

## Presentation College



## Anti-Bullying Policy, 2021

### **Policy Outline:**

This policy document applies to the student population of the College and its purpose is to provide and guarantee the care and protection of all students in accordance with the Code of Behaviour (point 12, section on Bullying) and Mission Statement of the College.

### **Definition:**

The Department of Education and Skills, in Circular 045/2013 defines bullying as *'unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time'*.

Bullying is, in essence, any repeated aggressive behaviour, whether it be by physical action, gesture, word, online or otherwise, be it directly or indirectly applied by one or more persons against another person or persons with the result that the individual's definitive right to personal dignity is affected.

There are many different forms that bullying can take and while no list can be totally definitive, the Department of Education and Skills outlines some examples of what forms bullying can take:

- 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 ethnicity and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.
- Once off offensive or hurtful public messages, images or statements on any social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people.
- Harassment in any form of unwanted conduct that is prohibited. Equality Legislation and in particular if same is being prohibited as being one of the nine stated discriminatory grounds – gender (including transgender), civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the travelling community.

### **Types of Behaviour Deemed to be Inappropriate:**

- An attack by gossip, rumour, innuendo or ridicule on the reputation of a person.
- An attack by gossip, rumour, innuendo or ridicule on the reputation of the family of any person.
- Exclusion and isolation.
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Physical abuse or threatened physical abuse.
- Written abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
- Name calling and/or derogatory comments regarding sexual orientation, academic ability or similar.
- Theft.
- Racist comment.
- Any form of verbal abuse.
- Cyber bullying which is the wrongful use of technology with the aim of intimidating or frightening or threatening another student. The use of social networking sites, email, text messaging, digital postings can form part of this type of bullying.
- Slagging
- Damaging the property of another student.
- Extortion.

The above list **is not** exhaustive.

## **To Whom and When does the Anti-Bullying Policy of Presentation College Apply?**

- All students of Presentation College Secondary School.
- During the school day.
- On the school premises.
- Whenever in school uniform, both inside and outside the school grounds.
- On all school based activities – rugby matches, rowing, GAA matches, soccer matches etc., and on all trips both national and international.
- Whenever representing the school at any event.
- To any behaviour that is deemed not to be in accordance with the school code of behaviour and/or any behaviour that is, in the view of the school Principal of Presentation College likely to adversely affect the reputation of Presentation College. Please note the above list is not exhaustive.
- Online to other students.

## **Bullying – What will Presentation College aim for?**

Presentation College will do as much as possible to try and ensure that bullying does not take place and as a consequence ensure that all students can be educated in a harmonious and hardworking environment.

All incidents of bullying that are reported will be noted and records kept.

Students, as the main stakeholders in the school community, will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour and the Student Council will be encouraged, in conjunction with teachers in relevant subject areas, to run campaigns throughout the College to highlight the fact that the reporting of incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.

The college will have a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied.

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with in a serious manner.

All members of staff of the college will work in harmony to eradicate incidents of bullying.

### **Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that Bullying does not continue:**

- The College will provide education for all students on bullying through SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education).
- Student mentoring programme will aim to educate students and eradicate bullying.
- Anti-bullying awareness will be encouraged.

### **Dealing with a case of Bullying in Presentation College:**

If a case of bullying is noticed or a report of bullying is received by a teacher or any auxiliary member of staff, the following procedures can be put into action:

- Speak separately to the person who appears to be the bullying, the person who appears to be the victim and, if possible, any independent witness to incidents of bullying.
- Should the incident be considered serious, it should be immediately reported to the relevant year head and/or the Deputy Principal/Principal.

Any incident of bullying must be recorded, in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines (2013). The Year Head will complete the appropriate form in the absence of a relevant teacher being appointed to keep such records.

The Year Head/ /Deputy Principal/ Principal should make contact with the parents where appropriate and deemed necessary.

The victim of bullying will be offered reassurance and ongoing support and, in particular, the Student Support Team will review the student's progress over the weeks following the first reporting of an incidence of bullying.

Support will be offered to the bully who will be told that the behaviour will not be tolerated. Contact may be made with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the bully in the context of reacquainting the bully with the college's anti-bullying policy.

The victim of bullying and his parent(s)/guardian(s) will be kept informed of the action that has been taken by the college authorities in relation to the matter as well as any further action that may be necessitated.

