Catholic University School

89 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2

Anti-Bullying Policy

March 5th, 2025.

Catholic University 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 Catholic University School, 89 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2, 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 reporting directly to the Board of Management.
   - 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.*

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

- Subject Teacher
- Class Head
- Year Head
- Careers Guidance Counsellor
- Deputy Principal
- Principal
- Sports Coaches

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

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 (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- **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 unacceptable nature 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.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of relevant teacher(s)
- Outside organisations and agencies to hold workshops for both students and teachers.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, sports 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. 6th Year Mentoring/Prefects, Ember Team, Amber Team, and other student support 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 school journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in a dedicated notice board within the school.
- The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is discussed with pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. classroom and notice board promotion for bullying prevention, awareness at assemblies, morning class head and friendship, subject-based questionnaires, Stand-up/Friendship Week, year assemblies with year heads, etc.;
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of by-standers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in informing. This confidence factor is of vital importance, and 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;
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
    a. Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
    b. Hand up a note with homework.
    c. Make a phone call to the school or a trusted teacher in the school;
    d. Sending an email or private message to a teacher via MsTeams
    e. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on their behalf.
    f. Confidential questionnaire administered in an appropriate subject e.g. CSPE, SPHE, RSE, etc.;

g. Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. This should be done through the school office or by an arranged meeting with the teacher;
- The Acceptable Internet and Mobile Phone Use Policy in the school must include the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology is strictly monitored within the school, as is students' use of mobile phones.

- **Implementation of curricula**

Whole-school use of the PowerPoint presentation at the beginning of the school year.

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula along with RSE and cyber bullying programmes;
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes;
- School-wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes e.g. Children of a Digital Age, UP2US, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet, etc.;
- School-wide delivery of lessons on relational aggression (SPHE, CSPE, RSE), cyberbullying (Don't be mean behind your screen), homophobic and transphobic bullying (Growing up LGBT, Stand up Programme, The Trust Pack), diversity and inter-culturalism. A list of all programmes available through SPHE and CSPE are included on the subject plans.

- The school must specifically consider the students with additional educational needs with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
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Links to other policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Child First Guidelines
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary schools 2017
- Dignity in the Workplace (Staff Policy), Acceptable Usage Internet for both staff and students, Mobile Phone Use Policy.
- Extra Curricula Policy, Attendance Policy.
- Excursions Policy

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):

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 must be consistent with the approach outlined below. Where appropriate, every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) understand this approach from the outset. The school may attempt to resolve the issue in-house without consulting parents. This would only include one-off examples of lesser severity.

- **Reporting bullying behaviour:**
  - Any pupil may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
  - Any parent/guardian may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school through whatever communication channel they deem appropriate.
  - All reports, including anonymous reports, of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the teacher.
  - Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNA's), bus escorts, sports coaches, caretakers, cleaners, catering staff must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or reported to them, to relevant teacher(s).

- **Investigating and dealing with incidents - style of approach:**
  - In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation may be resolved. This may also involve attempting to resolve an incident without involvement of the parent(s) in the instance that the example is deemed to be a stand-alone incident of minor severity;
  - 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 it practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
  - Teachers will take a calm, professional, 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, minuted 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 way, in some instances.
  - When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, why, how and who. 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 could be met as a group, where the teacher has deemed appropriate.
  - If the teacher has deemed a group meeting appropriate, each member of the group should be supported through the possible pressures that may

face them from the other members of the group after the interview. It may also be appropriate/helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

- In cases where it has been determined by the 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 that have been undertaken and will be undertaken (as per the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- Where the teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's Anti-bullying Policy and efforts should be made to try to get him 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

- **Follow up and recording:**

  - In determining whether a bullying case has been adequate and appropriately addressed the teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement and may include the following factors:

    a. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
    b. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
    c. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable'
    d. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) of the school's Deputy Principal or Principal

  - Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately.

  - 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 Children.

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 teacher.
  - While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and with the teacher, the teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions take and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
  - Where appropriate, the teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

- Informal determination that bullying has occurred:
  - If it is established by the teacher that bullying has occurred, the teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
  - The school in consultation with the teacher(s) should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the teacher.

- **Established intervention strategies:**
  - Teacher interviews with all pupils involved separately.
  - Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by a monitoring process. This can be an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
  - Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions.

- Implementation sociogram questionnaires in relevant subjects e.g. CSPE, SPHE, RSE, etc.;
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given e.g. Year Head/ Class Head, Chaplin, Guidance Counsellor, etc.

7. **School Support:**

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for 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.

- Buddy/peer mentoring system, fifth year friends (Amber/Ember Team)
- Prefects
- Class Head time
- Class Head and Year Head care system
- Student support services system

- Counselling with Careers Guidance counsellor.

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 5/3/26.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. The Board of Management once in every school year will review this policy and its implementation. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____ Date: 5/3/25
(Principal)

Signed: _____ Date: 5/3/25
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date of next review: 5/3/26

Appendix 1

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:

Name	Class

3.
3.

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

Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Transport	
Other	

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents
   (Tick relevant box/es)

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other	

Other:

_____

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

Homophobic	AEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of the behaviour and its impact:

9. Details of actions taken:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Relevant teacher)

Date submitted to Principal/Vice Principal: _____

Note: The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested, and school may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

Appendix 2

Types of Bullying Behaviour

Types	Examples
General	Harassment Physical aggression Damage to property Name-calling Slagging Taunting Verbal abuse Offensive jokes Victimisation Intimidation The 'look' Exclusion Extortion Graffiti Threats Intrusion through interfering with personal belongings An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individual's reputation
Cyber	Silent phone calls Abusive phone calls Abusive text messages Abusive e-mails Abusive website comments/blog/MSN/pictures/Facebook/Twitter/Viber/ WhatsApp/Snapchat, etc. Online polls/fake pages/camera phone abuse
Identity Based	Ethnic Homophobic Transphobic Racial Taunting Name-calling Spreading rumours Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic background.

Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: Ignoring and isolation Exclusion from a group Taking someone's friends away Spreading rumours Talking loudly enough so the intended victim can hear
Sexual	Unwelcome sexual comments or contact

This list is not exhaustive.

Appendix 3

Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate, across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the Parents' Association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day-to-day work?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	

Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____ Date 5/3/25

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal