

**St. Dominic's Grammar  
School for Girls**

**Parents'  
Handbook  
2023/24**

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**The Parents' Handbook is available on the School App and the school's website.**

**The purpose of the handbook is to give parents clear information about the day-to-day organisation and procedures in St. Dominic's Grammar School.**

**Please contact the school if there is an area about which you are unclear or which you think should be included.**



<b>School Prayers</b>
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**Morning Offering**

O Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer all my prayers, works and sufferings of this day for the intentions of your Sacred Heart.

Amen

**Live Jesus Live**

Live, Jesus Live.

So live in me that all I do be done by thee.

And grant that all I think and say

May be thy thoughts and words this day.

Amen

**Memorare**

Remember O most gracious Virgin Mary that never was it known, that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence I turn to you Virgin of virgins my mother.

To you I come, before you I stand sinful and sorrowful.

O mother of the Word incarnate, despise not my petitions but in mercy hear and answer me.

Amen

**Prayer to St Dominic**

O Lord

By the prayer of Dominic, your saint and our father and leader, give us the grace to find Dominic's equilibrium in today's world.

Make us understand that its secret lies in the gospel message,

That its dynamism is love, that its foundation is truth.

Teach us the great joy of Dominic,

A joy which expresses sure faith in you,

Understanding of others and forgetfulness of self.

Amen

<b>Vision Statement</b>
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<b>OUR MISSION</b>
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<b>Each one of us is unique, created by a unique God, for a unique purpose.</b>
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<b>St Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach her/his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.</b>
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<b>We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated.</b>
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<b>We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos.</b>
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<b><i>St. Dominic's School is committed to being a self-evaluating and self-improving school</i></b>
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## General School Organisation

Pupils entering in Year 8 are divided into six groups, each with its own class tutor. These groups are not streamed and follow a common curriculum which consists of Religious Education, two Modern Languages (French/Irish/Spanish), English, Science, Maths, History, Geography, Art, Music, Physical Education, Drama, and LLW. They also study Computer Coding, Home Economics and Design/Technology, each for a thirteen-week period throughout the year.

For GCSE, the core subjects are: -

Religious Education, English, English Literature and Maths. Additional subjects are selected from a range of options.

Choices for GCSE are made in the second term of year ten. A booklet which explains the choices available is given to pupils before the Year 10 parents' meeting so that there can be full consultation between parents, pupils and staff. An information evening is also organised prior to the parents' meeting so that all parents and pupils have the necessary information. Pupils' choices at GCSE are closely monitored to ensure that they are making sensible and informed decisions based on their interests, ability, previous performance and career choice.

It is expected that most pupils will wish to continue study into Key Stage 5. The school offers a wide range of AS and A2 courses. The details about these courses and also the criteria for entry into Year 13 are set out in an options booklet. The choices are made in the second term of Year 12 after extensive consultation between pupils, parents, careers staff and subject teachers.

From Year 10 upwards, all pupils receive careers guidance within the school timetable.

The school places great importance on the contacts between parents and staff and parents are encouraged to develop a close relationship with the school.

Meetings are held between parents and teachers for each year group. Parents are encouraged to contact the relevant form tutor/year head whenever they have a particular concern. There are also opportunities for informal contact at Masses, school concerts, plays and other occasions.

<b>BOARD OF GOVERNORS</b> <b>2022-2023</b>
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Mr Rory Galway	Chairperson
Mrs Fiona Collins	Trustee Appointee
Mr Damian O'Neill	Trustee Parent Appointee
Mr Paul McGlade	DENI Appointee
Dr Mary McIvor	DENI Appointee
Ms Eileen Lavery	DENI Appointee
Miss Imelda McDaid	Co-opted Member
Mrs Lisa Magennis	Elected Parent (Designated Governor for Child Protection/Safeguarding)
Dr Andrea Rainey	Elected Teacher
Mrs Orla O'Neill	Principal

<b>TEACHING STAFF 2022-2023</b>
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Mrs Orla O'Neill  
 Mr Philip McMaster  
 Ms Phyllis McNulty  
 Ms Aine Braniff  
 Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons  
 Mr Brendan Mc Ardle  
 Dr Andrea Rainey  
 Mr Darren Scott

**Principal**  
**Vice Principal (Curriculum & School Improvement)**  
**Vice Principal (Pupil support and Development)**  
**Senior Teacher**  
**Senior Teacher**  
**Senior Teacher**  
**Senior Teacher**  
**Senior Teacher**

Mrs Laura Bannon  
**Mrs Áine Braniff\***  
 Miss Hannah Cadden  
 Mrs Deirdre Cassidy  
 Ms Meabh Cassidy  
 Mrs Catherine Cauley  
**Miss Annie Clarke\***  
 Miss Anne Connolly  
 Mr Ciaran Crudden  
**Ms Maria Davison\***  
**Miss Annmarie Doherty\***  
**Miss Jenny Fell\***  
 Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons  
 Miss Marie-Therese Fleming  
**Mrs Aine Frazer \***  
**Mr David Gibson\***  
 Mrs Karen Gibson  
 Mrs Mary Glynn  
 Mrs Rachel Higgins  
 Miss Niamh Howell  
 Ms Leah Hunt  
 Miss Anna-Lise Keenan  
 Ms Donna Kelly  
**Ms Maeve Kennedy\***  
 Miss Brenda Magenis  
 Mr Brendan McArdle  
**Miss Fiona McAuley\***  
 Mrs Jane Marie McCartan  
 Miss Emma McDonnell  
 Mr Barry McElwee  
 Miss Autumn McLaren  
 Ms Shauna McLaughlin  
 Ms Caragh McNeill  
 Miss Clíodhna Mc Neill  
**Mr Shane McNeill\***  
 Mrs Lizzie Mc Nicholl  
 Ms Phyllis McNulty  
 Mrs Elaine Mc Peake  
 Ms Siobhan Morgan  
**Mrs Sonia Morton\***

PE  
 Drama  
 French  
 P.E  
 Maths and Physics  
 Drama  
 Irish  
 Religion  
 English/History/Coordinator of Citizenship  
 Art  
 Chemistry  
 Geography/Sociology  
 Spanish/French/LLW  
 Maths and science  
 History  
 Physics/Junior Science  
 Biology/KS3 Science Coordinator  
 Science/Careers  
 Media/English  
 Chemistry/Science  
 Maths  
 Software Systems Development & Digital Technology  
 English  
 Psychology/SENCO  
 Maths/Exams Officer  
 Physics  
 English  
 Geography/HE/HSc  
 Maths and Science  
 Art  
 Chemistry/Science  
 English  
 Irish/BS/RE  
 Irish/Drama  
 Music/ English  
 Maths  
 English  
 History  
 English/Media Studies  
 Spanish



Mrs Geraldine Mulholland	ICT/Business Studies
Mr Jamie Mulholland	TD/STEM Coordinator
Ms Ellen Mullen	Music
<b>Mrs Denise Murphy*</b>	Business Studies
Miss Yvonne Murphy	PE
<b>Mr Owen Murray*</b>	Careers/Science/Chemistry
<b>Ms Joanne O’Kane*</b>	Home Economics/HSc
Mrs Hannah O’Neill	Geography
<b>Mr Ian Parker*</b>	ICT
Miss Caroline Patterson	French/Spanish
<b>Dr Andrea Rainey*</b>	Maths
<b>Miss Rebecca Richards*</b>	French
<b>Mrs Mairéad Rodgers*</b>	Geography
Ms Rebecca Rowan	Biology/Science
Mr Darren Scott	Politics/History
Miss Maria Smyth	English
Ms Rachel Sullivan	Maths
<b>Mr Conrad Thomas*</b>	Politics/History
<b>Mrs Kathy Turner *</b>	Technology and Design
Ms Katie Tweed	English
<b>Mr Conor Waters*</b>	Biology
Mrs Amanda Willoughby	Religion
Mrs Barbara Wilson	Religion
Miss Elaine Woods	Health & Social Care and Home Economics

**\* Staff Members who are Heads of Department/Co-ordinators of Subject**

<b>YEAR HEADS 2021-2022</b>
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<b>Year 8</b>	Mrs J. Fitzsimons
<b>Year 9</b>	Ms M. Smyth
<b>Year 10</b>	Mrs C. Cauley
<b>Year 11</b>	Ms L. Hunt
<b>Year 12</b>	Ms L. McNicholl
<b>Year 13</b>	Miss J. Fell
<b>Year 14</b>	Mrs B. Wilson

<b>Senior Team Links Heads of School</b>
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<b>Year 8</b>	Mrs J. Fitzsimons
<b>Years 9-10</b>	Ms A. Braniff
<b>Years 11- 12</b>	Mr D. Scott
<b>Year 13</b>	Dr A. Rainey
<b>Year 14</b>	Mr B. Mc Ardle

<b>SCHOOL TIMETABLE</b>
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<b>Assembly Bell</b>	8.45am
<b>Registration and assembly</b>	8.50am
<b>Class begins</b>	9.00am
<b>Break</b>	10.30am
<b>Class resumes</b>	10.45am
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Lunch</b>	11.50 -12.25pm
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lunch</b>	12.25-1.00pm
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Lunch</b>	1.00-1.35pm
<b>End of School Day</b>	3.10pm

<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
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Schools are required by the Department of Education to record details of attendance in the following categories:

<b>Present</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In school all day</li> <li>Educated off site</li> <li>Approved sporting activity</li> <li>Educational Visit</li> <li>Work Experience</li> </ul>
<b>Authorised Absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bereavement</li> <li>Under suspension</li> <li>Ill or all-day medical/dental appointment</li> <li>Medical/Dental appointment for part of the day</li> <li>Enforced closure</li> </ul>

**(Please note, that an authorised absence is still recorded as an absence on the student's attendance record and will affect their percentage attendance figures.)**

Any other absence is recorded as unauthorised. These categories are recorded on the official register and appear on pupils' records.

Pupil absence must be explained in writing to the class tutor on the day of return to school.

Family holidays in term time are not authorised except in very exceptional circumstances as led out by the Department of Education.

## Procedures for Pupils

1. Pupils should be in school at 8.40am. The bell for Registration and Assembly rings at 8.45am. Registration takes place at 8.50am followed by Assembly.
2. A late pass is available for those pupils who have a valid reason for not being in at 8.45am. Parents must apply for this in writing to the school office.
3. Pupils who arrive in school after 9.00am must sign the late book immediately on arrival. Otherwise they will be registered as absent.
4. **Pupils must have a written explanation of any absence signed by parent/guardian in their planner and this should be presented to the class tutor for signature on the day of the return to school.**
5. **Pupils may not leave school before 3.10pm except in unavoidable circumstances. In such cases a written request must be made in advance in the planner to the Year Head. Medical/Dental appointments should be made outside school hours.**
6. There is a 30 /35-minute break for lunch. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day.
7. Pupils who become ill during the school day will be sent to the First Aid Station. Should it be necessary for a pupil to go home or to hospital, **the school will contact the parent/guardian to make the necessary arrangements to have their daughter collected.** Students who are unwell are not allowed to make their own way home and should be collected by a parent/guardian or another responsible adult assigned by the parent/guardian. Should it occur that a pupil has difficulty in moving around the school (e.g. if she has a limb in plaster, or needs to use crutches), parents should inform the school prior to the pupil's return to school. Every possible assistance will be given within the restrictions imposed by the physical layout of the school and timetabling requirements.
8. School visits – permission slips to be signed by parent/guardian are issued for all school outings. For some longer residential visits, a parents' information evening is arranged.
9. Pupils are expected to be present in school until the end of each term. The Principal cannot give permission for holidays to be taken during term time. Such absences, if they occur are recorded on the register as unauthorised absence and will appear on the pupil's record as such. In the event of a pupil taking a holiday during term time, the parent/guardian must inform the Principal in writing and the letter will be placed in the pupil's file.
10. Pupils must come to all classes properly equipped for work. Full co-operation with staff is expected at all times.
11. The school cannot accept responsibility for pupils' personal property. Parents may wish to consult their own Insurance Company about cover for any loss that may occur.
12. All money, bus passes and phones must be kept on the pupil's person at all times.
13. **If it is necessary for pupils to bring sums of money or other items of value into school, they should be left in the school office for safe keeping until needed.**
14. Mobile phone use:

Phones must be switched off during the school day at all times. This also applies to Year 13 and Year 14 pupils. They are the role models for our younger pupils and if they are seen with their phones constantly attached to them, the younger pupils will believe that we are sending out mixed messages.

Pupils must keep their phone (switched off) in either their school bag or in their blazer pocket. If going out of class eg. to go to the bathroom, they must leave their phone on the desk

**Any phone that is found to be switched on while in school, whether or not it is in use, will be confiscated and left in the school office to be collected by a parent. There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

Should parents and pupils need to contact each other during the school day they must do so via the school office.

Photographs/videos should not be taken in school or on the school bus. **Any pupil who is found to be in breach of this rule will be suspended from school.**

Photographs which are taken in school, on a school trip, or photographs of a member of staff or of a pupil in school uniform should not appear on a social networking site (except the school's official twitter and Facebook sites and the school website which are used to affirm and celebrate the pupils' achievements). This is for the protection of all members of the school community. **Any pupil who is found to be in breach of this rule will be suspended from school.**

## **PASTORAL CARE STRUCTURE**

**The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Ms Phyllis McNulty.**

**The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons and Ms Aine Braniff.**

**The Delegated Governor for Child Protection is Mrs Lisa Magennis. Mr Rory Galway is the Chair of Governors.**

- The Pastoral Care of the individual pupil is our prime concern and whilst all staff contribute to the caring ethos of our school, there are a number of specialised roles within the Pastoral Care structure.
- The Pastoral Care system is co-ordinated by the Vice Principal (Pupil support and Development).
- Each class group of approximately 28 pupils has a Class Tutor and each year group has a Year Head.
- The Class Tutor has daily contact with the class, delivers the Pastoral Care programme and has an overview of each student's progress. He/she liaises regularly with subject teachers and monitors the students' work, behaviour and well-being.
- The Year Head has overall responsibility for the Pastoral Care of the pupils in the year group, working closely with Class Tutors and preparing a programme relevant to the needs of the pupils in that year.
- In addition, each Senior Teacher oversees one section of the school, providing support for Year Heads and Tutors within the section and monitoring attendance, punctuality, behaviour and academic progress.
- Each class in Years 8-11 have prefects who act as role models for younger pupils, provide another channel of communication between pupils and school staff and assist in a number of practical duties throughout the school year.

## **Parents/Guardians**

An essential element of the Pastoral Care system is partnership with parents, whom the school recognises as the first and most important educators of their children. To this end, regular contact, both formal and informal, with parents is promoted throughout the child's school career.

- A solid link with home is established at the first interview which takes place as soon as the child is offered a place in St. Dominic's. This interview allows the child's family to become further acquainted with the school's ethos, curriculum and procedures as well as to pass on specific information relating to the child's individual needs.
- Thereafter, year groups have parent-teacher meetings which provide the opportunity to discuss a pupil's progress with all the subject teachers and to speak to the Year Head and Class Tutor if so desired.

- There are also opportunities to discuss Option Choices for GCSE and A Level.
- Induction evenings are arranged for the parents of pupils in Years 8, 11 and 13. These are designed to acquaint parents/guardians with the curriculum at each level and to let them know how they can best support their daughter at each stage of her school career. These Induction Evenings are hosted by the Principal, Senior Teacher Link, Careers Staff, Year Head and Tutors.
- School Masses are organised for the Year 8 pupils, and A-level students who are leaving. These are attended by pupils, parents, Tutors and Year Heads.
- In addition to the above formal or timetabled meetings, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the school at any time if they have concerns about their daughter's progress and/or well-being.
- If they wish to speak to a teacher, they are asked to make an appointment. The Year Head or Class Tutor will contact a parent or guardian if they have concerns about a pupil.
- The school reserves the right to interview pupils about disciplinary matters and academic progress should it be considered necessary.

### **School Counselling**

- The school engages the services of Familyworks independent school counselling services.
- Pupils may be referred by their Year Head at the request of parents/ guardians or the pupil herself.
- Pupils may also self-refer, using the self-referral box located on the ground floor, near the school offices.
- If it is thought that a particular pupil would benefit from counselling, the Year Head may suggest that a referral be made. The counselling sessions are confidential except when issues of child protection arise.
- The school also uses a CBT counsellor on occasion as the need arises.

### **Outside Agencies**

The Year Head and Pastoral Co-ordinators make contact with outside agencies and avail of the services provided by them. This contact includes referral, in the case of absenteeism, to the Education Welfare Officer.

The School Health Service is available to all pupils. A nurse is available to see individual pupils, to talk to parents, to provide advice and information on health-related issues and to make further referrals where necessary.

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Ms McNulty) and the Deputy Designated Teachers (Mrs Fitzsimons/Ms Braniff) will make referrals where necessary, to the relevant Health and Social Services Trust, in the event of suspected child abuse or to seek additional family support (see Child Protection Policy).

## Student Planner

- **The planner must be placed on the desk at the beginning of class**
- **All homeworks must be recorded in the homework Planner**
- **Teachers must explain all homeworks and allow time for the homework to be recorded**

## HOMEWORK

It is school policy that homework is set for all pupils in those subjects for which it is relevant.

Homework is any relevant task specified by the teacher to be done at home by the pupil. It does more than reinforce what is taught in school during the day; it also helps to develop important skills such as independent learning, inquiry and self-discipline. These are skills that will remain relevant throughout life.

In the area of homework, as in all other areas, St. Dominic's recognises the central role played by parents in providing support and encouragement for their daughters. This support is particularly important during the early years in the school. As the students progress and become more responsible for organising their own time, direct parental contributions may be less frequent, but their continued encouragement is important.

### **Parents can provide support by**

- providing a quiet space where pupils can do their homework.
- by taking a positive interest in their daughter's work e.g. by looking at homework as often as possible, by praising good work and, where appropriate, by encouraging higher standards.
- checking and signing the homework diary each week.
- communicating with the Class Tutor if a pupil is unable to cope with the homework set.

Parents are asked to write a note for the teacher if the pupil has not been able to do homework through illness or family circumstances.

### **Student Planners**

Each girl has a student planner. The purpose of this planner is to: -

- allow the pupil to note homework's set and dates due.
- enable both parents and tutors to have an overview of the pupils' homework.
- encourage pupils to record their own achievements and set themselves targets.
- provides a means of communication between home and school.
- parents are asked to check and sign the homework planner each week.
- the Student Planner must be placed on the desk at the beginning of each class.

## HOMEWORK CLUB \*

The homework club is open after school from Monday to Thursday.  
Members of staff and senior pupils are available each day to help pupils.  
Computer suites with Internet access are available for pupils.  
Each pupil who attends must sign in and sign out.



