



**Presentation Community College, Terenure**  
**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 Presentation Community College Terenure 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.

This policy comprehends bullying that is either perpetrated by students or experienced by students in the College. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the following ETB policies.

- Bullying Prevention Policy – Compliant Procedure for ETB Staff.
- Harassment/Sexual Harassment prevention policy – complaint procedure for ETB staff.

2. The Board of Management of Presentation Community College Terenure adopts the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools issued by the Department of Education and Skills (September 2013) as the basis for the way in which the Presentation Community College community addresses the issue of bullying.

3. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students or staff and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

**a) A positive school culture and climate which:**

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages students and staff 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 students;
- Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying;
- including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

- f) Effective supervision and monitoring of students.
- g) Supports for staff.
- h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).
- i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

**4. 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.
- 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.

Those who bully others in a non-physical way often do not realise that their actions may have serious legal consequences for them. **The reality, however, is that bullying may constitute a criminal offence.**

For example, bullying may constitute a criminal offence under **Section 10 of the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997.**

Section 10 of this act deals with harassment and provides that a person may be guilty of this crime if s/he:

*'... without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, by any means including by use of the telephone, harasses another by persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with him or her.*

*'For the purpose of this section, a person harasses another where-*

- (a) *he or she, by his or her acts intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to the other, and*
- (b) *his or her acts are such that a reasonable person would realise that the acts would seriously interfere with the other's peace and privacy or cause alarm, distress or harm to the other'.*

**Section 10 harassment** is an arrestable offence and, if convicted on indictment, carries a jail term not exceeding 7 years. On conviction also, a court may make an order that the guilty

party may not, for a specified period, communicate by any means, or come within a specified distance of a person's home or workplace.

**Section 2 of the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act (1989)** makes it a criminal offence for a person *to publish or distribute written material, to use words, behave or display written material ... or to distribute, show or play a recording of visual images or sounds, if the written material, words, behaviour, visual images or sounds, as the case may be, are threatening, abusive or insulting and are intended or, having regard to all the circumstances, are likely to stir up hatred.*

Those convicted on indictment under this provision may be sentenced to a maximum of two years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £10,000.00.

Even where bullying does not amount to a criminal offence, the perpetrator may be held liable for damages in civil court proceedings. For example, **statements made on social media sites are covered by the provisions of the Defamation Act 2009**, which at Section 2 defines a defamatory statement as 'one which tends to injure a person's reputation in the eyes of reasonable members of society'.

Many, young and not so young, seem to feel that by posting anonymously on social networking sites, they can guarantee that their identity is protected. This, however, is not the case. Indeed, in many cases the content of messages makes it easy to identify the perpetrator. In any case, where the Gardaí have grounds for believing that criminal activity may be occurring, applications can be made to the courts requiring the internet service provider or others in possession of relevant information to divulge a perpetrator's identity.

Where it is felt that bullying may amount to a criminal act, the College **may** seek legal advice and the matter will be reported to the Gardaí.

## **5. To whom should concerns about a student being bullied be reported – relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying?**

Students, parents, non-teaching staff or members of the wider community should feel welcome to report their concerns to any member of the teaching staff – including the Principal, the Deputy Principal and the Assistant principal(s) with particular responsibility in this area. In this regard, any member of the teaching staff is deemed to be a relevant teacher in the context of Section 6.8.3 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. Upon a report of bullying the staff member should report the matter to the relevant Assistant Principal for investigation as outlined in the Presentation Community College Anti-bullying procedures (Appendix 4).

## **6. Education and prevention strategies to combat bullying – Section 6.5 of DES Procedures**

6.1 The College makes it clear to all members of the school community that bullying of any kind is unacceptable, irrespective of whether it is a student a staff member or any other person that is the subject of such behaviour. In this context, all members of the School community have a duty to bring to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal and the Assistant principal(s) any incident of cyber bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

6.2 While, when 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 College 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/College's Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying procedures (see appendix 4), and the CDET General Rules and Regulations for Schools, Colleges and other Centres, against those who bully others.

- 6.3 The prevention and awareness of bullying is integral to this policy and students will, through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes, be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- 6.4 The focus of the School's/College's prevention strategy will be to build empathy, respect and resilience in students.
- 6.5 Students will be provided with opportunities to understand the causes and effects of bullying, the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying. This will include the display of LGBT posters (as appropriate) and discussions with parents about statements of welcome and respect for LGBT members of the school community, teaching the Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE) resource, Growing Up LGBT and (as appropriate) participating in LGBT awareness events.

The College recognises that the SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. Also, that the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme provides opportunities to explore and discuss areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying. The College will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the full potential of these programmes to combat bullying is exploited.

It is recognised that there is potential 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.

- 6.6 Prevention and awareness raising measures will also deal explicitly with cyber-bullying through educating students about appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also through developing a culture of reporting any concerns about or incidents of bullying to a member of the teaching staff.
- 6.7 The College will, in all its communications with students and their parents, commencing with the induction of the student into the College, make every effort to highlight the importance of students reporting incidents of or concerns about bullying to a member of the teaching staff on the clear understanding that these matters are being reported in confidence. This means that a student who draws concerns about bullying to the attention of a member of staff will not have his/her identity divulged in any way that might result in those against whom allegations are being made identifying the source of the report.

More than anything else, the combating of bullying will depend on the extent to which students note and report bullying. In this context, the well-being of students is very much dependent on the vigilance of their fellow students and their preparedness to report concerns about bullying to the teaching staff and/or school management. All teaching staff will reinforce this point to students on an ongoing basis.

- 6.8 The College will adopt a school-wide approach (involving management, staff, parents, students and members of the wider community with a connection to the College) to prevent and combat bullying. In this context, the College is committed to engaging with parents. Firstly, the College will involve them in the development of policies and practices to combat bullying. Secondly the College will hold information evenings for parents to ensure that they understand the way the College deals with bullying, and to provide them with reliable information on how they may contribute towards combating

bullying. In this regard, it is important that parents realise that anyone can be a bully and anyone can be a target of bullying. It is not just other people's daughters that can bully. Here, also, it is important to realise that disagreements between young people are part and parcel of negotiating the road to adulthood and that every youthful disagreement should not be treated as a full-blown bullying episode.

- 6.9 In accordance with 6.8.9 of the DES Procedures 'parents and students are expected 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'.
- 6.10 The College will establish links with school bus drivers and others who come in daily contact with its students, where practicable and appropriate, in order to enlist them in countering bullying behaviour by reporting it to parents and/or the College.
- 6.11 Where necessary the College will seek the assistance of and work with CDETB, CDETB Psychological Services, NEPS, the HSE and the Gardaí, as appropriate, to combat bullying – identify the perpetrators and support the victims.
- 6.12 In combating bullying, the College will take particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. This will involve improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying particular attention to student induction and cultivating a school culture that respects everyone and values helping one another.
- 6.13 The College will devote a staff development session (for teaching and non-teaching staff – as appropriate) each school year 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 session 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, its associated procedures (appendix 3), and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools consistently and effectively.
- 6.14 The College is committed to devoting a continuous professional development session each year to building the capacity of the College to combat bullying.
- 6.15 The College is committed to surveying the student body regularly (at least once every school year) to identify the extent of bullying and, in so far as is possible, the students that are affected by it.
- 6.16 The College's RSE and SPHE programme will specifically address the issue of bullying with each year group, each school year.
- 6.17 The College will, each year, hold a Safe Internet Awareness day and an Anti-bullying awareness week to highlight the whole issue of bullying and staying safe using modern technology.

6.18 The College's senior students will have a specific responsibility for recognising bullying behaviour, for bringing concerns about bullying behaviour to the attention of a teacher and for supporting vulnerable students in relation to bullying. The senior students will be provided with training to assist them in this regard.

**7. Procedures for investigating, following up and recording of bullying behaviour, and intervention strategies used by the College for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour - see Section 6.8 of DES Procedures**

- 7.1 Where a member of the teaching staff has a concern about a student being bullied, either as a result of a personal observation or as a result of receiving a report from a third party, s/he will refer the matter to the Assistant Principal with responsibility in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. Alternatively, in the case of serious/extreme cases of bullying, the teacher may refer the matter to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- 7.2 In investigating bullying behaviour or addressing bullying behaviour in any way, teachers are welcome to seek the assistance and support of the principal, the deputy principal, Assistant Principals, or the pastoral care team at any time. Indeed, given the extent to which the principal and deputy principal and Assistant Principals are privy to all kinds of personal information about students, it would be prudent for teachers to check in with either of them before taking any action in relation to bullying behaviour.
- 7.3 Where a teacher is concerned that a particular bullying episode is causing serious upset to a student, staff member or other person, s/he should bring it to the attention of either the Principal, Deputy Principal or Assistant Principals at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 7.4 The College reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where bullying is perpetrated by a member of the school community and it impinges on the work or well-being of a student in the school, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the College.
- 7.5 The College reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6.3.5 of the DES Procedures to seek the assistance of agencies such as CDET, CDET Psychological Services, NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to dealing effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where the College deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (see sections 6.8.12, 6.8.13 and 6.8.14 of the DES Procedures) it will consult with the HSE's Children and Family Services to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- 7.6 Concerns about or allegations of bullying will be investigated and addressed in accordance with Section 6.8.9 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, and the Procedures as outlined in Appendix 4. These are summarised as follows.
- a. In investigating and dealing with bullying the focus will be on resolving the interpersonal issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved - rather than apportioning blame.
  - b. 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 might be resolved.

- c. All reports of bullying, including anonymous reports, will be investigated and dealt with by the Assistant principal(s) with particular responsibility in this area. In this regard, it is incumbent on each teacher who becomes aware of bullying behaviour either to bring such behaviour to the attention of the Assistant principal(s) with particular responsibility in this area or Principal or Deputy Principal at the earliest possible opportunity.

- d. It will be made clear to students in all years that when they report bullying

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 1 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 (see 7.3) or where a relevant teacher at any time passes on concerns or allegations of bullying to the Principal or Deputy Principal (see 7.1).

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 1, retain a copy of the completed template in his/her files and provide a copy to the Principal or Deputy Principal, as applicable.

EXTRACT From: DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

behaviour they are not considered to be 'telling tales' but are behaving responsibly and that the well-being of other students is dependent on them reporting such behaviour to a teacher or to a senior student.

- e. All non-teaching staff such as clerical and administrative, study supervisors, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners, sports' coaches, those taking extracurricular activities and those driving school buses will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to either a teacher or the principal or deputy principal.

- f. Incidents of bullying will be investigated in a calm, unemotional problem-solving manner.
- g. Incidents of bullying will generally be investigated outside of the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- h. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for the rights of students, irrespective of whether they are allegedly involved in bullying behaviour or in a position to provide information about the behaviour being investigated.
- i. Those investigating bullying behaviour will calmly seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
- j. Where a group is allegedly involved in bullying behaviour, each student will be interviewed individually in the first instance. Thereafter, where appropriate, all involved will be met as a group and, at this meeting; each member will be asked for his/her account to ensure that all are clear about what each individual is saying.
- k. Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that she may face from the other members of the group after being interviewed.
- l. Where deemed appropriate, those being interviewed may be asked to write down their account of what happened.
- m. Where the teacher investigating a bullying issue determines that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school.
- n. Where the relevant teacher determines that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to her how she is in breach of the College's anti-bullying policy and every reasonable effort will be made to try to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the student/s being bullied.
- o. Where the College deems it necessary to impose disciplinary sanctions, it will be made clear to all involved (both the bullied and those doing the bullying) and their parents) that this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, her parents and the College.
- p. As a follow up to a bullying issue being resolved, the relevant teacher should meet separately with the relevant parties to review progress. Subsequently, but only if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable, consideration should be given to meeting with both parties simultaneously as this can have a therapeutic effect.

- q. Where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the bullying incident must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 2.
- r. 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; and
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- s. Where a parent/guardian or a student who is more than 18 years old is not satisfied that the College has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, s/he will be advised of his/her right to make an appeal to the College Board of Management. Such appeals shall be submitted, in writing setting out the grounds for the appeal, to the Chairperson of the Board within 15 school days of the parent/guardian informing the College principal that s/he is of the opinion that the College has not dealt with the bullying case in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.
- Where a parent/guardian, having exercised his/her appeal to the Board of Management, is still not satisfied s/he will be advised of his/her right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **8 Programme of support for working with students affected by bullying - see Sections 6.8 15, 6.8.16 and 6.8.17 of DES Procedures**

- 8.1** The College will put in place a programme of supports for students who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements.
- Students who have been bullied will be:
    - offered appropriate counselling; and
    - provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
  - Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:
    - provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others; and
    - provided with appropriate opportunities to build their self esteem and feelings of self-worth.
  - Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and their parents and to avail of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.

## **9 Supervision and Monitoring of Anti-Bullying in College**

- 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.
- The implementation and effectiveness of the College's anti-bullying policy will be an agenda item for all staff meetings – so the concerns about the policy and/or the welfare of individual students can be shared and effectively addressed.
- Data gathered through the reporting templates (Appendix 2) will be collated and analysed annually with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying issues requiring attention. This analysis will complement the information gathered through the bullying surveys – see Section 6.15.
- At least once in every school term, The Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out the following.
  - the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template (see Appendix 2) since the previous report to the Board.
  - confirmation that all cases referred via the recording template (Appendix 2) have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. The minutes of Board of Management' meetings will record the Principal's report but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the students involved.

## **10 Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the College will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students 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 Policy Adoption and Review**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in April 2014. And Reviewed in October 2016

## **12 Policy Dissemination and Publication**

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent School Association.

## **13. Policy Review**

- The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools using the checklist included at Appendix 2 of those procedures – see Appendix 3 of this policy.

- The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas for improvement identified by the annual review.
- Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent School Association.
- Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management' meeting that adopted the review and a record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, will be made available to the Patron and the DES. In the case of the DES, it is appreciated that the Inspectorate will place a strong focus on the actions the College takes to create a positive school culture and to prevent and tackle bullying.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of next review:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Principal)**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1 – Relevant Teachers for Investigating bullying behaviour**

1. Assistant Principal
2. Member of the Student Support Team (formerly known as Care Team).
3. Deputy Principal
4. Principal

## Appendix 2 – Reporting Bullying Behaviour to Principal/Deputy Principal

### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

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

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### 3. Source of Bullying concern/report

(tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned  [ ]  
Other Pupil  [ ]  
Parent  [ ]  
Teacher  [ ]  
Other  [\_\_\_\_\_]

### 4. Location of incidents

(tick relevant box(es))

Grounds  [ ]  
Classroom  [ ]  
Corridor  [ ]  
Toilets  [ ]  
Other  [\_\_\_\_\_]

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

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### 6. Type of bullying behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical aggression  [ ]  
Damage to property  [ ]  
Isolation/Exclusion  [ ]  
Name Calling  [ ]  
Cyber-bullying  [ ]  
Intimidation  [ ]  
Malicious Gossip  [ ]  
Other(specify)  [\_\_\_\_\_]

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

Homophobic  [ ]  
Racist  [ ]  
Other (specify)  [\_\_\_\_\_]  
Disability/SEN  [ ]  
Membership of Travelling community  [ ]

### 8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

### 9. Details of actions taken

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal \_\_\_\_\_ or Date submitted to Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

### 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 <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
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?	

## Appendix 4 Overview of Anti-bullying Procedures for Presentation Community College

### Managing Bullying Incidents:

The school expects a high standard of behaviour as detailed in the Code of Behaviour and promotes positive approaches to achieve this.

When dealing with students involved in bullying incidents the aims are to:

- a) Support and counsel the victim, and
- b) Encourage those responsible for the offence to take responsibility for their actions and change their behaviour.

These aims are met via:

- Prompt but considered response to incidents
- Collation of relevant information.

*A written recording procedure is used. This procedure ensures that a fair process of challenging the student about behaviour of concern is in place.*

- The adult who has observed an incident or to whom the incident has been reported will listen to the victim and give them the opportunity to describe what has happened, reassure the victim and give support by telling them we will **act**.
- Use of existing disciplinary sanctions. (These apply only with a view to improving the behaviour of those responsible and to ensure the schools commitment to its policy against bullying.)
- Contact with the parents/carers of both victims and bullies in the vast majority of cases. This should always be followed by feedback on the progress made in dealing with the incident.
- The use of appropriate counselling strategies.
- Feedback to victims, bullies and other concerned parties, on the progress made in dealing with the incident.
- When monitoring and supporting students, care is taken to ensure confidentiality as far as possible within and outside school. Information is only disclosed on a strict “need to know” basis.

### Procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour:

- Students who feel they are being bullied should tell someone, a friend, teacher, tutor, year head, school counsellor, or family member.
- Parents may need to be involved at an early stage, or indeed may be involved in the initial report/information giving and will be a welcome part of the process.

- Telling is difficult for students. Victims of bullying fear that telling will worsen, the problem, and that there may be retaliation if it known they told. In this regard the school will strive to develop and provide *safe* structures which encourage disclosure including the use of:
  - Confidential Questionnaires
  - Bullying Sociograms
  - Class Observation.

### **Procedures for investigating:**

- Interviews: All interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of any pupils involved.
- Bullying Sociogram: is also an invaluable strategy used to investigate instances of bullying, including one-to one or incidents involving a group.

### **Programmes of support for Victim and Bully:**

Students may need to attend counselling.

Strategies will be suggested and worked on with individuals where appropriate. These would include, for example, a focus on self control and self discipline, encouraging self esteem, giving praise, encouraging students to work in groups other than those to which they naturally gravitate and so on.

### **Outline of sanctions on pupils.**

- a) If you are involved you will be warned to stop.
- b) If you do not stop your parents will be told.
- c) If the incident(s) is/are particularly serious/persistent you may be suspended/expelled.
- d) You may be required to seek help to change your pattern of behaviour.

### **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation of Procedures.**

The College will monitor aspects of the procedures to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the college.

The areas are:

- a) Anti-Bullying Programmes
- b) Managing Bullying Related incidents

The results of the monitoring will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

## Appendix 4A Ladder of referral in dealing with incidents of Bullying Behaviour.

All False claims of Bullying against a member of the school community are considered as a very serious, and will be treated as such.

Procedure to be followed by subject teacher:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a teacher witnesses bullying behaviour or is informed of bullying behaviour. <i>Or</i></li> <li>1<sup>st</sup> Report of a student/s involved in bullying behaviour.</li> </ul>			
Procedure	Disciplinary measures /Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge behaviour by referring to Anti-Bullying Policy. Stress behaviour is unacceptable.</li> <li>After intervention in an incident/responding, stand beside student causing the problem.</li> <li>Diffuse confrontation.</li> <li>Speak to student/s after class.</li> <li>Do not deal with student(s) in front of class group.</li> <li>Students involved are warned to stop behaviours of concern and given a <b>verbal warning</b>.</li> <li>Complete incident report form.</li> <li>Refer incident to Assistant Principal.</li> </ul>	<p>Verbal Warning</p> <p><i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately.</li> <li>That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.</li> <li>Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved.</li> </ul>	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologising</li> <li>Paying for damage.</li> <li>Returning money or the equivalent value of property.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully.</li><li>• Punishment work if necessary e.g. Write out anti-bullying code.</li></ul>		
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<b>Procedure to be followed by Assistant Principal in the case of:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Report of students involved in bullying behaviour. <i>Or</i></li> <li>• Gang Bullying</li> </ul>			
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Disciplinary measures /Sanctions</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Outcome Expected</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident Reported</li> <li>• Interview victim, alleged bully, witnesses, Individuals involved in gang bullying.</li> <li>• Other strategies to consider:</li> <li>• Bullying Sociogram</li> <li>• Class Observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gathering of evidence and offering of support to others effected may be facilitated by the carrying out of a bullying sociogram or class observation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Incident investigated and assessed.</li> <li>• <b>Student/s involved are warned to stop behaviours of concern.</b></li> <li>• <b>(Verbal Warning)</b></li> <li>• Mediation (If appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>If behaviour is considered to be very serious and suspension is warranted parents need to be contacted.</b></li> <li>• Complete incident report form.</li> <li>• Follow up needed to monitor progress.</li> <li>• <b>If behaviour continues (e.g.) 2<sup>nd</sup> report of same student(s) involved in bullying behaviour</b></li> <li>• Repeat procedure outlined above.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible Sanctions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Warning</li> <li>• <b><i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i></b></li> <li>• The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately.</li> <li>• That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.</li> <li>• Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information.</li> <li>• If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully.</li> <li>• Contact Parents</li> <li>• Suspension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved.</li> <li>• Parental Support of all parties concerned needed and need to be informed of proposed plan.</li> <li>• Staff Support: Class Observation for a two week period may be carried out to monitor progress.</li> <li>• Support for class: Bullying Sociogram to be carried out again to continue raising awareness of bullying as an</li> </ul>	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising</li> <li>• Agreeing to mediation.</li> <li>• Agreement reached with a parent present.</li> <li>• Agreement to speak to a counsellor.</li> <li>• Paying for damage.</li> <li>• Returning money or the equivalent value of property.</li> <li>• Suspension</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In the case of a 2<sup>nd</sup> report of same students involved in bullying behaviour parents must be contacted.</b></li> <li>• Feedback to other necessary parties on a need to know basis.</li> <li>• If after investigation it is found that bullying behaviour is involved and that Tutor / Year Head feel that the matter can not be resolved at this stage or is very serious they may refer the incident to the Deputy Principal/Principal.</li> <li>• If it can be resolved by Assistant Principal, this is satisfactory.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour monitored over an agreed period of time.</li> </ul>	<p>unacceptable behaviour and to monitor progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be advised to attend counselling at this stage. Recommendations for referral Guidance counselling or Care team are services on offer by Presentation Community College</li> </ul>	
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**Procedure to be followed by Anti-Bullying Team.**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Report of students involved in bullying behaviour. **Or**
- If incident 1 or 2 considered to be very serious and cannot be resolved at above stages. **Or**
- Gang Bullying. **Or**
- Serious Act of Aggression

Procedure	Disciplinary Measures / Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<p><b><u>Stage 1:</u></b></p> <p>Meeting of appropriate staff to discuss case and appropriate course of action to be taken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview parties concerned.</li> <li>• Gathering of evidence and offering of support to others effected may be facilitated by the carrying out of a bullying sociogram or class observation.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Stage 2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of same should be contacted immediately and present at meetings.</li> <li>• Parents and students need to be reminded of Code of Discipline and Anti-Bullying Code/Statement they have signed.</li> <li>• We need a promise and guarantee from these students to stop this behaviour: Threatening, Name calling .....</li> <li>• A contract/promise to change behaviour must be signed by both student and parent/guardian.</li> <li>• Consequences of a repeat of this behaviour should be outlined in this agreement: repeated</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Stage 1</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Warning</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Contact parent/guardian.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Stage 2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract/ Promise to change behaviour.</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Recommendations for Referral to: Guidance Other: Anger Management. J.L.O.</li> <li>• Behaviour monitored over a period of time.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Stage 1</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behavior of any others involved.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Stage2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental Support of all parties concerned needed and need to be informed of proposed plan.</li> <li>• Students may be advised to attend counselling at this stage. Recommendations for referral Guidance counselling or Care team</li> <li>• May be a need for anger management training. Contact with other agencies may be necessary:</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Stage 1 and 2</u></b></p> <p><i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i></p> <p><i>Verbal Warning outlines</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The specific behaviour/s you have discussed should cease immediately.</li> <li>• That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.</li> <li>• Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information.</li> <li>• If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully.</li> </ul>

<p>bullying behaviour will merit attendance at the Discipline committee / Board of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The above may need to be completed before the victim or alleged bully returns to school if suspended..</li> <li>• Advised not to involve the Gardaí, unless families of parties concerned wish to involve them.</li> <li>• Reconciliation facilitated by a mediation process may or may not be appropriate at this time.</li> <li>• Behaviour monitored over a period of time.</li> <li>• All members must record their involvement.</li> <li>• A written record procedure must be used.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>We must keep in mind the sanctions in our Code of Discipline.</p> <p><b><u>Stage 3</u></b> Follow up meeting to monitor progress?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student / parent must attend up follow up meeting on request.</li> <li>• If they don't agree to above - we are following procedure as laid out in Anti-Bullying policy and code of Discipline. They have already signed up to these contracts on attending the College</li> <li>• Consequences of repeat bullying behaviour will be:</li> <li>• Referral</li> <li>• Suspension Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head. i.e. Discipline Committee Board of Management.</li> </ul>	<p>Child Support Worker (I.S.P.C.C.) Psychologist Juvenile Liaison Officer Gardai To attend G.P.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To report to an agreed member of staff for an agreed period of time.</li> <li>• Year Head, Tutor, Deputy Principal, and other parties concerned need to be fully informed of proposed plan.</li> <li>• Staff Support: Class Observation for a two week period may be carried out to monitor progress.</li> <li>• Support for class: Bullying Sociogram to be carried out again to continue raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable behaviour and to monitor progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Stage 2 continued:</u></b> Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising to mediation.</li> <li>• Agreeing an agreement with a parent present.</li> <li>• Signing an agreement with a parent present.</li> <li>• Agreement to speak to a counsellor.</li> <li>• Paying for damage.</li> <li>• Returning money or the equivalent value of property.</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• The behaviours of concern must stop.</li> <li>• Behaviour to be monitored by all parties over an agreed period of time.</li> <li>• Follow up meetings.</li> <li>• Whole school approach</li> </ul>
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<b>Procedure to be followed by Principal / Discipline Committee</b>			
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Disciplinary Measures / Sanctions</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Outcome Expected</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If behaviour still persists student and parents meet with Principal./Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principal.</li> <li>• If behaviour still persists student may be suspended.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Possible Sanctions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Referral to Board of Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved.</li> </ul>	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologising</li> <li>• Agreeing to mediation.</li> <li>• Signing an agreement with a parent present.</li> <li>• Agreement to speak to a counsellor.</li> <li>• Paying for damage.</li> <li>• Returning money or the equivalent value of property.</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Behaviour monitored over an agreed period of time.</li> <li>• To attend follow up meetings on request.</li> <li>• Referral to Board of Management.</li> </ul>

**Presentation Community College**

Incident Recording Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Names of students involved including witnesses.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Details of Incident(s) / Report.***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***The incident was also reported to:***

Tutor  Year Head  Other  \_\_\_\_\_

***Action Taken.***

**Sanction:**

Verbal warning  Written work

Contact parent/carer  Suspension

Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Other(Explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**Outline of outcome:**

Apology	Agreeing to mediation	Agreement / or signing an agreement with parents /carers present	Agreement to speak to counsellor/ Referral to Family Therapy	Referral to outside agency	Paying for damage	Returning money or the equivalent value of property
<i>Tick below or add notes.</i>						

***Suggestions for follow up:***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE FORM AT APPENDIX 2 MUST BE COMPLETED WHERE INCIDENTS OF BULLYING ARE UNRESOLVED OR ARE OF A SERIOUS NATURE.**

## Appendix 4B Strategies for Reporting and Investigating bullying behaviour

The strategies employed are:

Confidential Questionnaires  
Anti-bullying Sociograms  
Class Observation

### 1 Confidential Questionnaires

This is the simplest and most obvious way of discovering who needs help in dealing with bullying in school.

One question, which can be answered discreetly during class time.

Name: _____ Class: _____			
Would you like to talk to someone about bullying? Yes	?	No	?

Questionnaires can also be used to monitor the effectiveness of a school's implementation of anti-bullying measures.

This will be carried out as appropriate.

## **The Bullying Sociogram**

A sociogram is a useful strategy for understanding relationships in a class or group. The method employed is to ask each student a series of questions designed to uncover the social dynamic in a class, thus identifying positive and negative influences in the group.

### **Aims**

#### **Preventative**

1. To prevent bullying by adopting a proactive pastoral approach. The direct intervention of an individual teacher will build trust and confidence in the schools anti-bullying policy, and inspire better relationships amongst the pupils themselves.
2. Awareness of the unacceptability of bullying will be raised even if there are no problems in the group.
3. To provide a safe structure, which encourages disclosure of bullying situations, thereby uncovering emerging or previously undetected cases.
4. To establish a clear picture of the social dynamic operating within a class by identifying:
  - The power structure amongst students.
  - Levels of bullying and victimization.
  - Students involved.
  - Students at risk.

This will give the teacher first hand information and a better understanding of the hidden sub-culture of the group.
- 5 To identify the strengths within the group, and by empowering bystanders, to encourage mutual support between students.

