



St. Louis Community School

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 St. Louis Community 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 which occurs in the school environment:
 - (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; effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - (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.
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, e.g. cyberbullying 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 conduct.

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.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all;

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation, civil status, family status age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, membership of the Traveller community.
- Physical aggression.
- Damage to property.
- Name calling.
- Slagging.
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person offensive graffiti.
- Intimidation.
- Insulting or offensive gestures.
- Invasion of personal space.
- A combination of any of the types listed.
- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation

Cyber

- Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual.
- Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name.
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight.
- Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online.
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images.
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive text messages.
- Abusive emails.
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/WAsk.fm/
- Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles.
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures.
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.

Identity Based Behaviours

- Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

Homophobic and Transgender

- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation.
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation.
- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner.
- Physical intimidation or attacks.
- Threats.

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community

- Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background.
- Exclusion on the basis of any of the above.

Relational

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip.
- Deliberately ongoing exclusion from the group.
- Taking someone's friends away.
- "Bitching"
- Spreading rumours.
- Breaking confidence.
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear .

Sexual

- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching.
- Harassment.

Special Educational Needs, Disability

- Name calling.
- Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs.
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying.
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.
- Mimicking a person's disability.
- Setting others up for ridicule.

(this list is not exhaustive)

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are the respective year heads.

Year Group		Year Head
First Year	-	Ms. Aideen Ueno
Second Year	-	Ms. Ruth McNamara
Third Year	-	Ms. Denise Nagle
Transition Year	-	Mr. Murt Dunleavy
Fifth Year	-	Ms. Nuala Whelan
Sixth Year	-	Ms. Lynn Anderson
Leaving Cert Applied	-	Mr. Declan Concannon

They in turn may be assisted by a team consisting of:

- Principal,
- Deputy Principal,
- Class Tutors,
- Pastoral Care Team,
- Student Council Coordinator,
- Additional Education Needs Coordinator/Teachers,
- Guidance Counsellor,
- School Chaplain.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

Sample Education and Prevention Strategies

School-wide approach

A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.

Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s) School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.

Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. The Student Council itself, mentoring and other activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.

Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Conduct of the school (every year).

The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; student surveys and class or year group assemblies.

Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

On St. Louis website there is a form where students can report alleged bullying. It is located on the forms section. This form can be used anonymously or named at the discretion of the reporter. The School will establish links with sports coaches, canteen staff and ancillary staff who come in daily contact with its students in order to enlist them in countering bullying behaviour by reporting it to parents and/or the School.

Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:

- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Hand note up with homework.
- Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
- Form on the school website.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Administer a confidential questionnaire to all pupils.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

While, investigating and dealing with bullying the primary focus is on resolving differences and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than apportioning blame), the School nevertheless reserves the right to take disciplinary action (up to and including suspension and expulsion), where such is warranted, in accordance with the School's Student Code of Behaviour, against those who bully others.

Implementation of curricula

The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programmes.

Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

School wide delivery of lessons on bullying.

School wide delivery of lessons on Cyber Bullying (#UP2US, Think Before you Click), Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack Diversity and Interculturalism).

Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at post- primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying

The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

The School will devote time at staff/pastoral care meetings towards: raising the awareness of bullying among staff, building an understanding of what bullying is and providing guidance on how it is best combated — prevented, detected, investigated, documented (as appropriate) and resolved. This time will also provide opportunities for exploring the potential that exists within the teaching of all subjects and within extracurricular activities to foster an attitude of respect for all, to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

A clear focus of all staff development around combating bullying will be the enablement of all staff to implement this policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools consistently and effectively.

Links to other policies

- School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying are Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.
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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Overview

Those involved in investigating and resolving bullying behaviour will note and report developments as follows and, in doing so, they will comply with relevant data protection legislation.

- The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement regarding the records to be kept of information received, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved with the bullying behaviour.
- Where the relevant teacher establishes that bullying has occurred, s/he must keep appropriate written records to assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix I to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
 - a) Where s/he considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after s/he has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
 - b) Where it is necessary to report serious bullying behaviour immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal or where a relevant teacher at any time passes on concerns or allegations of bullying to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at Appendix 1 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

At any point in either investigating or resolving a bullying matter, the relevant teacher may seek the advice and support of the Principal and/or Deputy Principal while retaining responsibility for dealing with the matter.

Also, at any point in either investigating or resolving a bullying matter, the relevant teacher may hand the matter over to either the Principal or Deputy Principal. In doing

so, however, s/he must complete the recording template at Appendix I, retain a copy of the completed template in his/her files and provide a copy to the Principal or Deputy Principal, as applicable.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame); The school's procedures is consistent with the restorative justice approach/model to bullying. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), sport coaches, canteen staff, caretakers, cleaners and visiting speakers must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. A written account of the incident will be requested. This should

be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group to discuss the incident.

Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.

It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.

Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; -Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Pupils.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- **All staff** must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, **the relevant teacher** must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- Informal-determination that bullying has occurred
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal-Appendix 1

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix I (Page13/14) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a. 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; and
- b. Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.
 - Striking.
 - Public postings of images or messages.
 - Other Circumstances considered to be of a more serious nature by the relevant teacher,
 - When the recording template is used, it will be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Records will be stored securely.
 - Established intervention strategies
 - Teacher interviews with all pupils.
 - Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
 - No Blame Approach.
 - Restorative interviews.
 - Restorative conferencing.
 - Implementing sociogram questionnaires.

7. This 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.

- Pastoral care system
- Mentoring system
- Tutor/Year head system
- Care team / Pastoral Care Team
- Group work (SPHE / Tutorial time)

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.

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 6 July 2017, and reviewed on 21st September 2023.
11. This policy was made available to school personnel, the Student Council, staff, parents and published on the school website. 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 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: Mary Mullarkey

Ms. Mary Mullarkey

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 24/09/2024

Signed: Regina Anderson

Ms. Regina Anderson

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 24/09/2024

Template for recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class (es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box (es))

Pupil Concerned
Other Pupil
Parent
Teacher
Other

4. Location of Incident (s) (tick relevant box (es))

Playground
Classroom
Corridor
Toilets
School bus
Other

5. Name of person (s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box (es))

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic Membership of Traveller Community
Disability/SEN related Racist Other

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) **Date:** _____

Date submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal _____