

St. Dominic's Secondary School

Anti – Bullying Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect all members of our school community from being bullied. In September 1993, the Department of Education and science issued guidelines on countering bullying behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools. The guidelines say that:

“The role of the school is to provide the highest possible standard education for all its pupils. A stable secure environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour by its very nature undermines and dilutes the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. As such, it is an issue, which must be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school – based measures and strategies through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour.”

St. Dominic's strongly supports this view.

School Ethos

St. Dominic's Anti-Bullying Code supports the aims and aspirations in St. Dominic's Mission Statement.

- All persons in St. Dominic's are valued and have the right to be treated with dignity and respect as well as having the responsibility to treat others, as they would like to be treated themselves.
- The school is committed to creating a safe environment where every one can learn.
- We want St. Dominic's to be a place where students have the right to enjoy their learning and leisure time free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, sexual harassment or racism.
- Our school community will not tolerate any form of bullying behaviour, physical, verbal or psychological.
- We want everyone – staff, students and parents to deal with bullying, which may involve reporting incidents whether they are victims or witnesses.

“Make this a caring school, stand up and support each other”.

Pupils and parents will be expected to sign our Anti-Bullying statement. (See appendix 1)

Scope

This policy is applicable to all students of St. Dominic's and applies in class, on corridors, in the toilets, on school grounds, on the way to and from school and on school trips.

Goals / Objectives of this Policy

- To create a climate where bullying is not accepted.
- To help prevent bullying from starting.
- To ensure that staff respond consistently and appropriately to bullying.
- To empower victims of bullying to seek help.
- Involve everyone, students, staff, parents and management, in acting against bullying whenever and wherever it occurs.
- Help those involved in bullying to change their behaviour.

Implementation:

The policy is implemented by the following strategies

Creating the climate:

All members of the school community are encouraged to:

- Have positive self regard
- Look after each other
- Be open about bullying
- Turn to someone with their concerns and fears.

Everybody is made aware of the school's anti-bullying stance and the strategies to deal with bullying

- First Year students by Induction Programme and Bullying Awareness Training Day
- Students through Anti-Bullying Programmes, code of behaviour and assemblies
- Parents through leaflets, information evening and student's journal.
- Staff and management through handbook and training.

In dealing with behaviours of concern

- Staff will strive to achieve consistency in response to behaviour
- Work together through referral and support.

Definition

Bullying is intentional, repetitive behaviour: physical, psychological or verbal initiated by an individual or a group, which results in distress, unhappiness, or injury to a person.

Characteristics of Bullying:

The following is a list of behaviours, which might be characterised as bullying. It is not an exhaustive or prioritised list but is for illustrative purposes only. A once off act of aggression does not constitute bullying; it is persistent, repetitive behaviour. Bullying can make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, undermines their self confidence and may cause them to suffer stress or illness.

Physical	Verbal	Psychological
Hitting	Name calling	Staring
Pushing	Jeering	Whispering
Kicking	Slagging	Excluding
Throwing Things	Insulting Family	Ignoring
Spitting	Threats	Not sitting near to _____
Gestures	Noises	Pointing
Destroying Work/Property	Sarcasm	Gestures & noises
Stealing/Hiding Property	Whispering	Sarcasm
Stickers		Spreading rumours
Graffiti		Passing notes / Drawings
		Sexual comments
		Undermining someone/work

Roles and Responsibilities:

The school acknowledges the importance of clear, concise communication between the various parties concerned in minimising and dealing with bullying in the school.

The Whole School Dimension: To ensure its success we need the support and commitment of all students, parents, teachers, tutors, year heads, senior and middle management and ancillary staff.

The school sees a role for the following parties in preventing bullying behaviour and assisting in raising awareness of it:

Students:

- We expect students to treat one another with dignity and respect.
- Not to tolerate bullying in any form.
- We expect students who witness bullying to offer appropriate support to victims and to behave responsibly and report the matter.
- Students must be encouraged to talk about bullying, and how to work with the whole school to deal with it.

It must be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying that they are not telling tales. The excuse "we were only messing" must be constantly challenged.

Senior Management Team:

- Promote the use of the Curriculum, where possible, as a way to raise awareness of, and combat bullying.
- Ensure all parents, students and staff in school know that bullying is completely unacceptable and that they will be supported in their management and use of the policy.
- Make provision to ensure recording of incidents, and successful monitoring of the policy.

- Ensure the ways of preventing bullying in our school are outlined in the school written policy on discipline and that they are accessible to all.
- Deal with cases of bullying.
- Support students and staff involved.

Year Heads:

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the policy through their team of Tutors and at assemblies.
- Collate and recording information on incidents of bullying
- Deal with cases of bullying in accordance with the school policy
- Contact and work with the parents of victims and bullies

Subject Teachers /Tutors:

- Encourage adherence by students to the Code of Behaviour
- Give support to S.P.H.E. teachers in implementing areas of the S.P.H.E. curriculum which address issues related to bullying
- Pass on information to Year Heads/ Anti –Bullying Team.
- Offer support to victims of bullying.
- Raise awareness that bullying will not be tolerated and to report any suspicious incidents in or out of class, or on school trips.

Anti-Bullying Team

This Anti-Bullying Team consists of the Principal or Deputy Principal, a representative of the counselling group, the Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator and the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.

- The anti- bullying team will support and implement the anti-bullying policy.
- Regular meetings in response to third reported offences will be arranged. (See appendix 2, Ladder of Referral)
- The Team will liase with all parties concerned and endeavour to put strategies in place to resolve the problem.

Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator:

1. To provide a co-ordinated approach to Bullying Education within the school.
2. To implement school policy on Bullying.
3. Liaise with Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Tutors, S.P.H.E. Co-ordinator and teachers concerning anti-bullying education.
4. Liaise with outside agencies.
5. Organise events that highlight this issue within the school.

Parents of victims/bullies:

- Support their daughter and the school in its efforts to deal with the problem.
- Watch out for signs of distress in own children (pattern headaches, stomach and leg aches, etc., equipment missing requests for extra money, damaged clothing, bruising).
- If the school recommends that counselling is necessary for victim or bully we expect parents to support us.

Parents are strongly encouraged to contact the school as soon as they suspect their daughter is being subjected to bullying behaviour. A record should be kept of incidents. The matter will be dealt with seriously. Further suggestions of support in dealing with bullying are available from school.

External Agencies:

The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator will liase and elicit the support of relevant external agencies.

Non teaching staff, caretakers, secretarial staff, cleaning staff and visitors should be as part of this policy encouraged to report any incidents witnessed by them or mentioned to them.

Mentors and Prefects

The involvement of older/other students as intermediaries between pupil/pupil is good practice; students may relate problems to people nearer their own age and if they are unable to confide in staff directly.

Whole School Strategies:

The school works proactively to ensure in as far as it can that bullying does not take place. Bullying can be prevented by raising awareness of all persons in the school community about the reality of bullying and its detrimental effects.

In this regard the school uses the following approaches:

Preventative Strategies:

- Teachers use aspects of the curriculum to raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour.
- S.P.H.E classes will include specific Anti-Bullying programmes.
- Tutors will support the work done in S.P.H.E. by working with their group on developing an Anti-bullying Charter.
- In addition the issue will be raised in other areas of the curriculum.
- The I.S.P.C.C. will facilitate an Anti-Bullying Groupwork Programme for all first years.
- A Bullying Awareness Training Day will be held for all first years, facilitated by Ballyfermot Youth federation.
- The I.S.P.C.C. will provide talks to support work done in class to second and third year students. Programmes will be reviewed and rewritten where necessary.
- We support agencies / help lines on notice boards.
- Teachers regularly stress to pupils the importance of reporting matters of concern and foster an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable about seeking help and which they know how to seek help.
The raising of bullying as unacceptable behaviour will be addressed in assemblies and tutorials.
- **The Confidential Questionnaire**
- **Bullying Sociogram:** (See appendix 3 for implementation procedure)
- The school seeks opportunities to enhance the self worth of all pupils.
- The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are open to all students.
- The school has leaflets for parents and students on bullying behaviour and various strategies for coping with bullying – these are available on request.
- Making students aware of the strategies for coping with bullying.
- Minimising the occurrence of situations in the school day, which make bullying likely to occur. (For example by the provision of quiet supervised areas.)
- Providing positive reinforcement of good behaviour, both informally and informally.
- Mentoring System
- Prefect System
- Training for staff:
 - Teachers involved in S.P.H.E. will be given the opportunity to avail of training in group facilitation skills and personal development.
 - Training will be made available to staff in relation to managing bullying incidents.

Re-active Anti-Bullying Strategies:

However good a schools preventative strategies are some bullying will happen from time to time. It is necessary therefore to have a range of strategies, which can be used to deal with the range of behaviour, which we include under the heading of “bullying”. Of course, it is vital always to assess the true nature of an incident before applying any of these strategies, which will include:

- Behaviour support
- Counselling
- Mediation
- Sanctions (see appendix 3)

Programmes of support for Victim and Bully:

Students may need to attend counselling.

Strategies will be suggested and worked on with individuals where appropriate. These would include, for example, a focus on self control and self discipline, encouraging self esteem, giving praise, encouraging students to work in groups other than those to which they naturally gravitate and so on.

Outline of sanctions on pupils.

1. If you are involved you will be warned to stop.
2. If you do not stop your parents will be told.
3. If the incident(s) is/are particularly serious persistent you may be suspended.
4. You may be required to seek help to change your pattern of behaviour.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation of Policy.

The Anti-Bullying co-ordinator will monitor aspects of the policy to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the school.

The areas are:

1. Anti-Bullying Programmes
2. Managing Bullying Related incidents

The results of the monitoring will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

Review of the Policy

The policy will be reviewed annually, or in light of changing information, by the anti-bullying working group in consultation with the wider school community.

Evaluation

Teachers, Parents, Students, Board of Management and other relevant groups will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year.

The main areas of the policy we will evaluate are:

1. Anti-Bullying Programmes
2. Managing Bullying Related incidents.

Dissemination of the policy

Copies of this policy will be disseminated to all the school community. It will also be freely available from the Principal's office or Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator and it will be given to all new staff and parents of new children as part of their induction to the school.

Young people will be made aware of the policy as part of their Anti-bullying education within the context of a Social, Personal and Health Education Programme.

Appendix 1: Implementation Programme

Anti – Bullying Statement

In St. Dominic’s we want everyone to

Treat all staff, students, parents and visitors with respect.

Bullying breaks this rule, because if you hurt, threaten or frighten someone you are not treating them with respect.