#### **Reactive**

1. To investigate reported instances of bullying. This includes one-to-one bullying or incidents involving a group.
2. To stop bullying by providing an immediate response, and to reduce the possibility of retaliation.

#### **Procedural**

1. To embed anti-bullying measures into teachers' classroom practice. Information may also be used as an early warning system to form the basis of a team response by other subject teachers.
2. To fit in with the school's discipline structure by allowing teachers to establish standards of acceptable behaviour.
3. To facilitate the noting, recording and investigating of bullying as described in the Guidelines.

### **When to use the Sociogram?**

As a powerful preventative measure: the sociogram may be used very early in first year before serious patterns of negative behaviour take hold, and when students are beginning to form relationships with peers. Students will be reassured by the experience of a teacher who is supportive and is encouraging a safe and friendly atmosphere, and who is prepared to act with authority when necessary.

As a monitoring mechanism: it can be used at regular intervals as part of tutorial provision in the school.

As a non – confrontational intervention: it can be used in cases where bullying has already occurred.

### **Steps for implementation**

1. Decide who should administer the sociogram and consult with school management, or care team.
2. Seek the co-operation of the subject teacher and arrange for a class period if possible.
3. At the appointed time, explain the purpose of the sociogram to students. Inform the whole class that you are going to talk to everyone about their experience of the class atmosphere, and whether it needs to be improved. Explain that this exercise is part of the school's anti-bullying measures. Tell the class that you will give them feedback.
4. Subject teacher continues work with their class, thus ensuring minimum disruption. Individual students are interviewed privately. (See form for questions)
5. Inform each student of the confidential nature of the interview, reassuring them that they will not be identified as having provided information. Be clear that all students will be asked the same questions. This protects victims from retaliation; on the basis that the picture you have formed comes from the whole class contribution. Have the class list to hand to record information. You may find it helpful to make a visual representation of the information on a chart, especially where there is a recurring problem. Record the details.
6. A clear picture of the class dynamic will emerge. Discuss general findings with the whole class. Identify ways in which the class is working well in terms of co-operation and friendships. If this is overwhelmingly positive, the preventative aspect of the strategy will have come into play. Praise the class for their co-operative spirit, and reward them if possible.
7. If problems have been identified, deal with the problem behaviour immediately after having interviewed all students. Discuss evidence privately with individual students who were identified as behaving in a bullying manner.
8. Be specific about the problem behaviour, explain why it is wrong, and challenge the inappropriateness of it. Be clear that it is totally unacceptable in the school.
9. Seek agreement on:
  - i. Facts
  - ii. Future behaviour

### iii Follow up meeting

10. It may be useful to have a teacher or year head witness the agreement. Inform the offending young person that this will be monitored, and that other teachers will also be made aware of the situation. Arrange a time to review progress. Mention the rights of others. Explain to the student, that being popular in class is more likely to arise from being admired by others, rather than being feared. Emphasise that you have formed an opinion about their specific behaviour by talking to every student in the class. No particular person should be singled out for revenge or retaliation. This also applies to friends of the offending pupil. Make it clear that you will be checking up on this. Make a record.
11. Negotiate or renegotiate a class agreement regarding future acceptable behaviour.
12. Feedback results of the sociogram to class teachers, and decide on a strategy for supervision and monitoring.
13. Arrange to review progress with the class and with the class teachers.

## Bullying Sociogram Form

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Who is bullying?	What is the behaviour?	Who is it directed towards?

*Details of positive behaviour and relationships should also be recorded.*

- Are you happy with the atmosphere in your class?
- Who are your friends?
- Are you being bullied in any way? (If the answer is yes, gather details and reassure the pupil that the problem will be addressed.)
- Is there anyone in the class being picked on or having a hard time?
- Is anyone being left out, or ignored?
- Is there anyone spreading rumours or gossip, or using notes, phone calls or text messages to make others feel bad about them?
- Is anyone being unfair to others?
- Is there a group of pupils making life difficult to others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
- Can you give examples?
- Who do you think is causing the problems?
- What can you do to help students who are having a hard time?
- Have you being bullying anyone?

Who is bullying? E.g.	What is the behaviour?	Who is it directed towards?
John	Pushing, name calling	Tom
	Three pupils mentioned this	
Niamh Orla	Used to be friends with Mary, Now excluding her from the group. Reported by Mary and Liz	Mary

Conclude by reminding all pupils about the school's anti-bullying policy. Thank them for their co-operation, and mention that you will be acting on the information you have received.

### **3. Class Observation**

Class observation involves all subject teachers recording peer behaviour over an agreed period, pooling the information, and deciding on an agreed course of action. This observation is carried out unobtrusively. Class observation is a useful tool for discovering the dynamic at work in a group and provides a more comprehensive method dealing with negative behaviour and maximizing constructive behaviour. It can also be used to monitor events following the use of the Bullying Sociogram. Teachers may find class observation useful where bullying is suspected but more evidence is required to identify its source. In cases where bullying has been reported and there is a risk of retaliation, this strategy protects confidentiality and enables evidence to be gathered through direct teacher observation. It may also be used to gather information where teachers are being bullied, especially by a group of students.

#### **Aims:**

- To improve class atmosphere, thereby protecting the rights of pupils and teachers.
- To co-ordinate teachers' response to bullying behaviour.
- To identify and encourage constructive influences in the class.
- To record problematic behaviour accurately.
- To identify pupils who need support including those engaged in questionable behaviour.
- To enable teachers to establish standards of what is acceptable and unacceptable and to implement these.

Class observation is best carried out discreetly and confidentially with the support of a principal, who will facilitate teachers' meetings to pool information and to ensure follow up.