## Procedure for making complaints

*St. Dominic's aims always to ensure the best possible provision for all students and encourages true partnership with parents/guardians. In the event of a parent/guardian being dissatisfied with any aspect of the school's provision, the following procedure is advised. All issues of concern/complaints will be taken seriously and given due consideration. Full copy of the policy is available from the school on request.*

1. If a parent/guardian wishes to make a complaint, he/she may contact the school, verbally or in writing. If deemed sufficiently serious, the complaint will be passed to the Principal. The majority of complaints can be addressed and resolved through contacting the member of staff involved, the tutor, Year Head or Head of Department.
2. Alternatively, a parent/guardian may write to the Principal outlining the complaint/stating clearly the issues/reasons for the complaint.
3. The Principal will contact the parent/guardian personally to discuss the complaint fully. Many issues/complaints can and are resolved informally.
4. If deemed appropriate, a more formal process will be followed. An investigation will be carried out and a written report will be provided for the parent within 14 days of receipt of the complaint. The report will include the school's proposed resolution to the complaint if the complaint is upheld.
5. If the complaint is upheld, an action plan will be drawn up outlining the steps which will be taken to ensure that any identified deficiency is addressed.
6. If a complaint is upheld, the area for concern will be monitored and evaluated following the complaint.
7. In the event of the Principal not responding to the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, he/she may put the complaint in writing to the Chair of the Board of Governors.
8. In the event of the Chair of the BOG not responding to the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, he/she may put the complaint in writing to the Ombudsman.

## UNIFORM

The school uniform is designed to foster a sense of identity, loyalty and pride in the pupils and the school and is compulsory for all.

### **Compulsory**

Maroon blazer with badge  
Maroon pinafore (Years 8-10) \*  
Maroon skirt (Years 11-14) \*

### **Optional**

School scarf/Plain black scarf  
Short sleeved blouse  
(Summer term)  
Raincoat (plain black rainmac)

**\*When a pinafore needs to be replaced at the beginning, or during Year 10, a school skirt may be purchased**

School jumper with badge  
White blouse  
School tie (years 8-12)  
Striped blouse with reverse neck (years 13 & 14)  
Plain Black tights  
Low heeled black leather shoes (not canvas/converse/sport type shoes)

### **P.E. Uniform**

School Top  
School Shorts  
White Ankle Socks  
Appropriate running trainers – not black soled or flat Converse style  
School Track bottoms  
School Track top

### ***Extra-curricular (optional)***

Gaelic - shorts, jersey  
Netball - kit ordered within school  
Games Socks - ordered within school

The official school uniform may be obtained from Chaplin, Louis Boyd, Monagh Fashions, Truly Fare and Warnocks. All items of clothing and footwear must be clearly marked with pupils' name.

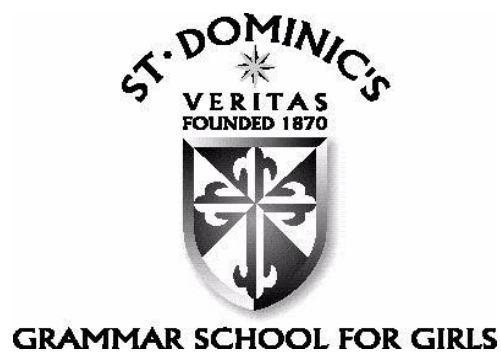
- Jumpers should have the school crest
- Cardigans are not permitted
- Skirts should be no more than 2 – 3 inches above the knee
- 

### **Guidelines**

- Girls who normally wear size 10 should buy waist 28 or 30, those who normally wear size 12 need waist 32.
- If the skirt does not sit comfortably at the waist it will be too tight and too short.
- Girls who are about 5ft 4in tall will require skirts at least 20 inches long.

**If school authorities judge that a skirt worn by a pupil does not adhere to these guidelines the pupil may be asked to replace the skirt.**

### **Appendix 1- Positive Behaviour Policy**



## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

*(Updated June 2021)*

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>St Dominic's Grammar School</b> <b>Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy</b></p>
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### **School Details**

St. Dominic's is a Grammar School for Girls situated in Belfast. Founded by the Dominican Order in 1870, it continues to flourish as a centre of educational excellence. The school has a long and proud tradition of providing a first class holistic education for girls.

### **Mission Statement**

*St. Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach their potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.*

*We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated.*

*We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos.*

### **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

“The aim of St Dominic's Child Protection Policy is to help protect all students in our care from harm”.  
(Child Protection Policy)

“St Dominic's Grammar School sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the safety and well-being of both students and staff. The school wishes to promote the development of the whole person, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, moral, social and environmental health.” (Drugs Policy)

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This policy is one of a number of inter-related policies concerned with student welfare, including the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, the Drugs Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. The policy also draws upon advice published by relevant bodies and sources including both, DE's *'Together Towards Improvement'* which stipulates that schools should have a 'caring ethos' that creates 'a supportive environment which is conducive to learning' and *'Every School a Good School'* which emphasises the need for the existence of a clear commitment to promoting 'equality of opportunity, high quality learning' and where staff enjoy 'positive relationships with their pupils.'

#### **1.2 RATIONALE**

This Policy, revised in consultation with the Board of Governors, staff, a sample of parents and a sample of pupils, aims to promote a positive approach to discipline within St. Dominic's. The Policy outlines a framework within which self-discipline and sound relationships may flourish. Thus, pupils are enabled to sustain positive self-worth and respect for others in a safe, secure and respectful environment.

The contents of this document relate to all pupils and apply when in uniform (including travelling to and

from school), during the school day and when participating in school-related educational activities.

Guidelines relating to bullying, drug and substance misuse are set out in separate policies. (*Anti-Bullying Policy* and the *Drugs Policy*)

### **1.3 AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES**

The school strives for excellence in a caring community; pride is taken in being a community in which each individual is recognised and valued. The school strives to sustain a friendly atmosphere within a culture of strong pastoral care, a climate of concern and trust, and a positive working environment. St Dominic's *Positive Behaviour Policy* is designed to help create a climate in which independent learning and effective teaching can take place, in which all can work in a spirit of mutual respect and where there is proper concern for the individual and the community. The school works in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure that students conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour, its standards and ethos, thereby ensuring a secure, safe and equitable working environment for all.

**The aims of the *Positive Behaviour Policy* are to:**

- promote positive behaviour and conduct throughout the school community;
- promote self-esteem, self-discipline, proper regard for others and build positive relationships based on mutual respect;
- ensure fairness of treatment for all;
- encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour;
- create an environment in which our pupils feel safe and secure;
- encourage positive relationships with parents/guardians, involving them as active partners in the implementation of the school's *Positive Behaviour Policy*;
- help pupils to develop independence by taking responsibility for their own behaviour and to distinguish between right and wrong;
- encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions;
- enable students to understand the potential consequences of their actions for themselves and others.

Having taken all of the above into account, pupils will be in a position to develop a set of guidelines to govern their own behaviour.

### **1.4 RELEVANT PERSONNEL**

- the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Mr Rory Galway;
- the Designated member of the Board of Governors for Child Protection, Mrs Lisa Magennis;
- the Ethos Governors, Mrs Fiona Collins;

- the Principal, Mrs Orla O'Neill, responsible for overseeing general student welfare and the student Code of Conduct;
- the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Ms Phyllis Mc Nulty and the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection, Ms Aine Braniff and Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons

The SLT, Year Heads, tutors, teachers and support staff support the implementation of the Policy and the rewards and sanctions for both positive and negative behaviour. The Year Heads work closely with the Class Tutors on a daily basis. They inform and remind students about expectations of behaviour, encourage them to manage their own behaviour effectively and to respect the rights of others. They work closely with parents/guardians who have an important role to play in supporting the promotion of good behaviour within school.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (Mrs M Kennedy) and members of The Learning Support Team assist students with Special Educational Needs.

**The Heads of Year are:**

Year 8	Mrs J Fitzsimons
Year 9	Ms M. Smyth
Year 10	Mrs C. Cauley
Year 11	Ms L. Hunt
Year 12	Ms L. McNicholl
Year 13	Miss J. Fell
Year 14	Mrs B. Wilson

**The Heads of School are:**

Years 8	Mrs Fitzsimons
Years 9 and 10	Ms Braniff
Years 11 and 12	Mr Scott
Year 13	Dr A. Rainey
Year 14	Mr McArdle

The Principal is responsible for:

- overseeing the general welfare and appropriate behaviour of pupils within the school.

Each member of staff has a pastoral responsibility to:

- promote positive behaviour and follow the school's procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

The Class Tutor has responsibility for:

- informing students about the school's Code of Conduct;
- reinforcing positive behaviour within their Tutor group;
- implementing the Policy and dealing with inappropriate behaviours of the pupils in their tutor group;
- liaising with the Year Head, Head of School and Vice Principal to report any concerns about student behaviour.

The Year Head has responsibility for:

- co-ordinating action by Tutors to reinforce positive behaviour;
- applying rewards and sanctions;
- liaising with and holding meetings with parents to address behavioural concerns;
- informing the Heads of School, Vice Principals and Principal about serious breaches of discipline and outcomes of meetings with students and parents.

The Head of School has responsibility for:

- working closely with Year Heads to ensure the effective implementation of the Policy;
- co-ordinating action by Tutors and Year Heads to reinforce positive behaviour;
- applying rewards and sanctions;
- liaising with and holding meetings with parents to address behavioural concerns;
- informing the Vice Principals and Principal of serious breaches of discipline and outcomes of meetings with students and parents.

The Vice-Principal (Pastoral) has responsibility for:

- working closely with all staff to ensure the effective implementation of the Policy;
- co-ordinating action by staff to reinforce positive behaviour;
- co-ordinating action by teachers when inappropriate behaviours are discovered;
- reviewing and updating the *Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy* and making it available to parents as appropriate; and
- reporting to the Board of Governors as required.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and members of the Learning Support Team assist pupils with Special Educational Needs.

## **1.5 POLICY CONSULTATION**

This policy will be revised regularly in consultation with stakeholders. The nature of the consultation process is dynamic and is inclusive of: parental consultations through the website and through Parent Link; student consultations through the Senior Student Leadership Team, the Student Voice and student questionnaires; staff consultations, awareness-raising and on-going professional development; ratification by the Board of Governors.

## **1.6 DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY**

The *Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy* is available to the school community through the school's website and the School App. Copies are also available from the School Office.



## SECTION 2: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct acknowledges that behaviour is a shared responsibility. It is based on our philosophy of respect for self and also aims to encourage concern and respect for the welfare of others. The Code emphasises the importance of good relationships based on these values. It aims to encourage students to manage their own behaviour effectively and to respect the rights of others. This includes valuing the school environment and adhering to school procedures.

It is designed to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, to take their place in society and, in particular, the world of work in which high standards of attendance, punctuality, presentation and conduct are required.

St Dominic's *Code of Conduct* is designed to help create a climate in which independent learning and effective teaching can take place, in which all can work in a spirit of mutual respect and where there is proper concern for the individual and the community.

The school works in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure that students conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour, its standards and ethos, thereby ensuring a secure, safe and equitable working environment for all.

### SECTION 2 : RESPECT FOR SELF AND OTHERS

#### 2.1 RESPECT FOR SELF AND FOR OTHERS

**Students have a right to:**

- be valued as members of the school community;
- access support to deal with academic or pastoral issues;
- be treated fairly, consistently and with respect;
- play an active role in the school community within a clearly defined and fairly administered Code of Conduct.

**Students are expected to show respect for ourselves and for others by: -**

- Behaving in a polite, dignified and responsible manner;
- Being sincere and honest in everything they say and do;
- Being sensitive to the needs of others;
- Treating all members of staff and fellow students with courtesy and respect;
- Rejecting all behaviour that threatens the safety or happiness of others;
- Behaving in a manner which does not bring the school into disrepute. This relates to all students when in uniform and includes travelling to and from school;
- Valuing the views of others;

- Treating others as they would like to be treated;
- Following all school rules and deadlines.

## 2.2 RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Students should create and maintain a pleasant environment by: -

- Taking care of school property, building and grounds;
- Disposing of litter properly;
- Reporting immediately any accidental or deliberate damage.

## SECTION 3 : PRESENTATION AND UNIFORM PAGES

### 3.1 PRESENTATION

Students are expected to:

- Take pride in their appearance by wearing the school uniform properly;
- Take pride in good presentation of work.
- Students should not chew gum whilst wearing school uniform or during school activities;
- All school property, homework planners, textbooks and school bags must be free of graffiti.

\*\*Included here are Pages 8 and 9 from Student Planner describing compulsory uniform. \*\*

### 3.2 APPEARANCE/UNIFORM

UNIFORM
<b>The school uniform is designed to foster a sense of identity, loyalty and pride in the students and the school. It is compulsory for all.</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Compulsory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maroon Blazer with badge</li> <li>• Maroon Pinafore (Years 8-10*)</li> <li>• Maroon Skirt (Years 10-14)</li> <li>• Long sleeved white blouse</li> <li>• Black tights</li> <li>• School jumper with badge</li> <li>• School tie</li> <li>• Low-heeled black shoes (canvas or trainer type shoes are not permitted)</li> </ul> <p>*When a pinafore needs replaced at the beginning of, or during Year 10, a school skirt may be purchased)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School scarf or plain black scarf</li> <li>• Raincoat (plain black rain-mac)</li> <li>• Short-sleeved blouse (summer term)</li> </ul>

All items of clothing and footwear must be clearly marked with the student's name

**All students are required to wear the school uniform and to abide by the following rules relating to uniform and general appearance.**

- School uniform should be worn during school hours, on the journey to and from school and on other occasions as directed by school staff, such as school trips, and when representing the school;
- The school blazer must be worn to and from school and on the corridors;
- Only badges relating to school are permitted- e.g. prefect badges. No other badges are permitted.
- Only the plain, black school scarf is permitted;
- Visible body piercings are not permitted;
- Students are not permitted to wear nail polish (they will be given material to remove it on the spot);
- Students are not permitted to wear false nails, gel nails, acrylic nails or false eyelashes. In the case of a student having false nails, eyelashes, gel or acrylic nails, this will be reported to the Year Head and the student will be given a maximum of three days to have them removed;
- Students are not permitted to wear false tan (they will be advised to have it removed within three days);
- Only plain black leather or leather- look, low-heeled shoes are permitted (**Canvas or trainer-type shoes are not permitted**);
- It is only acceptable for students to wear one pair of gold or silver coloured stud earrings. If a student is wearing any unauthorised jewellery visibly (e.g. nose-piercing/ring, multiple studs/ear-rings) she will be asked to remove it/them immediately. Likewise, if a student is wearing more than one earring of any type in one ear, she will be asked to remove them immediately;
- On the removal of a piercing, or other item of jewellery, the member of staff shall confiscate it and leave it in the main office. Students shall have to collect the item of jewellery at the end of the school day;
- The school will respect legitimate/valid cultural traditions and practices.
- All students will be issued with a uniform card that can be signed at any time by any member of staff if students are failing to comply with the uniform rules. Any student who is issued 3 warnings on the uniform card will be issued a detention.
- **Failure to follow a member of staff's instruction in relation to removal of unauthorised jewellery or unauthorised uniform items will constitute a serious breach of discipline and result in a parental meeting and automatic detention/suspension if deemed sufficiently serious.**

#### SECTION 4 : HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RESPECT FOR THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

##### 4.1 SCHOOL RULES REGARDING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RESPECT FOR THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In order to ensure the safety of all members of the school community, students are asked to observe the following rules and procedures at all times:

Students must:

- use the pedestrian gates and the pedestrian crossings when entering and leaving the school grounds;
- remain within the St. Dominic's grounds (All Saints' grounds are out of bounds at all times);
- not interfere with fire alarms, fire extinguishers or other safety equipment;
- not smoke, vape, use e-cigarettes, drink alcohol or engage in any substance misuse on school premises, during school activities or in school uniform (see Drugs Policy);
- remain outside a classroom unless a member of staff is present;
- not run inside the school building;
- not engage in loud or boisterous behaviour;
- not sit on the floor in any part of the school including the corridors;
- not leave rubbish lying around in either the corridors or classrooms;
- line up in a quiet, orderly fashion while waiting for the teacher;
- remain standing in a line outside classrooms until admitted by the teacher;
- enter classrooms in an orderly manner;
- keep all passageways free of schoolbags, etc (students must not sit on the floor).
- follow the instructions of the teacher at all times;
- not eat in classrooms or corridors at lunchtime;
- not carry hot drinks along corridors;
- not bring scissors into school;
- not drink energy drinks in school or in the school grounds (The drinks will be confiscated and disposed of);
- not charge personal mobile devices in school;
- ensure that their presence is recorded if they wish to remain in school after school hours to use the school's study and ICT facilities;
- abide by the school's Safe Use of the Internet Policy;
- not damage school property (*Students/parents are financially liable for any deliberate damage to school property*);
- Abide by the School's *Bring Your Own Device to School Policy*

#### **4.2 Travelling to or from school on public transport or on foot**

Students are advised at all times to:

- be aware of street traffic;
- be aware of the risk of having property e.g. mobile phones stolen on the way to or from school;
- cross the road at traffic lights or pedestrian crossing only;
- form an orderly queue at the bus stop;
- stay clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop;
- board the bus in single file;
- remain seated in the bus;
- refrain from doing or saying anything hurtful about, or to another student;
- report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour to a member of staff;
- remember that chewing gum is banned on the school premises.
- remember that energy drinks are not permitted in school.

### To ensure the safety of all students:

- Students must not bring to school or use, share or sell items such as tobacco, aerosols, alcohol, e-cigarettes, vapes or illegal substances/drugs. Students are forbidden from using, possessing, sharing or selling, or to be under the influence of intoxicants, stimulants or drugs at any time when in school uniform or participating in activities organised by the school (cf *Drugs Policy*).

## SECTION 5 : MOBILE PHONE USAGE

### 5.1 MOBILE PHONE USAGE

Mobile phones rules are in the interests of the whole school community. The use of mobile phones can seriously impede learning and this is one of the main reasons that students are not permitted to activate their phones during the school day or in the school building at any time. The following points must be adhered to in the interests of all.

- Due to the risk of inappropriate text-messaging and the use of mobile phones to take photographs or videos, with or against, the wishes of the person, **mobile phones must not be switched on in school premises at any time.**
- Taking photographs or videos of other students while in school uniform either in school or outside school is totally forbidden and will lead to automatic suspension. Students must not upload any photographs or videos of themselves or other students in uniform onto any social networking sites. Uploading photographs or videos of students in school uniform at any time will lead to automatic suspension.
- The use of mobile phones to take photographs or videos of staff is forbidden at all times and will lead to automatic suspension (except under teacher supervision for the purposes of teaching and learning).
- Students may not use their mobile phone to contact a parent/guardian at any time. All contact with home during the school day must be via the school office.
- Students must keep their mobile phone switched off and in their schoolbag or blazer pocket at all times.
- Students must leave their mobile phones on their desk if they need to use the bathroom.
- In the event that a student is found to be using their phone in school, the mobile phone will be confiscated. The student's parent will have to collect it or arrange for another adult to collect it by arrangement with the school office. This applies at all times including before and after the school day. If a parent/adult cannot collect the phone from the school office at the end of the day, the phone will remain in school until such time that a parent/adult can collect it. Exceptions to this rule will not be made.

## SECTION 6 : ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

### 6.1 Punctuality

- Students should be in school at 8.45(Assembly Bell rings) and be on time for Registration at 8.50 am;

- Students arriving after 8.50 am will be marked “late” by the Class Tutor;
- Students arriving after registration has closed must sign the late book in the reception area. Thereafter, the student must report to the school office and sign the Late Book;
- The Class tutor will give detention for 2 lates in one week or 3 lates in one month;
- Students are expected to be punctual at all times throughout the school day.