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

You must not:

- Hit, kick, push, pinch, pull hair, trip, choke throw things, spit, or direct unwanted gestures towards other students.
- Jeer, provoke, taunt, tease or slag anyone, their family or friends.
- Write notes or graffiti, draw pictures or use words, which are intended to hurt. Send abusive phone calls, text messages or E-mails.
- Make nasty sexual comments about others or their appearance or make unwanted sexual passes.
- Steal, damage, hide, abuse or deface other people’s property.
- Threaten, isolate, intimidate, whisper about or exclude others in any way.
- Make nasty comments about people of a different colour, religion, nationality or background.

This applies in class, on corridors, in the toilets, on school grounds, and on school trips and school related activities.

A record will be kept of bullying incidents.

Sanctions:

- 1. If you are involved you will be warned to stop.**
- 2. If you do not stop, your parents / guardians will be informed.**
- 3. If the incident(s) is/are particularly serious or persistent, you may be suspended.**
- 4. You may be required to seek help to change your pattern of behaviour.**

If you are being bullied or see someone being bullied you should tell someone, a teacher, a member of staff or a member of your family and you will be helped and supported.

Principal / Deputy Principal

I agree to follow these rules and I will show respect for all members of the school community, students, teachers, parents, ancillary staff, management and visitors in St. Dominic’s

Parent/Guardian

Student

The Anti-Bullying Statement and Anti –Bullying Code will be in student’s school journal.

Appendix 2: Ladder of referral in dealing with incidents of Bullying Behaviour.

All False claims of Bullying against a member of the school community is serious misbehaviour.

Procedure to be followed by subject teacher:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a teacher witnesses bullying behaviour or is informed of bullying behaviour. <i>Or</i> • 1st Report of a student/s involved in bullying behaviour. 			
Procedure	Disciplinary measures /Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Challenge behaviour by referring to Anti-Bullying Policy. Stress behaviour is unacceptable. ⇒ After intervention in an incident/responding, stand beside student causing the problem. ⇒ Diffuse confrontation. ⇒ Speak to student/s after class. ⇒ Do not deal with student(s) in front of class group. ⇒ Students involved are warned to stop behaviours of concern and given a verbal warning. ⇒ Complete incident report form. ⇒ Refer incident to Tutor / Year Head. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Warning <p><i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately. _That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation. _Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information. _If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punishment work if necessary e.g. Write out anti - bullying code. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. 	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apologising ✓ Paying for damage. ✓ Returning money or the equivalent value of property.

Procedure to be followed by Tutor / Year Head in the case of:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st or 2nd Report of students involved in bullying behaviour. <i>Or</i> • Gang Bullying 			
Procedure	Disciplinary measures /Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<p>⇒ Incident Reported</p> <p>⇒ Interview victim, alleged bully, witnesses, Individuals involved in gang bullying.</p> <p>Other strategies to consider:</p> <p>⇒ Bullying Sociogram</p> <p>⇒ Class Observation</p> <p>Gathering of evidence and offering of support to others effected may be facilitated by the carrying out of a bullying sociogram or class observation.</p> <p>⇒ Incident investigated and assessed.</p> <p>⇒ Student/s involved are warned to stop behaviours of concern. (Verbal Warning)</p> <p>⇒ Mediation (If appropriate)</p> <p>⇒ If behaviour is considered to be very serious and suspension is warranted parents need to be contacted.</p> <p>⇒ Complete incident report form.</p> <p>⇒ Follow up needed to monitor progress.</p> <p>⇒ If behaviour continues (e.g.) 2nd report of same student(s) involved in bullying behaviour</p> <p>⇒ Repeat procedure outlined above.</p> <p>⇒ In the case of a 2nd report of same students involved in bullying behaviour parents must be contacted.</p> <p>Feedback to other necessary parties on a need to know basis.</p> <p>If after investigation it is found that bullying behaviour is involved and that Tutor / Year Head feel that the matter can not be resolved at this stage or is very serious they may refer the incident to the anti- bullying support team.</p> <p>If it can be resolved by Tutor /Year Head, this is satisfactory.</p>	<p>Possible Sanctions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Warning <p><i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i></p> <p>_The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately.</p> <p>_That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.</p> <p>_Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information.</p> <p>_If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Parents • Suspension • Behaviour monitored over an agreed period of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. • Parental Support of all parties concerned needed and need to be informed of proposed plan. • Staff Support: Class Observation for a two week period may be carried out to monitor progress. • Support for class: Bullying Sociogram to be carried out again to continue raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable behaviour and to monitor progress. • Students may be advised to attend counselling at this stage. Recommendations for referral to Family Therapy, Guidance counselling or St.Dominic's Care team are services on offer by St.Dominic's • Home School Visit 	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apologising ✓ Agreeing to mediation. ✓ Agreement reached with a parent present. ✓ Agreement to speak to a counsellor. ✓ Paying for damage. ✓ Returning money or the equivalent value of property. ✓ Suspension

Procedure to be followed by Anti-Bullying Support Team / Personal Safety Committee

- 3rd Report of students involved in bullying behaviour. *Or*
- If incident 1 or 2 considered to be very serious and cannot be resolved at above stages. *Or*
- Gang Bullying. *Or*
- Serious Act of Aggression

