaviour or suspicion of bullying behaviour is first reported, via the referral chain above.
Each individual case is different. Sometimes the case is dealt with only by the Form Teacher; at other times there is referral through the pastoral chain, even as far as the Principal. Sometimes a case may merit referral/ support from Guidance Team and/or outside agencies.
- An investigation is carried out; information gathered, verbally and in writing, from all pupils involved and any relevant member of staff. Records kept.
- Parents are contacted.
- Appropriate action is taken, depending on the nature of each individual case.

Some appropriate actions, depending on the severity and persistence of the individual case:

- A reconciliation of the two parties via bringing the pupils together and mediation from the significant teacher in the referral chain.
- Verbal and /or written apology.
- A sanction put in place for the pupil who has displayed bullying behaviour e.g. verbal reprimand, break or lunch time detention, internal suspension for a period of time, external suspension for a period of time, expulsion.
- A class move, if deemed appropriate, for any pupil involved in the situation.
- If necessary, a referral is made to the Guidance Team and / or an outside agency to support and respond to the needs of both those who have experienced bullying behaviour or those displaying bullying behaviour.
- Information shared throughout the process, when appropriate; feedback to parents and to other relevant staff members who may have been involved.
- Monitoring of the situation thereafter; further intervention if necessary.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Team Leader for Guidance and/or VPs will regularly hold staff training on anti-bullying on SDDs.

Staff will be provided with up-dates of the Anti-Bullying Policy over time.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be kept under review and up-dated in line with Government legislation every two years.



USEFUL CONTACTS

www.deni.gov.uk

www.antibullyingalliance.org

www.nspcc.org.uk

CCMS – Chief Designated Officer for Child Protection - Hollywood Tel: 90426972

Childline - 08001111

Kidscape - 0207 7303300

Relate Northern Ireland - 0870 2426091