### **Attendance**

- Parents /guardians will be given notice of the dates of the school terms. Guidance from the Department of Education makes it clear that parents/guardians should not arrange holidays during term time. Consequently, approval will not be given for students to be absent from school during the school term to go on holiday;
- Other than emergencies, medical, dental and similar appointments should be arranged outside the school day;
- Parents/guardians must provide an explanation of absence via the Gateway App or in the Student Planner and this must be presented to the tutor on the first day of return to school. If not using the Gateway App, parents/guardians should also contact the school office to inform the Year Head of a student’s absence;
- The Year Head will ring home on first day of absence to ascertain the reason for the absence if a reason is not provided on the Gateway App;
- If the Class Tutor does not receive a phone call or written explanation of absence on a student’s return to school, a note requesting same will be written in the Student Planner;
- If a written explanation is still outstanding a further note will be put in the Homework Planner giving a warning of detention.

If,

- Attendance is <95% - The Year Head will send a letter home.
- Attendance is <90% - The Year Head will invite the parent/guardian for an interview.
- Attendance is <85% - Referral to E.W.O

All letters will be in line with EWO guidance.

## **SECTION 7 : DISCIPLINE AND SANCTIONS**

### **7.1 DISCIPLINE**

Good discipline is in the interests of the whole school community. It promotes character, respect for others and self. It ensures that the rights of all are respected and creates an environment that allows all to reach their potential. It is the responsibility of each and every member of the school community to ensure that good discipline prevails at all times. Sanctions are not simply punishments but rather aim to instruct and guide the student to positive self-discipline and self-respect.

Breach of the school rules will normally result in sanctions being applied.

## **7.1 GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

- School uniform is compulsory.
- Rules pertaining to hair, jewellery and uniform are clearly defined throughout this Code of Conduct.
- Punctual attendance and full attention are required at assemblies, all classes and study periods.
- Truancy is unacceptable.
- In all cases of absence, a note from parents/guardians must be sent via the Gateway App or written in the Student Planner.
- Homework, including learning homework must always be done.
- Students must always be co-operative, courteous and well-behaved.
- Students must not engage in anti-social behaviour.
- Possession, use, sharing or selling, in school, on the way to or from school, of any tobacco product, e-cigarette, vape, alcoholic drink, illegal substance or legal 'high' is forbidden and will incur automatic suspension and could lead to expulsion.
- No student may park a motor vehicle in the school grounds without special permission which has been granted by the Principal.
- Any student engaging in physical fights whilst in school or whilst wearing the school uniform will be suspended.
- Taking photographic images or making recordings of any student or member of staff is strictly prohibited and will incur automatic suspension.

## **7.2 SANCTIONS**

**Sanctions for minor breaches of discipline include:**

- a warning and reminder of what is expected;
- a change of seating arrangements;
- a discreet conversation with the student at the end of class;
- withdrawal of privilege e.g. school trip/extra-curricular event;
- additional work to complement or reinforce current work (signed by the parent/guardian);
- a note on SIMs;
- detention

## **7.3 MINOR BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE**

**The Principal reserves the right to consider as a breach of discipline any behaviour which adversely affects a student, member of staff, school property or the reputation of the school.**

-minor breaches include the following:

- Lack of effort, attention or application;
- Non-doing of homework (on a one-off occasion);
- Under-achievement in class tests due to lack of effort;

- Forgetting books or materials needed for class;
- Poor punctuality;
- Minor lack of courtesy or respect (on a one-off occasion);
- Boisterous or unruly behaviour (on a one-off occasion);
- Lack of respect for the environment (e.g. dropping litter);
- Being out-of-bounds within the school building;
- Wearing nail polish/false nails (one-off occasion);
- Rolling up skirt;
- Wearing false tan;
- Sitting on the corridor;
- Non-compliance with rules pertaining to correct uniform.

*This list is illustrative and not exhaustive*

**Sanctions for serious breaches of discipline include:**

- Detention or if deemed sufficiently serious, suspension;
- Suspension leading to expulsion.

**7.4 SERIOUS BREACHES OF DISCIPLINE include:**

- Persistent failure to bring books or materials needed for class;
- Persistent lack of academic progress despite ability;
- Persistent failure to do homework;
- Persistent poor punctuality;
- Repeated unacceptable conduct including bad manners;
- Repeated lack of effort/ poor work ethic in academic studies;
- Repeated flouting of rules regarding school uniform, jewellery, nails, hairstyle, hair colour and make up;
- Repeated sitting on the floor in the corridors;
- Repeated disruption of other students' progress;
- Repeated lack of respect for the environment (eg. dropping litter);
- Being out of school grounds without the appropriate authorisation;
- Bullying another student or member of staff;
- Cyberbullying or inappropriate use of social media;
- **Any behaviour which might be considered socially unacceptable eg. Shouting out, interrupting when some-one else is speaking, being in any way rude/impolite to peers or staff, speaking over others, laughing at others, name-calling**

*This list is illustrative and not exhaustive*

**7.5 Examples of breaches of school discipline which incur automatic detention**

- Leaving school without permission;
- Failure to adhere to timetable;
- Forging signatures in the Student Planner;
- Truancy;



- Failure to produce Student Planner on more than two occasions;
- **Any behaviour which might be considered socially unacceptable eg. Shouting out, interrupting when some-one else is speaking, being in any way rude/impolite to peers or staff, speaking over others**

*This list is illustrative and not exhaustive*

#### **7.6 Examples of breaches of discipline which automatically incur suspension**

- Swearing or abuse of any form; either directly or indirectly at a member of staff or foul language used in response to something a member of staff has said or requested/ excessive insolence to a member of staff;
- Any action which compromises Health and Safety;
- Smoking, vaping or consuming alcohol or any illicit substances within the school or whilst in school uniform;
- Being in possession of, sharing or selling cigarettes, alcohol, vapes, e-cigarettes, drugs, or any illicit substances;
- Buying any illicit substance for or from another student in school;
- Physical fighting (all parties involved) and verbal or electronic challenges to fight;
- Being in possession of a lighter or an offensive weapon;
- Tampering with fire equipment;
- Failure to respond to a reasonable request made by a member of staff e.g. refusal to remove an item of jewellery/ piercing etc;
- Persistent flouting of school rules regarding school uniform, jewellery, hairstyle, hair colour and make up / persistent failure to respond to request to comply with rules related to hairstyle / hair colour and make-up;
- Misuse of Social Media/mobile phone to bully, humiliate or intimidate any member of the school community;
- Persistent serious disruption of other students' learning;
- Persistent bullying of another student or member of staff;
- Bringing the school into disrepute.

*This list is illustrative and not exhaustive*

#### **7.7 Further examples of breaches of discipline which incur detention or, if judged sufficiently serious, suspension or suspension leading to expulsion**

- Missed detention will incur a further detention;
- Serious lack of courtesy and /or respect;
- Graffiti of a personal and /or hurtful nature;
- Stealing;
- Vandalism / abuse of school property;
- More than one student being in a toilet cubicle;
- Committing of a criminal offence in school, on school trips or when wearing school uniform;
- Bullying another student or a member of staff;
- Disruption of other students' learning;

- **Any behaviour which might be considered socially unacceptable eg. Shouting out, interrupting when some-one else is speaking, being in any way rude/impolite to peers or staff, speaking over others, laughing at others, name-calling**

*This list is illustrative and not exhaustive*

# Sanctions Procedure

## Dealing with recurring misdemeanours

**Subject Teacher**

**Form Tutor**

1<sup>st</sup> Offence      Extra work  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offence      Extra work and note in planner  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offence      Extra work/note in planner warning of detention  
4<sup>th</sup> Offence      Detention

2 lates in one week/  
3 lates in one month      Detention  
Failure to provide explanation of absence after first warning      Detention

**Form Tutor / Year Head / SLT / Deputy Principal / Principal**

3 detentions      Interview with Tutor  
4 detentions      Interview with parents / Year Head / SLT link / warning of **suspension**  
5 detentions      Interview with parents / Deputy Principal and **suspension**  
6 detentions      Interview with Tutor  
7 detentions      Interview with parents / Year Head / SLT link / warning of **suspension**

**Detention is held on Fridays**

**Time 3.10pm – 4.30pm**

## SECTION 3: APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

### Initialisms/Glossary

Glossary of terms used:

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

SIMs – Software package used to assist in school administration

SEN – Special Educational Needs

SENCo – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

BYOD – Bring your own device



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Revised September 2020**

**Reviewed April 2022**

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### OUR MISSION

Each one of us is unique, created by a unique God, for a unique purpose

### VISION STATEMENT

*St Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach her/his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.*

*We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated. We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos.*

*St. Dominic's School is committed to being a self-evaluating and  
self-improving school*

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This policy is one of a number of inter-related policies which are concerned with student welfare. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies should be read in conjunction with the school's pastoral policies, including the 'Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy', the 'Pupil Acceptable Use of ICT' and 'Staff Acceptable Use of ICT' and the 'Relationships and Sexuality Policy'.

It is particularly important that it is read in conjunction with the school's 'Pupil Acceptable Use of ICT' and 'Staff Acceptable Use of ICT' Policies which outline the management of staff and students' use of online materials and ICT resources.

Parents and students need to be aware that whilst the internet provides children and young people with a wealth of opportunities for their education, communication and entertainment, there are also risks of harm through the deliberate behaviour of others online. It is also well known that young people can be exposed to inappropriate content online.

It is estimated that in school, students access approximately 20% of their total internet usage. This means that young people are accessing the majority of online information beyond the school day. The school has procedures in place to safeguard learners from unlawful, sexual or potentially harmful content on the internet. We also offer information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use at home. Parents need to monitor internet use at home and encourage their children to talk with them about any concerning /upsetting material they may come across.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is broader than child protection. Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection.

What is Child Protection?

Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is taken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm.

## **1.2 RATIONALE**

St Dominic's Grammar School has a safeguarding ethos; thus, it is recognised that, not only does the school have statutory responsibilities in relation to students' learning, but it also carries pastoral responsibility towards all students in its care. The school accepts that all students in its charge have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and will seek to do whatever is reasonable to safeguard and promote the safety and well-being of its students.