#### ***Steps for implementation***

1. Convene an initial meeting of subject teachers.
2. Indicate the nature of the problem.
3. Explain the procedure.
4. Emphasise confidentiality.
5. Fix a date for returning completed forms. Two weeks should suffice, but urgent issues arising should be dealt with immediately.
6. Gather evidence and record on Observation Forms.
7. Convene follow up meeting of subject teachers and pool information.
8. Decide on appropriate response.
9. Interview students concerned.
10. Review progress with class teachers.

**(Cool School Programme, 2002: North Eastern Health Board)**



This section deals primarily with an interview with someone accused of bullying others. However the general approach and structure may also be used with victims and bystanders adjusting the content as necessary.

### **Interviewing an alleged bully. Background considerations**

- Young people who are bullying others may respond in different ways when confronted. It is important to be aware of how an involved person might feel and the attitudes that may be displayed. The fear of being caught, labelled a bully, punished or expelled may inspire defiance, or a visible display of power. Students who feel concerned may decide never to admit wrongdoing.
- Some young people may feel ashamed of their involvement in bullying behaviour, and may feel guilty. Because of a desire to save face, they may deny all knowledge of involvement. Other pupils when challenged may respond by saying nothing, or by agreeing with everything that is said. The likelihood is that the student will offer temporary compliance, without fundamentally recognising a change of behaviour.
- Occasionally, bullies have no feelings of shame, guilt, or empathy with their victim's suffering. Expecting a response on the basis of remorse may not be productive. In such a case the consequences of bullying behaviour must be made very explicit.
- Even when there is an anti-bullying policy in place, some young people may be unaware that their bullying behaviour is wrong. This will have to be explained clearly, especially to those who tend to respond aggressively to problematic situations.
- In school environments where bullying has not been effectively addressed, many of the bullying behaviours which students inflict on each other may be socially acceptable. Pupils may be modelling the behaviour of others, or may be behaving in accordance with accepted hidden traditions. This occurs, for example where there is a covert acceptance by students and staff of bullying of 1<sup>st</sup> Year students, new students, or of vulnerable students.
- The challenge to a teacher is to disarm these attitudes, fears and beliefs and the non-confrontational approach suggested here may help to diffuse tension.

### **Key Elements of an interview**

#### **Privacy**

Pupils usually disclose more in private because they feel safer. Dealing with incidents in public can cause unnecessary embarrassment for the victim, increasing vulnerability, and may encourage confrontation and denial on the offender's side. Privacy is also important for witnesses and other members of the class. They may be experiencing subtle pressure to support one side or the other, or worse still, threats may have been made.

In a case where group bullying is suspected, teachers will find it helpful to enlist the help of a colleague to interview members of the group individually.

### **Non – confrontational approach**

After welcoming the pupil and thanking them for their co-operation let him/her know that you see yourself as facilitating problem solving, rather than as a person who dishes out punishment. Take a non-confrontational approach and use “I” statements. This will reduce tension and build trust. Avoid labelling of the young person as a “Bully”. Refer to the behaviour rather than the person. Be calm, constructive, and adopt a problem –solving approach, and allow enough time for the interview. Most young people respond to patience, and the opportunity to talk, rather than to pressure, anger, or impatience.

### **Examples of opening statements**

These are designed to inspire confidence in the young person that he/she will be treated fairly. You may wish to use some or all of them, depending on your own style.

- There seems to be some difficulty between yourself and Mary. I am here to help resolve the situation. I need your co-operation to get it sorted out, because I feel your contribution to the solution is going to be extremely important. Your help is going to make all the difference. Allow time to respond.
- If you have made a mistake in your behaviour, even if it is a serious one, I want to help you work things out. The most important thing from everyone’s point of view is that it never happens again. I think it is very important that it is settled here and now. Allow time to respond.
- This talk is between the two of us for the moment, and I don’t want to involve the school principal, or parents at this point. (NB. Serious cases may need to be referred on straight away.)
- We have dealt with a lot of different kinds of situations and we usually manage to sort things out, even serious problems. Allow time to respond.

At this point it should be clear to the teacher whether the young person is responding to the approach being taken. Every opportunity to co-operate is being extended to them in as friendly, non –threatening, and constructive manner as possible. Check that the young person understands what you are saying, and what your approach is. Ask whether they would like anything clarified or repeated. Give them time to think over what you have said.

### **Seeking further information**

The following questions will provide the teacher with contextual information.

- How do you get on with the other student/s?
- Did you know one another before this incident took place?
- How long do you know one another?
- Is there a history to what happened, or did it come out of the blue?
- Do you think it will be easy to get back on good terms with the other person?

Offer a choice between writing down what happened, and talking about it. Writing is less confrontational, especially for the young person who might regard any one-to-one interaction with a teacher as adversarial.

- Lets have a look at the incident now. I need to understand your involvement. Can you help me fill in the details from your point of view? This is what I need to be clear about.**

- What happened?
- When and where did it take place?
- Who was involved?
- What part did you play?
- Was there more than one person involved on either side?
- Were there any witnesses?
- Did this take place more than once?
- Have you been involved in anything like this before?

- Focus on students taking responsibility for their own actions rather than attributing blame to others or the group. Don't accept standard techniques for saving face such as " I was only messing", or "We were all doing it". Bypass these comments and ask the young person to talk about their specific role at the time. For example ask:**

- What did you actually say or do?
- How would someone else who witnessed the incident describe your actions?
- Would you do the same thing again, or act differently?
- What did you do wrong?
- Do you understand what was wrong about it?
- What is the problem about what you did?

- How do you feel about the situation?
- Are you worried about what is going to happen?
- What do you think is fair in the situation?
- This is what I think is fair:(Outline a fair outcome such as, apologising, agreeing to mediation, signing an agreement with a parent present, agreement to speak with a counsellor, paying for damage, returning money or the equivalent value of property, suspension)

Invite a comment from the young person at this stage. A co-operative attitude should be praised on the spot. If all concerned agrees the solution to the problem, the matter may be concluded.

