

**St. Mac Dara's
Community College
Templeogue**



Anti-Bullying Policy

**St. Mac Dara's Community
College**

29th April 2025

Mission Statement

"We, the community this College, through a caring and collective approach, aspire to provide a broad-based education for all, to foster respect and dignity and to promote a safe and just environment by positively encouraging all to realise their potential."

St. Mac Dara's Community College

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the Tusla, the Board of Management of St. Mac Dara's Community College 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 (Circular 045/2013)

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;
 - 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 (Circular 045/2013)

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 HBT (homophobic, biphobic and transphobic 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.

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

the Class Tutor

- usually, **not always**, receives the first reports of bullying and will conduct the initial investigate **and record** the incidents)
- will inform the Year Head of the results of the investigation
- Our Pastoral Care System via class teachers, tutors, year heads and senior management monitor and record individual cases of bullying of which reports are kept on file in the Principal's office for reporting at Staff, management and Board of Management meetings.

the Year Head

- may receive the first reports and therefore may investigate but will keep the Tutor informed
- will inform the Deputy Principal/Principal

the Deputy Principal

- may be involved at the request of the Year Head or as a direct result of a request from a student or parent/guardian

the Principal

- may be involved at the request of the Year Head/Deputy Principal or as a direct result of a request from a student or parent/guardian.

All reports of bullying will be referred to the care team for their consideration. The care team consists of the Principal, the Guidance Counsellor, the Chaplain, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and the SPHE Coordinator.

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

6. St Mac Dara's CC have committed to a whole school CPD in Restorative Practice 2021-2024. St Mac Dara's CC have engaged the support services of DCU and are piloting their FUSE Anti-Bullying programme.

- There will be a whole-school approach to education and prevention of all forms of bullying. This will require regular in-service training.
- The Social Personal Health Education programme (SPHE) adopted by St. Mac Dara's includes modules on bullying which include: promoting positive mental health. These aim to build the students' positive self-image, self-respect, respecting others and respecting difference. Students are encouraged to become an 'ally' of the LGBTQI+ community.
- Tolerance of difference is a core value of the school. This will be reinforced by all staff, through their interactions with students and by delivery of the various programmes in the school. Owing to Covid access to 'Help Seeking Agencies' will be included in students' Google Classroom accounts. The college Wellbeing Wall displays information on help available to students and parents and a digital copy is sent to parents.
- The dangers of using social media and other elements of technology are outlined to students in the course of the SPHE, RSE, IT, and the Religious Education (RE) programmes amongst others.
- The RE programme also promotes the notion of respect and tolerance through its curriculum.
- At the monthly student assemblies, the Principal, Deputy Principal and the Year Head will address the topic of bullying regularly and reinforce the college's non-tolerance of bullying in any form.
- The 6* Year Prefects are instructed to monitor the students and to be alert to any behaviour that may be viewed as bullying and to inform the Year Head if they should be aware of any such behaviour. As a result of Covid, 4th Year Mentors are closely involved with first year students.

- The Parent's Association will be encouraged to provide seminars for parents on the topic of bullying, especially the area of bullying which may take place outside the school e.g. cyberbullying.
- Staff who receive relevant training will pass on summaries of their training to the remainder of the school staff.

7. 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):

- Any report of bullying should be passed to the class tutor or the year head.
- The details will be recorded using the template for this purpose and the report will be investigated.
- A student reporting the incidents) will be asked to write an account giving specific details eg. times, dates, events etc.
- All parties involved in the reported bullying will be given the opportunity to give their version of the event(s).
- Investigation into bullying must be conducted in a manner ensuring privacy, sensitivity and fairness.
- If a group is involved, each member of the group should be interviewed individually at first. Subsequently, if deemed appropriate, they should be met as a group.

8. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- As part of the anti-bullying programme of St. Mac Dara's the self-esteem of all pupils is at the centre of all opportunities or activities.
- It is the responsibility of all school staff to try to raise pupils' self-esteem in the many areas of school life. However, if a student is deemed to be at risk from bullying or is being bullied, specific members of staff must provide the support necessary for the student to allow the development of friendship and social skills. This will help develop the resilience that can be needed to deal with bullying situations.
- These staff may include members of the Care Team, the counsellor, the chaplain, the tutor, the Year Head, the Deputy Principal and the Principal among others. The teachers delivering the SPHE programme have a particular responsibility especially in relation to the anti-bullying module.

- The counsellor may need to work with the victims of bullying in order to raise their self-esteem and to develop coping strategies. With CPD staff are adopting techniques in managing conflict and restoring relationships.
- St. Mac Dara's holds a Random Acts of Kindness week each year whose aim is to promote friendship and positive activities which encourages students to look out for and help each other. We participate in anti-racism competitions with external agencies during anti-racism week e.g. SDCC
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will also be offered counselling and will be shown ways in which they can behave that is respectful of others while meeting their own needs.

9. 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.

10. 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.

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. 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 (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.

13. The prevention of bullying and educational awareness of anti-bullying is supported by our school policies.



Case of alleged bullying Report

1. Name of pupil allegedly being bullied and class group

Name. _____ Class. _____

2. Names) and classes) of pupils) allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour

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

4. Location of incidents - tick relevant
box(es)

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground/Yard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Name of person(s) reporting the bullying concern

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour - tick relevant boxes)

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

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
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8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact (continue overleaf if necessary)

9. Details of actions taken (continue overleaf if necessary)

Signed (Relevant Teacher):
Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal:

Date;


Signed:
Chairperson Board of Management.


Signed:
Principal.
Date: 29th April 2025