## SECTION 2: CONTEXT

### 2.1 THE LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them..... When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be best for the child".

*Extract from United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)*

The aim of St. Dominic's Child Protection Policy is to help protect all pupils in our care from harm and to implement safeguarding procedures and child protection arrangements in an accessible way so that they are understood by the students and they know what to do and who to go to.

### 2.2 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021
- Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2016
- The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Education (2006 Order) (Commencement No 2) Order (NI) 2007
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978
- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The Education (NI) Order 1998/25
- Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 (duty to report offences)

### 2.3 The Policy & Guidance Context

- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017. Amended 2019. Updated June 2020)
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)

- Safeguarding Board of Northern Ireland (SBNI) Online Regional Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures manual 2017 (updated annually).

## **2.4 The International Context**

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)- Section (A28) sets out every child's right to an education and every child's right to be protected from all types of harm and violence.

# **SECTION 3: POLICY AIMS**

## **3.1 Ethos**

**St. Dominic's Grammar School is committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people and keeping them safe from harm, true to the statement set out below. At all times, the school strives to build the pupils' self-esteem enabling them to develop in confidence, resilience and a strong sense of self-worth.**

## **3.2 Specific Aims**

- To ensure staff awareness in the area of suspected child abuse. The policy will include a definition of child abuse and guidelines for the identification of suspected abuse.
- To set out clear procedures to be followed by all staff in the case of suspected abuse including
  - ❑ the role of individual members of staff
  - ❑ the role of the designated teachers
  - ❑ subsequent referral to outside agencies
- To ensure that all pupils are safe and that cases of suspected child abuse are appropriately responded to.

- To promote awareness and understanding of the area of child abuse among all stakeholders.
- To set down a clear system for staff training and school procedures.

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

The Children (NI) Order 1995 reinforces the statutory obligation on the education sector to play its part in the reporting and prevention of child abuse.

### **3.3 The Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection**

#### **3.3 The Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection from the Department of Education's Guidance 'Safeguarding and Child Protection School' are outlined below.**

The following principles underpin all our school strategies, policies, procedures, practice and services relating to safeguarding children and young people. It is the responsibility of all adults working with young people to familiarise themselves with them in order that they act as a guide for all our dealings with the young people in our care.

**(i) The child or young person's welfare is paramount**

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration in all our dealings with students. When making decisions about young people, the school tries its best to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between the child's rights and parents' rights. All efforts are made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

**(ii) The voice of the child or young person should be heard**

- In St Dominic's we recognise that young people have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously, taking account of their age and understanding. Through 'Student Voice' and the Student Council, self-evaluative questionnaires and the students' evaluation of policies and pastoral care provision, we aim to consult and involve them in matters and decisions which may affect their lives.

**(iii) Partnership**

- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is through working in partnership.

#### **Prevention**

- We deliver safeguarding training to all staff where we emphasise the importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.

**(iv) Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances**

- Where a young person's needs can be met through the provision of support services, these are provided. All staff must respond proportionately to the needs of a child in accordance with their duties and the powers available to them.

**(v) Protection**

- Children should be safe from harm and in circumstances where a parent or carer is not meeting their needs, they should be protected by the State. It is therefore a legal obligation for all staff in St Dominic's to report any child protection concerns to the designated teachers.

(vi) **Evidence-based and informed decision making**

- All the decisions and actions taken by staff in school must be considered, well informed and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and take account of, the young person's specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed need

## SECTION 4: DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

### 4.1 What is Child Abuse?

#### Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in a residential, hospital or institutional setting or in a community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. Abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

### 4.2 Types of Abuse

#### Physical Abuse

The deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones.



## **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

## **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

## **Exploitation**

**Exploitation**<sup>1</sup> is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

## **Specific Types of Abuse**

### **Grooming**

Grooming of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case.

Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared.

Staff should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming, and report any knowledge or concerns to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Any child under the age of 18 can be a victim of CSE. Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen and seventeen year olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited.

CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males.

While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, **the majority of CSE victims are living at home.**

## **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

This is threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.

## **Sexual Violence and Abuse**

Is any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed and established school procedures.

## **Forced Marriage**

A Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and where an agency, organisation or practitioner has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI immediately.

## **Children who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour**

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when there is no informed consent by the victim; and/or the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim. Harmful sexualised behaviour can include using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases, inappropriate touching, using sexual violence or threats. Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled. Harmful sexualised behaviour must be reported and will always require intervention.

## **Sexting**

Sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

### **Sexting between individuals in a relationship**

As adults we can question the wisdom of this but the reality is that children and young people consider this to be normal. Staff and pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases staff must always report any information they have on students involved in sexting.

### **Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress**

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that you **do not forward it to anyone else**. Please remember that staff are not required to investigate incidents, they must report them to the DT or DDT.

## **E-Safety/Internet Abuse**

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social media and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities. Pupils will read and sign the school's 'Acceptable Use of ICT Policy'.

### 4.3 Possible Indicators of Abuse- Symptoms

School staff are particularly well placed to observe symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. No list of symptoms can be exhaustive, but below are a number of possible indicators of abuse.

- Bruises or marks may be apparent, particularly when pupils are changing for sports activities.
- Possible indicators of physical neglect such as inadequate clothing, poor hygiene, deficient nutrition and of emotional abuse such as excessive dependence or attention-seeking.
- Young people who are sexually abused may exhibit physical signs or lead to a substantial behaviour change including precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate or harmful sexualised behaviour. Young people may also be more frequently absent from school.
- CSE can be very difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. However, it is our statutory responsibility to protect all children and young people from abuse, irrespective of whether or not they view themselves as a victim of abuse. **Professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for, professional support.** Potential indicators can include, acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation, leaving school without permission, being collected from school by unknown adults, significantly older boyfriend/girlfriend. While these indicators can be useful in identifying potential risk, their presence does not necessarily mean CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence mean it is not.

Such symptoms of all the above types of abuse may be due to a variety of other causes, medical or social, such as bereavement or other disruption in family circumstances or drug, alcohol or solvent misuse.

Signs, such as those described above, and others, can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. School staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are regularly repeated.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection. ***The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed,*** including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school's staff, teaching or non-teaching.

A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff of the school which gives rise to concern about possible child abuse by someone outside the school, or by a person working in the school in a volunteer capacity. The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team. The school Safeguarding Team will also refer where appropriate and follow school procedures.

## **Responding to Children with Increased Vulnerabilities and Children with a Disability**

Children and young people with disabilities (i.e. any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and staff working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues. Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult.

## **Gender Identity Issues/Sexual Orientation**

Our school strives to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

## SECTION 5: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 Responsibilities of Board of Governors

The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 places a statutory duty on Boards of Governors (BoG) to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils.
- Have a written Child Protection Policy.
- Specifically address the prevention of bullying in school behaviour management policies.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 places a statutory duty on Boards of Governors to keep a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil at the school. To fulfil their responsibilities BoGs are obligated to acknowledge and work within the relevant guidance and procedural documents that have been produced by the Department of Education (DE) and the Department of Health (DoH).

All Governors should have initial Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) child protection training with the Chair and Designated Governor for Child Protection undertaking full CPSS training. All Governors should undertake refresher Child Protection training every term of office (four years). See Section 4.7 for more details on child protection training.

#### *Process*

Boards of Governors must ensure that:

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools.
- They have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.

- Safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually and parents and pupils can access the policy on the school website.
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying.
- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every three years, or as specified in relevant guidance.
- There is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.
- All school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circular 2012/19.
- They receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff.

#### Chair of Board of Governors

#### **The Chairperson of the Board of Governors is Mr Rory Galway**

- The Chairperson of the Board of Governors plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.
- In the event of a safeguarding and child protection complaint being made against the Principal, it is the Chairperson who must assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department and the school's own policies and procedures.
- The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff, even if there have been no entries.

## **Safeguarding Team**

In the best interests of the children and for support for the Designated Teachers, the school has a Safeguarding Team. This is comprised of the chair of the Board of Governors, the delegated governor, the principal, the Designated Teacher and the Deputy Designated Teacher.

The Safeguarding Team are:

The Chair of Governors- Mr Rory Galway.

The Delegated Governor for Child Protection- Mrs Lisa Magennis

The Principal (Chair): Mrs Orla O'Neill

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection - Ms Phyllis Mc Nulty.

The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection -Ms Aine Braniff and Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons

The Safeguarding Team is a vehicle for ensuring effective co-ordination and co-operation between the key individuals responsible for safeguarding systems throughout the school.

The responsibilities of the team;

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

## **Principal**

**The Principal is Mrs Orla O'Neill**

- The Principal has the overall responsibility for the day to day running of the school including the appointment and management of suitable staff to the designated teacher posts.
- The Principal as the secretary to the Board of Governors the responsibility of making sure that the Board of Governors fulfils their Child Protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to child protection, ensuring timely inclusion of child protection activities on the agenda. They must ensure any circulars or guidance



from the Department of Education is shared promptly and ensure the termly inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing Child Protection concerns relating to staff.

## **5.2 Role of Designated Teachers for Child Protection**

### **The Designated Teacher for Child Abuse is Ms Phyllis McNulty**

Every school is required to have a Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection. This is a highly skilled role developed and supported through specialised training requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. It involves:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff in safeguarding and CP
- Being available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- Making referral to Social Services or PSNI Care Units
- Maintaining a current awareness of other local services
- Liaison with the Education Authority Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school Principal informed
- The lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy
- Promotion of a child protection ethos in the school
- Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Notifying the following of child protection referrals:
  - (i) The Child Protection Support Service for Schools
  - (ii) The Chair of the Board of Governors in St Dominic's which is a voluntary grammar school.

