



# DOMINICAN COLLEGE

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*Reviewed September 2014*

The school is fully committed to creating an ethos which is caring and where pupils feel safe and secure to develop their full human potential. It is therefore contrary to the ethos of the school to tolerate any incidents of bullying behaviour.

Pupils are taught about acceptable social behaviour through the school's pastoral programme in Tutor class materials, Personal Development, Year group Assemblies and academic curriculum where appropriate. The programme provides valuable opportunities for relevant discussion, active learning and role play with regard to bullying.

Pupils are always encouraged to resolve their disputes rather than resort to aggressive or impulsive behaviour. The school's Code of Conduct is designed to encourage self-discipline and consideration for others and require high standards of behaviour at all times.

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### **Definition of Bullying**

"Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others" (*Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum*).

We also acknowledge that bullying can occur and therefore principles and procedures are in place to prevent anti-social behaviour and bullying as far as possible, by dealing promptly and firmly with incidents when they occur. Our aim is always to promote a spirit of reconciliation and mutual respect.

### **Principles**

- In Dominican College we emphasise the importance of communication and encourage pupils to inform teachers immediately if they feel threatened or are felt they are being bullied.
- The Tutor system ensures that there is an identified teacher with whom children can talk in confidence and from whom they can be assured of assistance support.
- All reported incidents of bullying behaviour will be taken seriously and action taken promptly.
- In some instances pupils may prefer to approach our trained pupil mentors.
- When an instance of bullying comes to light the matter should first be brought to the attention of the Head of Year.
- Staff are asked to listen to, believe and support students when they report that they have been bullied.
- The school will take account of pupils and parents' views with regard to the effectiveness and relevance of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. The policy will be reviewed biannually.

### **Action**

**The aim of any intervention will be to RESPOND to the Bullying behaviour that is taking place. RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the well being of all those concerned**

- In the first instance the Head of Year will meet the pupil who makes the complaint. The purpose of this meeting is to make an initial assessment and overview of the situation. The student will be listened to sensitively and offered immediate support strategies. On the basis of this meeting the Head of Year will decide how to proceed.
- The Head of Year will use the Bullying Concern Assessment form and keep a careful record of the incident and inform the Head of Pastoral Care about the matter. The assessment will determine the **Level of Intervention**. (Ref: NIABF “Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour.”)
- The Head of Year will liaise with the Senior Teacher Link and/or the Head of Pastoral Care who will make contact with the parents of all concerned.
- Victims of bullying will be given ongoing support by their Class Tutor, Head of Year and a trained school mentor.
- Pupils will be encouraged to report any recurrences promptly. They will be advised of effective strategies for dealing with the situation.
- If agreeable an appointment will be arranged with the School Counsellor.

### **Dealing with the Pupil Displaying Bullying Behaviour**

- The Year Head will have a one to one meeting with the pupil who has displayed bullying behaviour. Restorative Questioning will be used. This approach should enable the pupil who bullies to take responsibility for her behaviour and to undertake actions to promote reparation. She may be asked to complete a Think Time Discussion and review sheet to promote reparation. The parents of this pupil will be contacted and interviewed by the Vice-Principal and Year Head.
- This pupil will be invited to give her account of the incident and encouraged to reflect on all its implications.
- Careful notes of the incident will be kept by the Year Head.
- Appropriate intervention/action will be decided upon depending on the circumstances of the event.
- The pupil accused of bullying behaviour towards another will also be offered counselling in the school.
- On-going monitoring of the situation will be put in place.

If a parent or guardian wishes to discuss a bullying incident he/she should make initial contact with their daughter's Year Head.

## **Guidelines for Teachers**

Teachers should be vigilant for aggressive and violent behaviour or signs of pupils being bullied.

They are asked to:

- Let it be known that high standards of behaviour are expected at all times.
- Be watchful; observe the social relationships between pupils in class and throughout the school.
- Note absence patterns. If a pupil is absent for more than three days, or if two or more Pupils who are in a friendship group are absent from class, the Tutor should be informed.
- Listen to, believe and support children who say they have been bullied.
- Respond immediately, swiftly and impartially to incidents. Keep an accurate record of the incident which should be brought to the attention of the Class Tutor who in turn Informs the Year Head.
- Teach students to talk through their disputes rather than resorting to aggressive or impulsive behaviour. Restorative Questioning should be used.

**An atmosphere of respect and tolerance for all pupils and staff should be nurtured throughout the school. The most important influence on children will be the experience of good relationships.**

- (i) pupils to pupils
- (ii) staff with pupils
- (iii) staff with parents
- (iii) Good staff relationships - no member of staff should ever feel under pressure due to the influence or obstruction of another.



**Dominican College**  
**Bullying Concern Assessment Form.**

**PART 1- Assessment of Concern.**

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

***Our School's Definition of Bullying:***

“Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others” (*Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum*).

	Name(s)	DOB/Year group class.(if pupil)
Person(s) reporting concern		
Name of targeted pupil(s)		
Name of pupil(s) involved		
Does the behaviour involve? <input type="radio"/> Individual to individual 1:1 <input type="radio"/> Individual to group <input type="radio"/> Group to individual <input type="radio"/> Group to group		

**Type of incident and Theme (If applicable)**

*Tick*

- ☐ Physical bullying (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking, any other contact which may include use of weapons.
- ☐ Verbal bullying. (Includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours.
- ☐ Indirect bullying (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to, play with/help others.
- ☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability).
- ☐ Cyber (through technology such as mobile phones, internet/social networking sites.
- ☐ Homophobic (related to perceived or actual sexual orientation).
- ☐ Racist (related to skin colour, culture ,religion)
- ☐ Sectarian (related to religious belief and/or political opinion.
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Is there persistence/recurrence of this behaviour?	Yes/No
Is it targeted behaviour?	Yes/No
Is there a power imbalance?	Yes/No
Is it intentionally hurtful behaviour?	Yes/No
Does the incident meet your school's definition of bullying?	Yes/No

*Check records for previously recorded incidents.*

***OVERLEAF: Outline of incident(s): Attach any written accounts completed by bullied pupil, witnesses, (i.e. other pupils, staff etc.) include date(s) of event(s).Concern email from staff.***