### **What if there is complete denial?**

Cases will arise from time to time where there is complete denial of involvement. Repeat the evidence as you see it, and try again. It may be necessary to protect the confidentiality of the source of your information.

Stay focussed on what you believe actually took place.

Do not accuse the young person of lying.

- This is the situation as I see it. (Give details)
- Anybody who examined it would think the same about your responsibility.

- I do not accept that I am hearing the full story from what has been said so far.

Explain your role again and let the young person know that this is a very positive opportunity for them to be forthright and honest. If there is still denial, explain that you are not going to let the matter rest until it has been resolved, and outline what the next steps are according to school policy.

Complete denial: outline next steps according to school policy

E.g.

- Reporting matter to the Principal
- Initiating a wider investigation.
- Contacting Parents
- Contacting outside agencies such as Juvenile Liaison Officer or the Gardaí. CDETB Psychological Services may have a role if it appears that there are psychological difficulties.

Whether or not there is an admission of involvement, it is critically important to be unequivocal about the immediate and future behaviour of the young person.

It should be made clear that;

- The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately.
- That the young person is made aware that the disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.
- Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the bully suspects may have provided information to teachers.
- If agreement is not forthcoming, a warning should be given which also extends to friends of the bully.
- Measures need to be taken by the school to ensure the safety of the victim, and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. A case discussion involving school management and other relevant personnel will decide on possible sanctions.
- If bullying continues, management have to choose between suspension/expulsion or referral of the offender for clinical psychological assessment. An assessment will point to whether the young Person has psychological /Psychiatric difficulties contributing to the behaviour not, and whether anger management training might be a useful next step.
- Discuss with the parents the possibility of counselling their daughter.
- Keep a record of the interview.

(The Cool School Programme 2002, North Eastern Health Board)

## Appendix 4D - Reconciliation and Mediation

There are many circumstances where reconciliation between the parties is possible. However in practice it may more effective to tell the young person involved to leave each other alone. The same instruction should apply to friends on both sides, whether they are in the school or not.

### **When is mediation appropriate?**

Where you believe reconciliation may be achieved with further support, mediation through the skilled facilitation of a teacher may be a useful next step.

The advantage of arranging and facilitating mediation for young people is that it involves them in the problem –solving at their own level. It gives them a sense of ownership of the solution, rather than imposing it from the outside. The process itself can be as valuable as the end result, because it allows divergent points of view and attitudes to provide focus, fairness, and safety to the interaction. A crucial consideration to be borne in mind is the openness of the participants to the process. *A young person who has been victimised will need to feel confident enough to face a direct meeting with someone who has caused them suffering, and the teacher should be aware that this may take time. Some young people may never feel confident enough to engage in the mediation process.*

### **When is mediation not appropriate?**

A young person who insists on minimising the effects of their bullying behaviour is not ready for mediation. They need to show that they understand what is wrong about their behaviour, and be prepared to change. In rare situations there are young people with poor conscience development who will not be suitable for mediation. In accessing the situation, the guiding principle should be that mediation should not make matters worse, and that the bullying should stop.

### **Preparation for mediation**

In order to assess the suitability of the candidates for mediation, it is necessary to hold an individual preparatory interview with both parties. There should be a clear assurance of safety and an atmosphere of welcome and affirmation. Explain the process and clarify that the objective of mediation is to resolve the conflict. Allow each person to tell the story from her point of view. This will show where points of difference and similarity lie and help the facilitator to establish what would be a fair solution to the problem.

Set the ground rules for mediation. There should be an attitude of respect on all sides and each person must listen to the other's story without interruption. Each party's contribution should be treated with respect and must not be spoken about in a way that would be considered abusive by either party. Encourage both to come to mediation prepared to reach agreement and with suggestions for solving the problem.

Mediation Process	Values to foster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation should take place in a calm atmosphere, so it should be arranged for a time when both parties have had an opportunity to de-stress, and not in the immediate aftermath of an incident.</li> <li>• Welcome both young people and reiterate the objective of mediation.</li> <li>• Facilitator starts briefly his/her understanding of the situation. Give each party a chance to respond or clarify.</li> <li>• Focus particularly on expression of feelings, encouraging a response from the other, e.g. “Were you aware that Jane felt as badly about what happened? Now that you are aware of how she feels, what difference do you think it will make to how you relate in the future?”</li> <li>• Using a flip chart or blackboard list the issues, highlighting the areas of agreement and concern.</li> <li>• Check each party for new information and new understandings.</li> <li>• Make sure that responsibility is being taken by the offender for what happened and that there is a clear understanding that this behaviour must stop immediately.</li> <li>• Summarise each party’s concern and check for accuracy.</li> <li>• Ascertain both parties’ willingness to proceed to solutions.</li> <li>• Focusing on the list of issues, generate suggestions / ideas/ options on how they might work through each issue. Accept all suggestions without judging their merit. List them on a flipchart.</li> <li>• <b>Options to consider may include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An apology.</li> <li>• A promise to change behaviour.</li> <li>• An agreement to avoid each other if necessary.</li> <li>• Retribution for damaged property.</li> <li>• An agreement that friends of both parties will be discouraged from engaging in destructive behaviour which might exacerbate the situation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encourage both parties to speak to each other and come to an agreement as to a preferred option. Discuss the appropriateness, practicality and acceptability of any agreement reached.</li> <li>• An agreement may be signed and review date set for checking progress.</li> <li>• End the session by thanking both parties for their co-operation and praising them for their contributions to peace making.</li> </ul>	<p>Values to foster</p> <p>Respect Teamwork Collaboration Trust – building</p> <p>Communication Empathy Recognition &amp; Acceptance of differences. Validation</p> <p>Honesty Integrity</p> <p>Personal responsibility</p> <p>Participation Empowerment</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Collaboration</p>