Procedure	Disciplinary Measures / Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<p>Stage 1: Personal Safety Committee meeting to discuss case and appropriate course of action to be taken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview parties concerned. • Gathering of evidence and offering of support to others effected may be facilitated by the carrying out of a bullying sociogram or class observation. <p>Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of same should be contacted immediately and present at meetings. • Parents and students need to be reminded of Code of Discipline and Anti-Bullying Code/Statement they have signed. • We need a promise and guarantee from these students to stop this behaviour: Threatening, Name calling • A contract/promise to change behaviour must be signed by both student and parent/guardian. • Consequences of a repeat of this behaviour should be outlined in this agreement: repeated bullying behaviour will merit attendance at the Discipline committee / Board of Management. • The above may need to be completed before the victim or alleged bully returns to school if suspended.. • Advised not to involve the Garda i, unless families of parties concerned wish to involve them. • Reconciliation facilitated by a mediation process may or may not be appropriate at this time. • Behaviour monitored over a period of time. • All members must record their involvement. • A written record procedure must be used. • We must keep in mind the sanctions in our Code of Discipline. <p>Stage 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up Anti-Bullying team meeting to monitor progress? 	<p>Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Warning • Suspension • Contact parent/guardian. <p>Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract/ Promise to change behaviour. • Suspension • Recommendations for Referral to: Family Therapy. Guidance Other: Anger Management. J.L.O. • Behaviour monitored over a period of time. • Student / parent must attend up follow up meeting on request. • If they don't agree to above - we are following procedure as laid out in Anti-Bullying policy and code of Discipline. They have already signed up to these contracts on attending St.Dominic's. • Consequences of repeat bullying behaviour will be: Referral: • Suspension • Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head. i.e. Discipline Committee Board of Management. 	<p>Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behavior of any others involved. <p>Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Support of all parties concerned needed and need to be informed of proposed plan. • Students may be advised to attend counselling at this stage. Recommendations for referral to Family Therapy, Guidance counselling or St.Dominic's Care team are services on offer by St.Dominic's • May be a need for anger management training. • Contact with other agencies may be necessary: Child Support Worker (I.S.P.C.C.) Psychologist Juvenile Liaison Officer Garda i To attend G.P. • To report to member of A.B.T. for an agreed period of time. • Home School Visits. • Year Head, Tutor, Deputy Principal, and other parties concerned need to be fully informed of proposed plan. • Staff Support: Class Observation for a two week period may be carried out to monitor progress. • Support for class: Bullying Sociogram to be carried out again to continue raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable behaviour and to monitor progress. 	<p>Stage 1 and 2 <i>Whether or not there is admission of involvement it should be made clear that:</i> <i>Verbal Warning outlines</i> _The specific behaviour/s you have discussed should cease immediately. _That the young person is made aware that disciplinary implications already apply in the situation. _Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the offender suspects has provided information. _If agreement is not forthcoming a warning should be given which extends to the friends of the bully.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. <p>Stage 2 continued: Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apologising ✓ Agreeing to mediation. ✓ Signing an agreement with a parent present. ✓ Agreement to speak to a counsellor. ✓ Paying for damage. ✓ Returning money or the equivalent value of property. ✓ Suspension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviours of concern must stop. • Behaviour to be monitored by all parties over an agreed period of time. • Follow up meetings. • Whole school approach!

Procedure to be followed by Principal / Discipline Committee			
Procedure	Disciplinary Measures / Sanctions	Support	Outcome Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If behaviour still persists student and parents meet with Principal./Deputy Principal/ Year Head. • If behaviour still persists student will be suspended. 	<p><u>Possible Sanctions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension • Referral to Board of Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures need to be taken to ensure the safety of the victim and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. 	<p>Outline a fair outcome such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apologising ✓ Agreeing to mediation. ✓ Signing an agreement with a parent present. ✓ Agreement to speak to a counsellor. ✓ Paying for damage. ✓ Returning money or the equivalent value of property. ✓ Suspension ✓ Behaviour monitored over an agreed period of time. ✓ To attend follow up meetings on request. ✓ Referral to Board of Management.

St. Dominic's Secondary School

Incident Report Form

Date _____ Time _____ Teacher _____

Names of students involved including witnesses.

Details of Incident(s) / Report.

The incident was also reported to:

Tutor Year Head Anti-Bullying Team Other _____

Action Taken.

Sanction:

Verbal warning Write out Anti-Bullying Code
 Contact parent/carer Suspension
 Date / Time: _____ Date / Time: _____

Other (*Explain*) _____

Outline of outcome:

Apology	Agreeing to mediation	Agreement / or signing an agreement with parents /carers present	Agreement to speak to counsellor/ Referral to Family Therapy	Referral to outside agency	Paying for damage	Returning money or the equivalent value of property
<i>Tick below or add notes.</i>						

Suggestions for follow up:

Appendix 3: Implementation Programme

Strategies for Reporting and Investigating

1 Confidential Questionnaires

This is the simplest and most obvious way of discovering who needs help in dealing with bullying in school.

One question, which can be answered discreetly during class time.

Name: _____	Class: _____				
Would you like to talk to someone about bullying?	Yes	?	No	?	

Questionnaires can also be used to monitor the effectiveness of a school's implementation of anti-bullying measures.

This will be carried out once a month.

2 Bullying Sociogram

A sociogram is a useful strategy for understanding relationships in a class or group. The method employed is to ask each student a series of questions designed to uncover the social dynamic in a class, thus identifying positive and negative influences in the group.

Aims

Preventative

1. To prevent bullying by adopting a proactive pastoral approach. The direct intervention of an individual teacher will build trust and confidence in the schools anti-bullying policy, and inspire better relationships amongst the pupils themselves.
2. Awareness of the unacceptability of bullying will be raised even if there are no problems in the group.
3. To provide a safe structure, which encourages disclosure of bullying situations, thereby uncovering emerging or previously undetected cases.
4. To establish a clear picture of the social dynamic operating within a class by identifying:
 - The power structure amongst students.
 - Levels of bullying and victimization.
 - Students involved.
 - Students at risk.This will give the teacher first hand information and a better understanding of the hidden sub-culture of the group.
5. To identify the strengths within the group, and by empowering bystanders, to encourage mutual support between students.

Reactive

1. To investigate reported instances of bullying. This includes one-to-one bullying or incidents involving a group.
2. To stop bullying by providing an immediate response, and to reduce the possibility of retaliation.

Procedural

1. To embed anti-bullying measures into teachers' classroom practice. Information may also be used as an early warning system to form the basis of a team response by other subject teachers.
2. To fit in with the school's discipline structure by allowing teachers to establish standards of acceptable behaviour.
3. To facilitate the noting, recording and investigating of bullying as described in the Guidelines.

When to use the Sociogram?

As a powerful preventative measure: the sociogram may be used very early in first year before serious patterns of negative behaviour take hold, and when students are beginning to form relationships with peers. Students will be reassured by the experience of a teacher who is supportive and is encouraging a safe and friendly atmosphere, and who is prepared to act with authority when necessary.

As a monitoring mechanism: it can be used at regular intervals as part of tutorial provision in the school.

As a non – confrontational intervention: it can be used in cases where bullying has already occurred.

Steps for implementation

1. Decide who should administer the sociogram and consult with school management, the in-school Anti- bullying support team, or pastoral team.
2. Seek the co-operation of the subject teacher and arrange for a double class period if possible.
3. At the appointed time, explain the purpose of the sociogram to students. Inform the whole class that you are going to talk to everyone about their experience of the class atmosphere, and whether it needs to be improved. Explain that this exercise is part of the school's anti-bullying measures. Tell the class that you will give them feedback.
4. Subject teacher continues work with their class, thus ensuring minimum disruption. Individual students are interviewed privately. (See form for questions)
5. Inform each student of the confidential nature of the interview, reassuring them that they will not be identified as having provided information. Be clear that all students will be asked the same questions. This protects victims from retaliation; on the basis that the picture you have formed comes from the whole class contribution. Have the class list to hand to record information. You may find it helpful to make a visual representation of the information on a chart, especially where there is a recurring problem. Record the details.
6. A clear picture of the class dynamic will emerge. Discuss general findings with the whole class. Identify ways in which the class is working well in terms of co-operation and friendships. If this is overwhelmingly positive, the preventative aspect of the strategy will have come into play. Praise the class for their co-operative spirit, and reward them if possible.
7. If problems have been identified, deal with the problem behaviour immediately after having interviewed all students. Discuss evidence privately with individual students who were identified as behaving in a bullying manner.
8. Be specific about the problem behaviour, explain why it is wrong, and challenge the inappropriateness of it. Be clear that it is totally unacceptable in the school.
9. Seek agreement on:
 - i. Facts
 - ii. Future behaviour
 - iii Follow up meeting
10. It may be useful to have a tutor or year head witness the agreement. Inform the offending young person that this will be monitored, and that other teachers will also be made aware of the situation. Arrange a time to review progress. Mention the rights of others. Explain to the student, that being popular in class is more likely to arise from being admired by others, rather than being feared. Emphasise that you have formed an opinion about their specific behaviour by talking to every student in the class. No particular person should be singled out for revenge or retaliation. This also applies to friends of the offending pupil. Make it clear that you will be checking up on this. Make a record.
11. Negotiate or renegotiate a class agreement regarding future acceptable behaviour.
12. Feedback results of the sociogram to class teachers, and decide on a strategy for supervision and monitoring.
13. Arrange to review progress with the class and with the class teachers.

Bullying Sociogram Form

Teacher _____ Class _____ Date ___ / ___ / ___

Who is bullying?	What is the behaviour?	Who is it directed towards?

Details of positive behaviour and relationships should also be recorded.

- Are you happy with the atmosphere in your class?
- Who are your friends?
- Are you being bullied in any way? (If the answer is yes, gather details and reassure the pupil that the problem will be addressed.)
- Is there anyone in the class being picked on or having a hard time?
- Is anyone being left out, or ignored?
- Is there anyone spreading rumours or gossip, or using notes, phone calls or text messages to make others feel bad about them?
- Is anyone being unfair to others?
- Is there a group of pupils making life difficult to others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
- Can you give examples?
- Who do you think is causing the problems?
- What can you do to help students who are having a hard time?
- Have you being bullying anyone?

Who is bullying? E.g.	What is the behaviour?	Who is it directed towards?
John	Pushing, name calling	Tom
	Three pupils mentioned this	
Niamh Orla	Used to be friends with Mary, Now excluding her from the group. Reported by Mary and Liz	Mary

Conclude by reminding all pupils about the school's anti-bullying policy. Thank them for their co-operation, and mention that you will be acting on the information you have received.

