

Anti-Bullying Policy



**Davitt College,
Castlebar,
Co. Mayo.**

This Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed at www.davittcollege.com

Davitt College 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 Davitt College** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
 - A positive school culture and climate which-
 - Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - Promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
 - Effective leadership;
 - A school-wide approach;
 - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
 - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - Supports for staff;
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. 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 and
- 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 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 others 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*.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying ect. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight. • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online. • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive e-mail • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/Twitter/You tube or on games consoles • Abusive
<p>Identity based behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community).</p>	
Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip

Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting up for ridicule

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*): In the case where a student(s) is being bullied he/she should be able to approach the following people:

- A Class Teacher.
- Class Tutor and/or Year Head.
- Any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable
- A member of the Care Team.
- Guidance Counsellor.
- Principal or Deputy Principal.

A student should feel comfortable reporting a bullying incident by using one, or any, of the following approaches:

- Directly approaching a teacher at an appropriate time. e.g. after class, break/lunch time.
- Handing up a note with homework or at supervised study/homework clubs.
- Approaching the Care Team. A student could address a specific member of the Team if they felt more comfortable.

- Getting a parent to contact the school by ringing the Class Tutor/Year Head/Care Team member.
- Participating in a sociogram twice a year (mid Oct – mid Nov and mid Feb – mid March) to all students to be administered by the Class Tutor/Year Head.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 if the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

The policy addresses bullying behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment. While it primarily addresses issues related to bullying of students, it applies also to teaching and other school staff, parents/guardians and others insofar as measures under the policy relate to them.

The policy applies

- During school time (including breaks).
- Going to and from school.
- During school tours.
- During extra-curricular activities.
- To any behaviour of a bullying nature (outside school) which seriously impacts on a students' participation in school and/or where the matter relates to the school's duty of care of a student.

Actions to prevent bullying

- Our Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of Davitt College's Code of Behaviour.
- Everyone in Davitt College has a duty to look out for any behaviour which can be deemed bullying (from list above). This includes parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- Class tutors can remind students regularly of the effects of Bullying.
- Supervision and monitoring of student's behaviour, including lockers, school grounds, corridors, areas with access to computers and sports hall.
- Inclusion in the Curriculum – create awareness in a wide range of subjects.
- Friendship Week – activities are planned that raise awareness and prioritise anti-bullying interventions.
- Teacher training for all staff.
- Development of the Anti-Bullying Charter for all classrooms.
- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying, during friendship week.

Links to Other Policies and to Curriculum Delivery

This policy is consistent with other policies in Davitt College;

- Code of Behaviour.
- Child Protection.
- Equality.
- Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy.
- Health and Safety.
- SPHE/RSE.
- Guidance.
- Learning Support.
- Admissions Policy.
- Induction for New Staff.

This policy links to the following Curriculum areas

- SPHE: the issue of bullying dealt with in each of three years of Junior Cycle SPHE.
- The Cool School anti-bullying lessons, could be taught by subject teachers and class tutors during Friendship week. e.g. CSPE (Human Rights), English (personal accounts), PE (Q of sporting exclusions).
- Other links could include:
 - Transition Year.
 - LCVP.
 - Tutor Time.
 - Monthly/Team Assembly.
 - Friendship Week.
 - Restorative Model e.g. Questionnaire; Sociogram; Teachers Observation form; Incident Report form; Code of Behaviour.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

Noting and Recording Incidents of Bullying

- All reported incidents of bullying to be noted on the Bullying Incident Report form.
- Bullying Incident Report form to be filled in by the teacher to whom it was reported.
- Forms to be filed by the Care Team, a folder is to be left in the office for staff to put reports into, for collection by the Care Team.

- Care Team will be responsible for keeping and maintaining files in the Care Team filing cabinet in the main school office.
- Access to the cabinet to be restricted to the Care Team, the Principal and the Guidance Counsellor.
- Files are to be kept in the filing cabinet for 5 years after the student leaves the school.

Dealing with Reported Incidents of Bullying

The principle of consultation applies across all measures here.

The procedure for noting and recording as outlined above will apply.

The rights of all students will be respected and a fair hearing will be given to all students.

Staff will be aware that allegations of bullying need to be fully investigated before action is taken.