## **5.3 The Role of the Deputy Designated Teachers**

### **The Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection are Ms Aine Braniff and Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons**

The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher is to work co-operatively with the DT in fulfilling her responsibilities. It is also to support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

## SECTION 6: PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Reporting Process - Procedure for Reporting an Incident of Child Abuse

- Role of individual members of staff
- Role of designated teacher
- Referral to outside agencies

- Child makes a disclosure to member of staff or member of staff has concerns about child, either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time.
- Member of staff does not investigate.  
**MUST ACT PROMPTLY**



- Member of staff refers matter to designated teacher, discuss with designated teacher.
- Designated teacher seeks further clarification from pupil as needed and records all relevant information.



Principal/Designated teacher makes referral to:

- Gateway
- Copies of pro-forma to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors
- Copies to Education Authority

If there is any doubt about whether to take further action, advice is available from:

- Social Services
- EA Designated Officer

Or other agencies.

When seeking advice, names need not be given. At this stage it is simply an enquiry.

Other Action:

- Record Advice given using the 'Note of Concern' Proforma (Appendix 3);
- Monitor
- Review

## 6.2 GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

- Any allegation by a child that she is suffering or has suffered abuse, should be treated seriously. When a child volunteers such information, the chief task at this stage is to *listen* to the child and make a written record of the discussion to pass on to the designated teacher.
- When teachers see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek *clarification* from the child, with tact and understanding. It is *not* the responsibility of staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected child abuse.
- Any comment by the child or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult about how an injury occurred, should be written down, as soon as possible afterwards, preferably quoting words actually used. Records made by a member of staff must be objective, factual and detailed; these records are to be given to the designated teacher to be filed in a secure place. Staff should also be aware that their notes may need to be use in any subsequent court proceedings.
- Staff should *not* give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can, and should, reassure them that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.

### **Protecting Children – a duty to care - Dealing with Disclosure - 6 Things to Do**

**RECEIVE** – listen to what a child says but do not ask leading questions.

**REASSURE** – ensure the child is reassured that she will be safe and her interests come first.

**REACT** – only to ensure that the child is safe and secure. Do not use physical contact.

**RECORD** – make note of what you have seen or heard and the date and time.

**REPORT** – report to the Designated Teacher as soon as you have any concern for the child.

**RELAX** – access support for yourself.

(Detailed advice is outlined below in the and in the appendices)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GUIDELINES FOR STAFF TALKING TO CHILDREN WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE</b></p>
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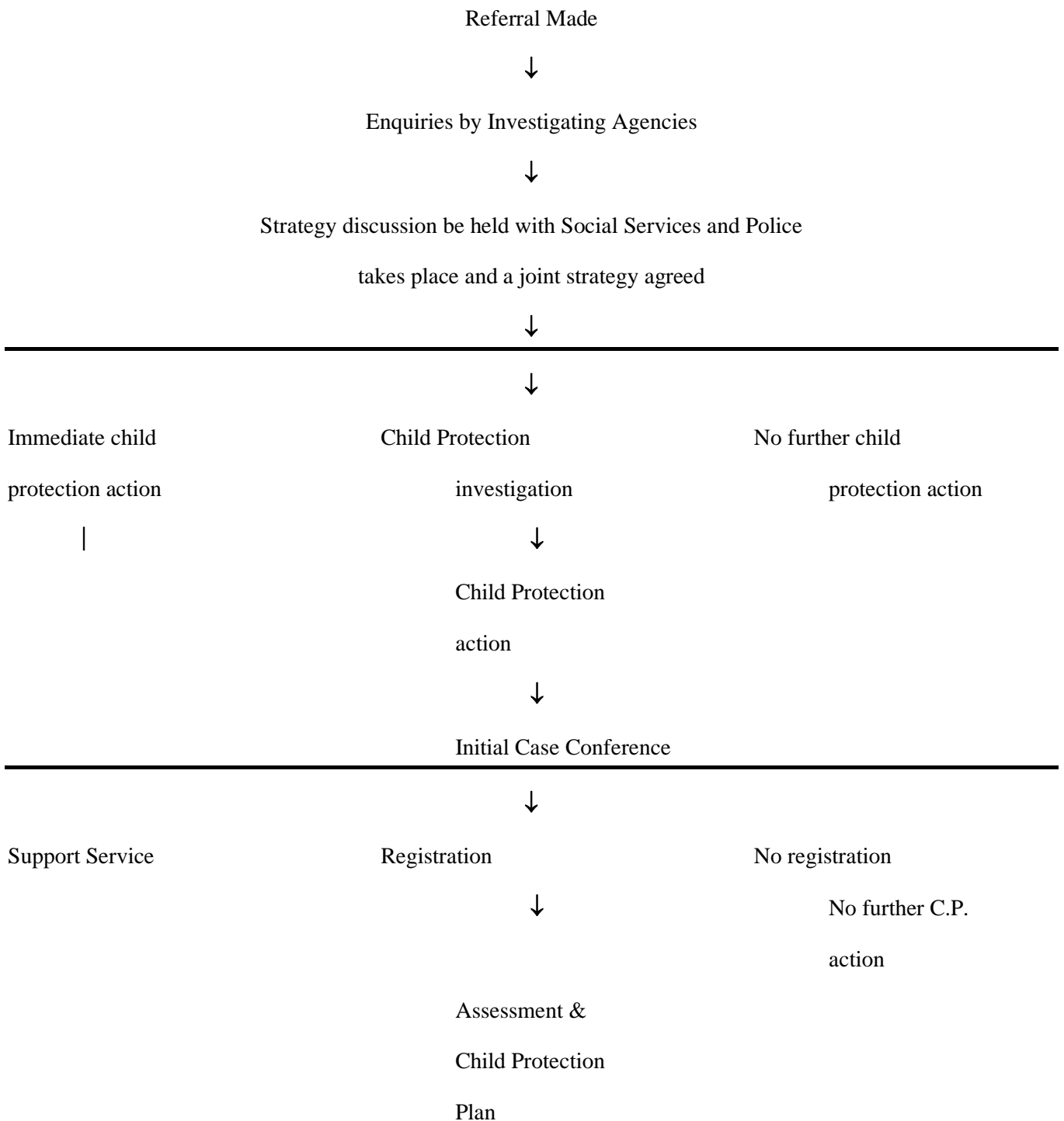
- Where teachers see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or another member of the school's non-teaching staff sees such signs, she should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the Designated Teacher, and it may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher.
- Such clarification may reassure teachers that abuse has not occurred; but signs and symptoms which cause concern, while perhaps not a result of abuse, may nevertheless indicate that the child or her family is in need of support by statutory, voluntary or community based services through a 'child in need' referral (with parental consent).
- Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse. The same considerations apply when a child makes an allegation of abuse, or volunteers information which amounts to that. In some circumstances, talking to the child will quickly clarify initial concerns into a suspicion that abuse has occurred, and point to the need for an immediate referral. Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings, and the extent of questioning should, therefore, be kept to a minimum. Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.
- Staff should not, therefore, ask questions which encourage the child to change their version of events in any way, or which impose the adult's own assumptions. For example, staff should say, 'Tell me what has happened', rather than, 'Did they do X to you?'.
- The priority at this stage is to actively listen to the child, and not to interrupt or try to interpret if they are freely recalling significant events (*the child must not be asked to unnecessarily recount the experience of abuse*), and as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher, using the pro-forma (Appendix 3).
- The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but *under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed nor a photograph taken*.
- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.
- Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should, of course, reassure them that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.

- Staff should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. It should be emphasised that lack of proper records will not, of itself, exempt the school from any subsequent requirement to give evidence in court. *It is therefore essential that accurate contemporaneous records are maintained.*
- Staff should **not** ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.

### 6.3 WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REFERRAL IS MADE?

#### ROLES OF OTHER AGENCIES

The welfare of the child is paramount and the following interagency procedures are intended to ensure a prompt and co-ordinated response to any referral.





### Review Case Conference

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Remove name from Child Protection Register and continued involvement	Continued Registration	Remove name from Child Protection Register and no further action
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Staff may be called upon to attend the initial strategy discussion and any subsequent case conferences. In more serious cases, staff may be required to assist in the preparation of a Court Report and may be asked to appear in court.

<b>6.4 OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION ABOUT ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF</b>
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1. It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is an identified risk to the child at home.

2. The member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must **ACT PROMPTLY**.

3. The source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.

4. The staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in her absence and provides note of concern.

5. Designated teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay.

**6. If Child Protection referral is not required**

The school may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

**7. If Child Protection referral is required**

The Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm, then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. She submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/ parent/carers and decides with the Principal if a referral is or is not required.