3. Class Observation

Class observation involves all subject teachers recording peer behaviour over an agreed period, pooling the information, and deciding on an agreed course of action. This observation is carried out unobtrusively. Class observation is a useful tool for discovering the dynamic at work in a group and provides a more comprehensive method dealing with negative behaviour and maximizing constructive behaviour. It can also be used to monitor events following the use of the Bullying Sociogram. Teachers may find class observation useful where bullying is suspected but more evidence is required to identify its source. In cases where bullying has been reported and there is a risk of retaliation, this strategy protects confidentiality and enables evidence to be gathered through direct teacher observation. It may also be used to gather information where teachers are being bullied, especially by a group of students.

Aims:

- To improve class atmosphere, thereby protecting the rights of pupils and teachers.
- To co-ordinate teachers' response to bullying behaviour.
- To identify and encourage constructive influences in the class.
- To record problematic behaviour accurately.
- To identify pupils who need support including those engaged in questionable behaviour.
- To enable teachers to establish standards of what is acceptable and unacceptable and to implement these.

Class observation is best carried out discreetly and confidentially with the support of a principal, who will facilitate teachers' meetings to pool information and to ensure follow up.

Steps for implementation

1. Convene an initial meeting of subject teachers.
2. Indicate the nature of the problem.
3. Explain the procedure.
4. Emphasise confidentiality.
5. Fix a date for returning completed forms. Two weeks should suffice, but urgent issues arising should be dealt with immediately.
6. Gather evidence and record on Observation Forms.
7. Convene follow up meeting of subject teachers and pool information.
8. Decide on appropriate response.
9. Interview students concerned.
10. Review progress with class teachers.

(Cool School Programme, 2002: North Eastern Health Board)

Interview Technique

This section deals primarily with an interview with someone accused of bullying others. However the general approach and structure may also be used with victims and bystanders adjusting the content as necessary.

Interviewing an alleged bully. Background considerations

- Young people who are bullying others may respond in different ways when confronted. It is important to be aware of how an involved person might feel and the attitudes that may be displayed. The fear of being caught, labelled a bully, punished or expelled may inspire defiance, or a visible display of power. Students who feel concerned may decide never to admit wrongdoing.
- Some young people may feel ashamed of their involvement in bullying behaviour, and may feel guilty. Because of a desire to save face, they may deny all knowledge of involvement. Other pupils when challenged may respond by saying nothing, or by agreeing with everything that is said. The likelihood is that the student will offer temporary compliance, without fundamentally recognising a change of behaviour.
- Occasionally, bullies have no feelings of shame, guilt, or empathy with their victim's suffering. Expecting a response on the basis of remorse may not be productive. In such a case the consequences of bullying behaviour must be made very explicit.
- Even when there is an anti-bullying policy in place, some young people may be unaware that their bullying behaviour is wrong. This will have to be explained clearly, especially to those who tend to respond aggressively to problematic situations.
- In school environments where bullying has not been effectively addressed, many of the bullying behaviours which students inflict on each other may be socially acceptable. Pupils may be modelling the behaviour of others, or may be behaving in accordance with accepted hidden traditions. This occurs, for example where there is a covert acceptance by students and staff of bullying of 1st Year students, new students, or of vulnerable students.
- The challenge to a teacher is to disarm these attitudes, fears and beliefs and the non-confrontational approach suggested here may help to diffuse tension.

Key Elements of an interview

Privacy

Pupils usually disclose more in private because they feel safer. Dealing with incidents in public can cause unnecessary embarrassment for the victim, increasing vulnerability, and may encourage confrontation and denial on the offender's side. Privacy is also important for witnesses and other members of the class. They may be experiencing subtle pressure to support one side or the other, or worse still, threats may have been made.

In a case where group bullying is suspected, teachers will find it helpful to enlist the help of a colleague to interview members of the group individually.

Non – confrontational approach

After welcoming the pupil and thanking them for their co-operation let him/her know that you see yourself as facilitating problem solving, rather than as a person who dishes out punishment. Take a non-confrontational approach and use "I" statements. This will reduce tension and build trust. Avoid labelling of the young person as a "Bully". Refer to the behaviour rather than the person. Be calm, constructive, and adopt a problem –solving approach, and allow enough time for the interview. Most young people respond to patience, and the opportunity to talk, rather than to pressure, anger, or impatience.

Examples of opening statements

These are designed to inspire confidence in the young person that he/she will be treated fairly. You may wish to use some or all of them, depending on your own style.

- There seems to be some difficulty between yourself and Mary. I am here to help resolve the situation. I need your co-operation to get it sorted out, because I feel your contribution to the solution is going to be extremely important. Your help is going to make all the difference. Allow time to respond.

- If you have made a mistake in your behaviour, even if it is a serious one, I want to help you work things out. The most important thing from everyone's point of view is that it never happens again. I think it is very important that it is settled here and now. Allow time to respond.
- This talk is between the two of us for the moment, and I don't want to involve the school principal, or parents at this point. (NB. Serious cases may need to be referred on straight away.)
- We have dealt with a lot of different kinds of situations and we usually manage to sort things out, even serious problems. Allow time to respond.

At this point it should be clear to the teacher whether the young person is responding to the approach being taken. Every opportunity to co-operate is being extended to them in as friendly, non-threatening, and constructive manner as possible. Check that the young person understands what you are saying, and what your approach is. Ask whether they would like anything clarified or repeated. Give them time to think over what you have said.

Seeking further information

The following questions will provide the teacher with contextual information.

