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# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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## INTRODUCTION

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### RATIONALE

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Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time; it can be physical, verbal or emotional and psychological.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It can affect

- Those who witness the bullying
- Those who may be drawn into bullying by other pressure
- Those staff, students and parents who support the victim

## OBJECTIVE

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- To reduce bullying in the College.
- To produce an environment in the college that is calm, safe and caring, where bullying is not tolerated.
- To address all issues of bullying so that all students will feel confident enough to inform a qualified adult in the College about their concerns

## GUIDELINES

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### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour, it can be:-

#### **a) Physical**

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc; or it can also involve physical threats used by the bully in order that the victim hand over property or money to them.

#### **b) Verbal**

Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.

#### **c) Emotional and Psychological**

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, by those they believe to be their friends; it can also involve students having anonymous messages left for them causing them emotional and psychological distress.

#### **d) Cyber**

Inappropriate use of texting, emailing, MSN and BEBO which is directed towards students in and out of college

## ADVICE TO STUDENTS

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**REMEMBER THAT YOUR SILENCE IS THE BULLY'S GREATEST WEAPON!**

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- Tell someone immediately- a parent or carer, member of staff or one of the SMILE Peer workers
- You do not deserve to be bullied - **IT IS WRONG**
- As difficult as it might be try not to show that you are upset, a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- If you can talk through what is happening, with a close friend who you can trust, ask them for their advice.
- Fighting back may make things worse. Generally it is best to tell a teacher, you will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way, which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

## IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

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- **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing can make the victim feel even more unhappy and alone
- If you think you know someone is being bullied, tell someone immediately either at home or in college
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

## ADVICE TO PARENT

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- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the college **IMMEDIATELY**. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!

- Reassure your son or daughter that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child and yourself are fully aware of the college policy concerning bullying.

## AS A COLLEGE WE AIM TO:-

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- Through proper organisation to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Provide peer support through the SMILE Club
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. in the Life skills lessons.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary. The family of the bullied pupil may wish to involve the police in charging the bullying pupil(s) with assault. This is their right. It is vital that accurate records are kept of incidents to show how the college has responded to assist with such proceedings and to protect the college should the family or child decide to take legal action against the college.
- Annually review the Anti-Bullying Policy and look for ways of improving it.
- Make sure that the College Behaviour Policy fully supports the college Anti Bullying Policy.
- If possible, encourage pupils to discuss how they gel on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people, e.g. Treatment Rule.
- Make sure that all staff, dinner supervisors, teaching assistant, office staff, cleaners as well as teachers are aware of college procedures regarding bullying.
- Treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to reduce the instances of it occurring in college.
- Involve the appropriate staff to deal with both the bully and victim.

## ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

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- If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-
- Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies.

## WE SUPPORT THE VICTIMS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:-

- Informing the victims' parents.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps to prevent more bullying and renew the confidence in the victim in speaking out
- Set up meetings between bully and victim if appropriate.

### *We also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:-*

- a) By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- b) Informing the bullies' parents
- c) By continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible; this work to be thoroughly followed up over an agreed period of time
- d) By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

## STUDENTS WHO BULLY OTHER STUDENTS CAN EXPECT THE FOLLOWING DISCIPLINARY STEPS TO BE TAKEN:-

- They will be warned officially to stop offending.
- Bullies' parents will be contacted by the college.
- They may be excluded from the college premises at break and / or lunchtimes.
- They could be involved in break, lunch and college detentions, or in community service.
- If they do not stop bullying they will be excluded for fixed term exclusion.
- If they continue to bully, they will be recommended for exclusion for a longer fixed term exclusion.
- If they still persist with such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion).

## CONCLUSION

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### **Why is an anti-bullying policy necessary?**

- The College believes that its students have the right to learn in a supportive, considerate, tolerant, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.
- It is important therefore that the College has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where students, staff and parents are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

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<b>Policy Author</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Terry Jones		June 2004
		June 2005
	Student Support Committee	June 2008