A report on all cases of bullying will be prepared and this can include written notes from both the alleged victim and perpetrator.

### **Dealing with Bullying – Guidelines for Parents/Guardians**

Presentation College aspires to creating a bullying free environment for all students and indeed teachers and auxiliary staff. In line with this aspiration, the college community works together to support one another. However, there is a realisation that unfortunately it is impossible to guarantee that no bullying is happening and there are some signs and/or symptoms that parent(s)/guardian(s) must be mindful of to ensure that if any incidence of bullying occurs, it will be confronted and stopped as soon as possible.

The following list makes parent(s)/guardian(s) aware of some signs and/or symptoms that could indicate that a student is being bullied. These signs and/or symptoms do not necessarily mean that a student is being bullied. However, if repeated or occurring in combination it is recommended that parent(s)/guardian(s) investigate further.

- A student who has been happy at school losing interest and enthusiasm for school. This can manifest itself through a decrease in grades and overall performance in school.
  
- Anxiety about travelling to and from school – requesting parent(s)/guardian(s) to drive or collect them from school.
  
- Unwillingness to attend school.

- Damage to bicycles or personal property, for example damage to clothes, books or loss of same.
- A student who returns home from school in bad humour and without explanation.
- Mood changes, in particular before the recommencement of school, at the end of the weekend or school holidays.
- Frequent minor illnesses, especially headaches and stomach aches, difficulty in sleeping and/or not eating. These symptoms are often accompanied by mood changes that are mentioned above.
- An increase in requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained cuts and/or bruises.
- Recurrent migraines.
- Truancy
- Enuresis
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress, e.g. stammering, withdrawing, difficulty sleeping, vomiting.
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him.

**FIRST STEPS:** (if a parent/guardian/friend notices any signs/symptoms that could indicate a possibility of bullying, it is important that investigating same does not put pressure on the student. It is recommended that the school be contacted and/or email at first. A meeting can follow, where necessary.

## **Dealing with Bullying: Guidelines for Students**

Students should discuss any incident of bullying with their parents(s)/guardian(s)/siblings/family, where possible. This can then lead to contact being made with the college. It is often the case that students prefer to talk to a teacher/Year Head about any bullying they may experience and it is important to educate all students of Presentation College that talking with a teacher or another trusted adult within the College is responsible behaviour.

It is not responsible behaviour to ignore the problem. It is important that all students of the College realise that they each have a responsibility towards their fellow students and, as such, they too must speak if they see any bullying behaviour happening towards one of their fellow students.

A culture of silence around this issue is not responsible behaviour.

The Chaplain and the Student Support Team of the College are further points of contact for any students or parent(s)/Guardian(s) who have concerns around the issue of bullying.

Who to Tell: Responsible Adult/Teacher/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal

### **How/Who to Tell?**

Talk to a teacher after class/on corridor. Hand up a note with your work to the teacher. Tell your parent(s)/guardian(s) at home. Make a phone call to the school or to a teacher. Talk to a senior member of the Student Council. Ask a parent/guardian/friend to talk on your behalf.

The College, in accordance with the Code of Behaviour will have sanctions in place for incidents of bullying and these will include, if necessary:

- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Detention
- Verbal warning by Year Head or Deputy Principal
- Referral to a Child Psychologist

- Referral to the local Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer

The above list contains examples of sanctions that can be imposed by the College authorities.

Records of incidents of bullying can have a major impact on the reference that the college will provide to the students when leaving the College or if requested during the years one spends as a student in the College. Furthermore, all records of incidents of bullying will be kept in Presentation College for a period not to exceed five years after all involved in any incidents of bullying have left Presentation College.

If there is a complaint of bullying of a student from a staff member, the Principal of the College must be immediately informed.

All incidents of bullying will be reported to the Board of Management.

## **Conclusion**

Presentation College commits to continuously working towards having an atmosphere of respect, encouragement and understanding prevail throughout the College community.

An environment where there is strong resistance to any form of bullying exists in Presentation College so that all can achieve their potential and so that all can work in a harmonious manner to benefit growth and the common good.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

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

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

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

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

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

## Appendix 1:

**This template is to be used if, after 20 days, the issue remains unresolved.**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

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


### 3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))\*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

**9. Details of actions taken**

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2:

### Checklist for annual review at the December Bord meeting 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?	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

**Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

To:

The Board of Management of Presentation College, Mardyke, Cork, wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department’s *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)