1. Initial steps to be taken following a report or disclosure of bullying behaviour

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include
Any class or subject teacher.	Speak to the student(s) involved.	Serious talk with the student(s).
A member of the Care Team.	Speak to relevant student(s) and/or interview the class using the Questionnaire (see appendix) and filling out the sociogram (see appendix). Keep a record.	Verbal warning. Any issues at this stage should be followed up in a compassionate and non-confrontational way. Outline a fair and mutually agreed outcome.
Teacher or member of the Care Team.	Follow up progress with all parties involved and monitor the situation.	

2. Subsequent incidents/ reports of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include
<p>Any teacher</p> <p>Member of the Care Team and /or Principal may be involved</p>	<p>Incident should be investigated by the Care Team using the Restorative model. (See appendix).</p> <p>Principal/Deputy Principal informed.</p> <p>Parents of the students involved should be contacted.</p> <p>Keep a record.</p> <p>Class Tutor and Care Team to monitor progress with all parties.</p>	<p>Serious talk with the student.</p> <p>Second verbal warning. Any sanctions imposed are the responsibility of the Dean of Discipline and will be applied as per the Code of Behaviour (see Appendix).</p> <p>Care Team to monitor behaviour.</p>

3. Where bullying behaviour persists/serious incidents of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or Sanction
<p>Principal/Deputy Principal involved.</p> <p>Class Tutor and Care Team may be involved.</p> <p>Board of Management will be notified at the discretion of the principal, once a term or in the case of Suspension.</p>	<p>Parents to meet the Principal</p> <p>Use Restorative approach where possible and appropriate.</p> <p>Feedback to Class Tutor and Care Team.</p> <p>Keep a Record.</p> <p>Follow up progress to be monitored by the care Team and/or the Dean of Discipline and Principal.</p>	<p>Detention/Suspension as per the Code of Behaviour.</p> <p>Parents to agree to a set of conditions for behaviour.</p> <p>Counselling offered. Referral to external supports e.g. Child Psychologist may be suggested.</p>

- Any reported allegations of bullying/harassment between student and staff should be dealt with directly by the Principal.
- In relation to staff incidents, the matter should be referred directly to the Principal where an incident report is to be filled out. Refer also to the T.U.I. Grievance procedure.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School's*):

- The victim will receive the utmost privacy and confidentiality in the initial, and subsequent, investigations. They will be given the opportunity of speaking with the guidance counsellor and any member of the Pastoral Care Team will be available to talk to them.
- The school will address the attitudes of bullying within the school community through the administering of sociograms to all class groups (by Class Tutors) twice a year.
- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying, during Friendship week.
- Bullying will be incorporated into SPHE and Guidance lessons.
- In a case where sanctions need to be imposed, they will be enforced, as per the school's Code of Behaviour, by the Dean of Discipline, or the Principal.
- Following an investigated incident of bullying, Class Tutors, members of the Care Team and break-time Supervisors will monitor the behaviour of the students involved. If deemed necessary a Class Tutor, or Care Team member, may administer a further sociogram, if deemed necessary.
- Staff will be informed of necessary developments in bullying incidents, at weekly Staff meetings/Tutor/Year Head meetings. They will be asked to monitor and observe the students or classes involved in specific incidents and to pass on these observations to a member of the care Team.
- Parents or guardians will be informed of serious incidents and if necessary they may be required to join in the restorative based approach to resolving the issue.
- Guidance Counsellor will provide training in resilience.
- A referral system will be in place to ensure that all incidents will be dealt with. If those investigating can't resolve issue it will then be referred onto the following people:
 - Teacher/Class Tutor/Year Head.
 - Care Team Member/Guidance Counsellor.
 - Dean of Discipline.
 - Principal.
 - Outside Agencies.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

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.

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the board of Management on _____ [date].

11. 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 of Education and Skills and our Patron, Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim Educational and Training Board.

12. 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 Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim Education and Training Board and the Department of Education and Skills.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: _____

Date of next Review: _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Sociogram

Name: _____

- Are you happy with the atmosphere in your classroom?
- Who are your friends?
- Are you feeling under pressure in any way?
(Take details and reassure the student that the problem will be addressed)
- Is there anyone in class having a hard time? Explain.
- Is anyone being left out, or ignored?
- Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages or e-mails to make others feel bad about themselves?
- Is anyone being unfair to others?
- Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
- Can you give examples?

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good – notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phones and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.

Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor area, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.

Hot times again tend to be where there is less structures supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Names(s) and Class(es) of Pupils(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"/>
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 and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

***Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

Appendix 4 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 on 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 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 _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of **Davitt College** 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 _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____