- How do you get on with the other student/s?
- Did you know one another before this incident took place?
- How long do you know one another?
- Is there a history to what happened, or did it come out of the blue?
- Do you think it will be easy to get back on good terms with the other person?

Offer a choice between writing down what happened, and talking about it. Writing is less confrontational, especially for the young person who might regard any one-to-one interaction with a teacher as adversarial.

- **Lets have a look at the incident now. I need to understand your involvement. Can you help me fill in the details from your point of view? This is what I need to be clear about.**

- What happened?
- When and where did it take place?
- Who was involved?
- What part did you play?
- Was there more than one person involved on either side?
- Were there any witnesses?
- Did this take place more than once?
- Have you been involved in anything like this before?

- **Focus on students taking responsibility for their own actions rather than attributing blame to others or the group. Don't accept standard techniques for saving face such as "I was only messing", or "We were all doing it". Bypass these comments and ask the young person to talk about their specific role at the time. For example ask:**

- What did you actually say or do?
- How would someone else who witnessed the incident describe your actions?
- Would you do the same thing again, or act differently?
- What did you do wrong?
- Do you understand what was wrong about it?
- What is the problem about what you did?

- How do you feel about the situation?
- Are you worried about what is going to happen?
- What do you think is fair in the situation?
- This is what I think is fair:(Outline a fair outcome such as, apologising, agreeing to mediation, signing an agreement with a parent present, agreement to speak with a counsellor, paying for damage, returning money or the equivalent value of property, suspension)

Invite a comment from the young person at this stage. A co-operative attitude should be praised on the spot. If all concerned agrees the solution to the problem, the matter may be concluded.

What if there is complete denial?

Cases will arise from time to time where there is complete denial of involvement. Repeat the evidence as you see it, and try again. It may be necessary to protect the confidentiality of the source of your information.

Stay focussed on what you believe actually took place.

Do not accuse the young person of lying.

- This is the situation as I see it. (Give details)
- Anybody who examined it would think the same about your responsibility.
- I do not accept that I am hearing the full story from what has been said so far.

Explain your role again and let the young person know that this is a very positive opportunity for them to be forthright and honest. If there is still denial, explain that you are not going to let the matter rest until it has been resolved, and outline what the next steps are according to school policy.

Complete denial: outline next steps according to school policy

E.g.

- ✓ Reporting matter to the Principal
- ✓ Initiating a wider investigation.
- ✓ Contacting Parents
- ✓ Contacting outside agencies such as Juvenile Liaison Officer or the Gardaí. National Psychological Services may have a role if it appears that there are psychological difficulties.

Whether or not there is an admission of involvement, it is critically important to be unequivocal about the immediate and future behaviour of the young person.

It should be made clear that;

- The specific behaviour you have discussed should cease immediately.
- That the young person is made aware that the disciplinary implications already apply in the situation.
- Agreement should be sought about not taking revenge against the victim or others whom the bully suspects may have provided information to teachers.
- If agreement is not forthcoming, a warning should be given which also extends to friends of the bully.
- Measures need to be taken by the school to ensure the safety of the victim, and to supervise the behaviour of any others involved. A case discussion involving school management and other relevant personnel will decide on possible sanctions.
- If bullying continues, management have to choose between suspension/expulsion or referral of the offender for clinical psychological assessment. An assessment will point to whether the young Person has psychological /Psychiatric difficulties contributing to the behaviour not, and whether anger management training might be a useful next step.
- Discuss with the parents the possibility of counselling their daughter.
- Keep a record of the interview.

(The Cool School Programme 2002, North Eastern Health Board)

Reconciliation and Mediation

There are many circumstances where reconciliation between the parties is possible. However in practice it may more effective to tell the young person involved to leave each other alone. The same instruction should apply to friends on both sides, whether they are in the school or not.

When is mediation appropriate?

Where you believe reconciliation may be achieved with further support, mediation through the skilled facilitation of a teacher may be a useful next step.

The advantage of arranging and facilitating mediation for young people is that it involves them in the problem –solving at their own level. It gives them a sense of ownership of the solution, rather than imposing it from the outside. The process itself can be as valuable as the end result, because it allows divergent points of view and attitudes to provide focus, fairness, and safety to the interaction. A crucial consideration to be borne in mind is the openness of the participants to the process. *A young person who has been victimised will need to feel confident enough to face a direct meeting with someone who has caused them suffering, and the teacher should be aware that this may take time. Some young people may never feel confident enough to engage in the mediation process.*

When is mediation not appropriate?

A young person who insists on minimising the effects of their bullying behaviour is not ready for mediation. They need to show that they understand what is wrong about their behaviour, and be prepared to change. In rare situations there are young people with poor conscience development who will not be suitable for mediation. In accessing the situation, the guiding principle should be that mediation should not make matters worse, and that the bullying should stop.

Preparation for mediation

In order to assess the suitability of the candidates for mediation, it is necessary to hold an individual preparatory interview with both parties. There should be a clear assurance of safety and an atmosphere of welcome and affirmation. Explain the process and clarify that the objective of mediation is to resolve the conflict. Allow each person to tell the story from her point of view. This will show where points of difference and similarity lie and help the facilitator to establish what would be a fair solution to the problem.

Set the ground rules for mediation. There should be an attitude of respect on all sides and each person must listen to the other's story without interruption. Each party's contribution should be treated with respect and must not be spoken about in a way that would be considered abusive by either party. Encourage both to come to mediation prepared to reach agreement and with suggestions for solving the problem.

