

URSULINE COLLEGE, SLIGO

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Within the context of the school's Religious and Mission statements, an Anti-bullying Policy has been formulated. The Board of Management of Ursuline College is committed to providing a safe positive learning environment for our students, where each person is respected and can work towards achieving her full potential.

Definition of bullying:

Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or psychological, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, which undermines the individual's right to personal dignity and well-being.

Bullying and intimidating behaviour includes:

- ◆ Physical contact which intimidates or harms another person
- ◆ Humiliation through name-calling, gossip, rumour, innuendo regarding a student's personal appearance, personal or family reputation, academic ability etc.
- ◆ Damage to, or interference with, another person's property, work or locker
- ◆ Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise
- ◆ Homophobic bullying
- ◆ Aggressive or obscene language
- ◆ Unwelcome phone calls, text messages or emails
- ◆ Cyberbullying: the use of the internet or electronic technology to intimidate or comment unfavourably on another person
- ◆ Threats including demands for money
- ◆ Deliberate exclusion or isolation

Procedures should bullying occur in the school

- In the event of (a) an incident being brought to the attention of a member of staff (b) a staff member becoming aware of an incident, the matter will be dealt with immediately.
- The staff member will inform the class tutor who will in turn inform Year Head and/or Deputy Principal/ Principal.
- The staff member will document the details of the bullying incident.
- Every allegation of bullying will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly in the following manner:

Appropriate personnel will interview all of the students involved in the bullying incident.

1. Restorative Practice will be used as far as possible in dealing with incidents of alleged bullying.

2. The alleged victim and alleged perpetrators will be spoken to and encouraged to solve the problem.
 3. The alleged victim and alleged perpetrators will be asked for a written account of the incident under investigation.
 4. Information relating to the bullying incident will be shared with relevant staff.
 5. A record will be kept of all reported incidents and of the procedures followed.
 6. Where appropriate the parents/guardians of the pupils involved will be invited to the school to meet with the Year Head and/or Principal/Deputy Principal
- Following thorough investigations of the bullying incident, a judgement will be made on the most effective way of dealing with the incident.
- Where the incident is deemed to be minor, the perpetrator will be given a verbal warning to stop the inappropriate behaviour.
 - Where the incident is deemed to be more serious or the student has failed to respond to other forms of intervention for repeated misbehaviour, appropriate sanctions will be imposed.
These may include:
 - (a) A contract of good behaviour.
 - (b) School community service
 - (c) Withdrawal of privileges
 In extreme cases of bullying Suspension or Expulsion may be imposed.
- Students involved in bullying incidents will be offered counselling where appropriate.
- Students behaviour will monitored by relevant staff.

Parents' Role

Parents have a vital role to play in supporting the college in implementing its anti-bullying policy. They are strongly advised to contact the school if they believe that their daughter is being subjected to bullying behaviour and to keep a record of such incidents.

The following behaviour **may** suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- ◆ Losing interest or enthusiasm for school
- ◆ Anxiety about travelling to or from school
- ◆ Unexplained mood changes possibly before school restarts
- ◆ Frequent minor illnesses
- ◆ Disturbed sleep
- ◆ Unexplained damage to property
- ◆ Unexplained cuts or bruises.

This is not an exhaustive list

Students' Role

Ursuline College encourages students to report incidents of bullying and intimidation. The reporting of incidents of such behaviour is considered to be responsible and caring behaviour and in keeping with the ethos of Ursuline education.

Duty of Care

Ursuline College is mindful of its obligation to protect all the students in its care from bullying or intimidating behaviour, and will work proactively as far as it can to ensure that bullying does not take place.

Review

The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.