

Catholic University School **Anti – Bullying Policy**

Mission Statement in relation to Bullying: The role of CUS as a Catholic educational community is particularly important at this time of increasing secularisation and individualism. In general the philosophy of the school addresses the challenge of forming our pupils into gentlemen who display courtesy and sensitivity to all and who can act with integrity and a sense of responsibility. CUS has always been known for the kindness and humanity with which it treats its pupils and for the high value it places on the quality of relationships. As educators, we in CUS recognize our responsibility to develop the full potential of the boys, something that will be different for each and every one of them and to foster excellence in everything we do and everything we ask of the boys. Our responsibility is to engage the whole person and to remember that the overall objective is for the boys of CUS to become rounded, responsible adults who can make their own way in the world.

Aims of Catholic University School:

In the context of an increasingly fragmenting secularising and individualising society and culture, the school aims:

- ♣ to provide a Catholic education that runs counter to the prevailing culture, while remaining faithful to its Marist and Catholic traditions
- ♣ to place the pupils at the centre of all that we say and do
- ♣ to be faithful to the raison d'etre of the school, that is to be a Catholic educational community.
- ♣ to inform our pupils with courtesy, sensitivity, modesty and a sense of responsibility and we aim to do this by treating them in that manner
- ♣ to evoke in our pupils those virtues and to develop each of them to their different but full potential
- ♣ that the students become rounded responsible adults when they leave CUS
- ♣ to create a school that is rounded and responsible in all of its actions and interactions so that this is evoked in the pupils and in providing this environment we aim ultimately to evoke in them a gratitude for what they have received so that they too will become Marist educators and formators in their lives ahead.

Scope of Policy: This Policy applies only to students in both the Junior and Senior School.

Rationale:

- ♣ The policy is based on our Marist ethos and desire to cultivate a caring school community
- ♣ Equality legislation prohibits discrimination on nine grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and traveller status.
- ♣ The Board of Management have a statutory obligation to ensure that a policy is in place that reflects the principles and values of the religious and educational philosophy of the school.
- ♣ Involving and encouraging all members of the school community in developing, formulating and reviewing this policy promotes partnership, ownership and implementation of a living policy.
- ♣ The Department of Education and Science requires schools to have a written policy on bullying.

Definition of bullying: Bullying consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by word, physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another

person or persons which undermines the individual persons right to personal dignity. **Note:** This is not to be confused with the good - natured banter that goes on as part of the normal social interchange between students or the normal professional classroom management by teachers.

Examples of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate include:

- ⤴ Humiliation; including name – calling, reference to academic ability.
- ⤴ Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
- ⤴ Verbal abuse; including aggressive or obscene language.
- ⤴ Physical abuse or threatened physical abuse.
- ⤴ Offensive joke; whether spoken or by email, text messaging etc.
- ⤴ Victimisation; including very personal remarks.
- ⤴ Exclusion, isolation or any form of discrimination.
- ⤴ Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker.
- ⤴ Threats, including demands for money.
- ⤴ An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individuals reputation.
- ⤴ Any act of incitement to others to behave inappropriately.

Any of the above, whether spoken, written or in cyber – space will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Statement on Bullying:

- ⤴ Every student in the school is entitled to respect and to be free from bullying.
- ⤴ The school will work pro-actively within its resources, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- ⤴ Appropriate action will be taken in relation to reported incidents.
- ⤴ The school has a support system for both those who bully and those who experience bullying.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting incidents of bullying:

- ⤴ Students should report any incident where they have perceived bullying to have taken place amongst others or felt bullied themselves.
- ⤴ Parents/Guardians should contact the Class-head/ Deputy Principal/ Principal regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents.
- ⤴ All reports of bullying should be thoroughly investigated and initially on seeing a report it is most important not to prejudge outcomes in order to understand the meaning of what has taken place as it is critical in addressing issues that arise in the interactions between pupils that nuanced and accurate descriptions are arrived at.
- ⤴ Once an issue of bullying has been identified, a record of the incident is kept on file and a copy of this is given to the classhead/parents.

Response to Reported Incidents of Bullying:

- ⤴ The school's belief is that issues arising out of interaction between pupils if they are to be resolved can best be done by developing the empathy and relational responsibility of all pupils involved, notwithstanding the role parents, staff and management can play in assisting and resolving such issues. The objective of any intervention is to stop the behaviour.

- ⤴ Students should feel that when they share information it is within a safe environment. This can take place within the **Circle System**. Conversations about bullying in Circle Groups are carefully managed as the aim is to focus on the development of empathy and create situations where students who may be involved in bullying can take responsibility. The first resort will not be to punish but to resolve.
- ⤴ At times class groups may be surveyed without notice in dealing with bullying claims and bullying questionnaires may be sent home to be filled in by parents with the students. It is important to note that while many conversations may be confidential, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed particularly where child welfare issues are involved.
- ⤴ Once information has surfaced and a student has taken responsibility then this may be discussed informally on a regular basis.
- ⤴ Where bullying behaviour is identified and acknowledged and the perpetrator persists, further sanctions may be evoked. It should be made very clear that persistent bullying, where identifiable, may result in such behaviour being referred to the Board of Management with a recommendation for permanent exclusion.

Education on Bullying: It is School Policy to provide education on bullying in the following manner:

- ⤴ Students in both the Junior and Senior School are facilitated through the S.P.H.E (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme which incorporates bullying information and learning.
- ⤴ Senior School Students are facilitated through the Senior Religious Education programme which incorporates a focus on good relationships.
- ⤴ New students who join the school at other times are allocated a companion- ideally this is another student from within the same year group. The Prefects play a significant role in the induction of new students.
- ⤴ Positive reinforcement of behaviour for the good of the school community is encouraged. It is advised that in devising and reviewing this policy that it takes place with the education partners through:

Consultation:

- ⤴ Discussion and agreement with the students through the Students Council.
- ⤴ Contribution from parents primarily through the Parents Association. The school recognises the right of parents to share in the task of equipping the student with life skills and also recognises the need to keep parents informed on procedures.
- ⤴ Input from Staff as agreed at Staff Meetings.
- ⤴ It is recommended that all staff partake in In-Service training.

Implementation:

- ⤴ As the official Anti-Bullying Policy of Catholic University school , all registered students of the school will have a copy of this policy in their school journal and their parents /guardians can download a copy of the policy from the school website.

Review:

- ⤴ This policy will be reviewed **One Year** after its implementation.
- ⤴ A major review will be carried out no later than **Five Years** after the date of implementation and will involve consultation with Parents/ Students/ Staff/ Management/ Board of Management of the school.