Mediation Process	Values to foster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Mediation should take place in a calm atmosphere, so it should be arranged for a time when both parties have had an opportunity to de-stress, and not in the immediate aftermath of an incident. 	Respect Teamwork Collaboration Trust – building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Welcome both young people and reiterate the objective of mediation. 	Communication Empathy Recognition & Acceptance of differences. Validation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Facilitator starts briefly his/her understanding of the situation. Give each party a chance to respond or clarify. 	Honesty Integrity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Focus particularly on expression of feelings, encouraging a response from the other, e.g. “Were you aware that Jane felt as badly about what happened? Now that you are aware of how she feels, what difference do you think it will make to how you relate in the future?” 	Personal responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Using a flip chart or blackboard list the issues, highlighting the areas of agreement and concern. 	Participation Empowerment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Check each party for new information and new understandings. 	Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Make sure that responsibility is being taken by the offender for what happened and that there is a clear understanding that this behaviour must stop immediately. 	Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Summarise each party’s concern and check for accuracy. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Ascertain both parties’ willingness to proceed to solutions. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Focusing on the list of issues, generate suggestions / ideas/ options on how they might work through each issue. Accept all suggestions without judging their merit. List them on a flipchart. 	
<p>Options to consider may include:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ An apology. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ A promise to change behaviour. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ An agreement to avoid each other if necessary. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Retribution for damaged property. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ An agreement that friends of both parties will be discouraged from engaging in destructive behaviour which might exacerbate the situation. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Encourage both parties to speak to each other and come to an agreement as to a preferred option. Discuss the appropriateness, practicality and acceptability of any agreement reached. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ An agreement may be signed and review date set for checking progress. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ End the session by thanking both parties for their co-operation and praising them for their contributions to peace making. 	

(Cool School Programme, 2002: North Eastern Health Board)

Appendix 4: Implementation Programme

Bullying Awareness Training Day For All First Year Students

A special training day will be arranged for our first year students when the theme will be bullying. The day will not be led by our own teachers but by Peer Educators from the Ballyfermot Youth Federation who like ourselves are deeply concerned about the issues of bullying.

The Day will be organised in October.

The programme for the day will be very varied, and will not be serious! Discussions, a film, fun artwork, drama and music workshops will be some of the possibilities.

The aims for the day are:

- To agree that bullying happens
- To agree that bullying is damaging to the person that receives it.
- To agree that bullies are not nasty people and may not be fully aware of how their behaviour damages other people
- To learn something about group process
- To experience group work
- To provide opportunity through creative work for young people to express feelings about bullying
- To provide empowering opportunities for problem solving “ what can we do”, “what will we do”
- To celebrate the work done on the day and prepare for further work to be done in the future.

In order to fit the programme we make some changes to the normal school day:

- 1. No Lessons**
- 2. The lunch break runs from 12.10 to 1.00. Pupils bring a packed lunch as a punctual start to the afternoon is made at 1.00.**
- 3. Refreshments are provided for the earlier break which runs from 11.00 - 11.30.**
- 4. The school day finishes for first years at 3.15.**
- 5. Pupils need not wear school dress but may come in casual clothes suitable for, say, drama or dance. Yes, jeans can be worn!**
- 6. The training team has asked me if a video will be made of the day. It will be used for evaluation purposes only.**
- 7. The Programme will be evaluated by students also, as we strive to improve on this programme in light of experience gained.**

St. Dominic's is delighted to have this programme available to our students and greatly appreciate the hard work and co-operation of the Youth Federation Services, peer mentors, drama students and teachers who work together to make the day possible.

Bullying Group Work Programme

Child Support Worker Holly Gillen from the I.S.P.C.C. will present a course to first year students aiming to:

Session 1- Introduction

- ◆ To raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour and to define bullying.
- ◆ To explore different types of bullying.
- ◆ To gain experience of what it's like to be a Bully / Victim.

Session 2- Bullying within the school setting.

- ◆ To introduce the idea of school bullying.
- ◆ To gain personal experience of bullying in school
- ◆ Why victims do/do not disclose.
- ◆ What an ideal bully free school should be.

Session 3-Signs and symptoms, coping mechanisms & supports.

- ◆ To identify the signs and symptoms of bullying.
- ◆ To devise coping mechanisms for both the bully and victim.

Session 4- To promote anti bullying in school and promote friendship and peer support.

- ◆ Devise a code of behaviour that rejects bullying and
- ◆ Promote positive friendships and peer support.

Each of the four sessions incorporates three main elements –

- **Experiential Work:** This addresses participant's own experiences of bullying and provides a forum for discussing bullying within the school.
- **Theoretical Work:** This provides an analytical overview of bullying within the scholastic setting.
- **Creative Work:** This Provides an active approach and incorporates the participant's individualistic style.

St. Dominic's School is delighted to have this programme available to our students and greatly appreciate the hard work and co-operation of the I.S.P.C.C. services.

The course will greatly reinforce anti-bullying work already completed as part of our Social, Personal and Health Education Programme.

The course will be evaluated.

It is important to note that if during the course of the programme a student discloses "abuse" (physical or sexual), that a disclosure of this nature will be reported to the Social Services by the I.S.P.C.C. Mandatory reporting is the policy of the I.S.P.C.C.