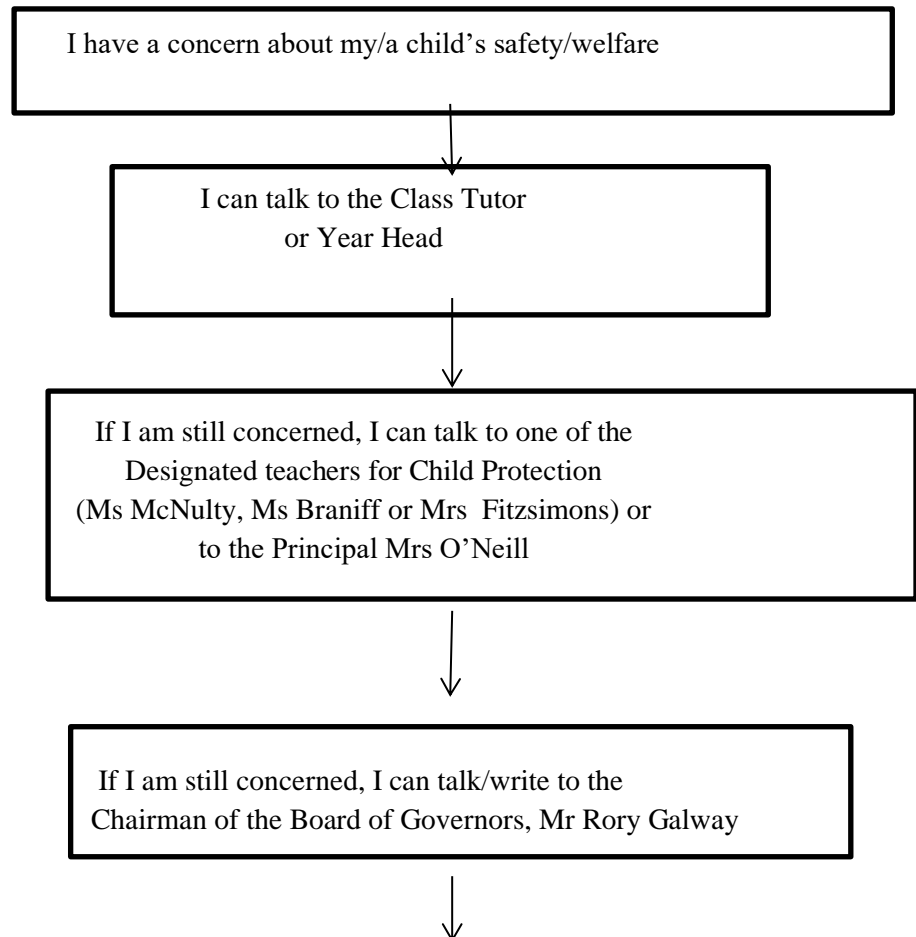


<b>DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF</b>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KEY POINTS</b></p>
<p>Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GUIDANCE ON NEXT STEPS</b></p>
<p>Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POSSIBLE OUTCOMES</b></p>
<p>Following on from establishing the facts, the DT/DDT seeks advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.</li><li>(ii) Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.</li><li>(iii) Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures put in place.</li><li>(iv) Alternatives to precautionary suspension put in place.</li></ul>

## **CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN**

### **Parents'/Guardians' guide to raising a concern/making a complaint including a complaint against a member of staff or volunteer**



If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

In the case of a parent/guardian making a child abuse complaint against an adult working in the school, the parent/guardian should raise the complaint with the Principal who will take appropriate action. In the case of a Child Abuse Complaint against the Principal, the parent/guardian should contact the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Chair of the Board of Governors

## 6.5 Vetting procedures and details of the safe requirement measures used

St Dominic's uses vetting checks as a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals access to students in school. All persons on school property are vetted, inducted in safeguarding systems or supervised as appropriate.

**Staff Members** - All staff, paid and unpaid are vetted using Access NI.

The following groups must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from Access NI **before** taking up post:

- All new **paid** teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Examination Invigilators.
- Private contracted transport providers - named drivers.

### **Volunteers**

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. Volunteers who work unsupervised have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, but the school ensures that a member of staff remains with them.

Schools must ensure that volunteers, eg coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place and a record of these should be maintained by the Principal.

The practice in the school is for volunteers to be supervised at all times.

Otherwise, those working in the school in a voluntary capacity will be subject to the usual staff vetting procedures and will be inducted in school policies and procedures by a permanent member of staff.

Coaches, and music tutors, school photographers etc., who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place and are given Safeguarding and Child Protection training by the DTs.

### **Volunteers**

A volunteer should immediately inform the member of staff with whom she/he is working in the event of a pupil making a disclosure of harm.

### **Work Experience Placements**

Those coming into the school on work experience will not be left unsupervised with children at any time – and will be inducted in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

### **Extended Schools**

Either the Principal, Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership team will be present in the school from 8am and until 4.30pm on any day when pupils are attending after-school activities.

### **In case of emergency**

If a member of staff finds himself/herself to be the only adult in the school and has a child protection issue s/he should contact social services Gateway Team on 02890 507000

### **The Preventative Curriculum**

The personal development curriculum gives specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships and sexuality education, and the development of a moral thinking and value system. For example, the students attend workshops on wellbeing delivered by the Samaritans, the Action Mental Health agency, MenSsana, Women's Aid and the NI Eating Disorders Association. The PSHE programme is designed to offer a medium to explore sensitive issues with students across the key stages in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours.

“Keeping safe messages” are delivered throughout the programme and supported by workshops delivered by the PSNI on internet safety and personal safety and road safety. The promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing of pupils within and across the broader

school community is achieved by raising awareness of social, emotional, and health issues, developing the confidence, resiliencies and coping skills of pupils, throughout the PSHE programme and in offering early intervention when pupils are experiencing difficulties.

The RSE programme also informs students about how to develop healthy relationships, and to make informed choices in their lives so that they learn how to stay safe and know who to turn to if in need of support.

All pupils receive training in the safe use of the internet and the issues of personal safety, respect for others and respect for self are addressed throughout the pastoral programme. The Community Police Officer is invited to speak to students in relation to personal safety and self-protection.

## 6.6 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

All adults in St. Dominic's are placed in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. Members of staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent pupils. Sexual offences, sexual insults or sexual discrimination (including gender or sexual orientation) against pupils, are inappropriate and illegal, as indeed is any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with, or towards a student.

Schools must safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in their charge, therefore the conduct of school staff towards their pupils must be above reproach. The following advice is designed to reduce the risk of allegations being made against any member of staff.

- Staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.
- Pupils should be addressed formally by their Christian name. Familiar terms e.g. darling, pet, which are not appropriate in a professional context, should be avoided.
- Staff must be aware of the potential risks which can arise from private interviews with individual pupils. There are occasions when confidential interviews must take place, but such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access or with the door open or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people. It is inadvisable to spend undue amounts of time with one pupil, away from other people.
- Where such conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
- Where possible, another student or adult should be present or nearby during the meeting.
- All allegations of bullying and bullying incidents must be reported to the DT or DDT. Staff must record all allegations or incidents of bullying on the reporting form contained in the school's 'Anti- Bullying Policy'.
- Where possible, staff should not be alone in a vehicle with a child.
- Staff need to be aware of the acceptable boundaries of physical contact with pupils, and must bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. On rare occasions, a teacher might have to restrain a pupil physically, to prevent her causing injury to herself or others

or to property. In such instances, no more than the minimum necessary force should be used – and this should be recorded following school process.

- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- If a member of staff has to administer first aid, ensure, where possible, that this is done in the presence of other students or another adult. **However, in an emergency, staff should not hesitate to administer first aid, even if there is not another person present.**
- All young people have the right to be treated with respect.
- Staff need to be alert to the risk of emotional abuse, such as persistent or vindictive sarcasm, verbal bullying or severe and persistent negative comment or actions. Members of staff should be encouraged to reflect on any aspect of their contact with children which may give rise to perceptions or allegations of this form of abuse.
- Teachers should avoid using teaching materials of a sensitive nature which could be misinterpreted.
- If in doubt about the suitability of a particular teaching resource, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.
- The school operates a filtered system to the Internet to ensure that only appropriate resources can be accessed.
- Staff should be particularly careful when supervising children in a residential setting such as a ski-trip, outdoor education camp or an extended visit away from home, where relationships tend to be less formal and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school environment. Professional relationships are expected at all times.
- Following any incident where a teacher feels that his/her actions have been or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal of the school. This would apply especially in a case where a teacher had been obliged to restrain a child physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury.
- If any allegations are made against a member of staff, details must be recorded and reported to the designated teacher/ Principal immediately.
- Where concern arises about inappropriate behaviour by another adult in the school, it is essential that this is reported to the designated teacher/Principal.
- All allegations of a potential child abuse nature **must** be recorded in the school's *Record of Child Abuse Complaints Log* which is retained securely in the Principal's Office. A record of such a concern / allegation is placed on the student's Child Protection file.

The school's *Record of Child Abuse Complaints Log* is signed annually by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

- The school receives written permission from parents of students starting school to take photographs of pupils for school records, for displays around the school, for the school magazine, prospectus and web site.
- Staff should receive parental consent before any photograph of a child under the age of 18 is passed onto an outside agency.

On receiving a complaint against a member of staff, the Principal

- Seeks discreet preliminary clarification of the complaint
- Informs the designated teacher
- Records the complaint
- Consults with the EA Child Protection Support Service
- Consults with Chair of Board of Governors

If the complaint comes to the designated teacher, they will pass it to the Principal who will follow the steps listed above.

Possible decisions

- If the allegation is without substance, no further action
- If concerns remain, preliminary suspension/move from direct contact duties
- Immediate referral to Social Services/P.S.N.I.
- In a case of inappropriate behaviour, the Principal applies the school's disciplinary procedures

<b>CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF IN RELATION TO MOBILE PHONE USAGE</b>
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- Staff use of mobile phones during their working school day should be outside of their contact hours and discreet and appropriate e.g. not in the presence of children.
- Members of staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/text during lesson time.
- Mobile phones should be set to silent/vibrate while on school premises, other than in the staffroom.
- If it is necessary to make or answer a call, then it should be done so in a private area.



- Whilst at meetings, staff should turn their phones to silent. They should not answer their mobile whilst in a meeting.
- In a one to one situation, phones should be switched off completely.
- If staff have a private circumstance that may necessitate receiving a call, the Principal/Vice-Principal should be informed that the staff member has their phone on. Where possible, they should have an arrangement with a colleague to be able to step in and supervise the class.
- Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone on school related business, or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent/carer, the school telephone or school mobile phone should be used.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues, parents or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- With regard to camera mobile phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph children or allow themselves to be photographed by a child.
- During group outings, staff may carry the school's mobile phone for use in an emergency with the number left in the school office.
- The school also appreciates the fact that staff will use their own mobile phones as emergency contact tools when on trips and outings. In these instances, it may be unavoidable that mobile phones are used in the presence of pupils.
- Staff should consider the needs/workload of their colleagues at all times when using a mobile phone in a common staffing area.
- Staff are not, at any time, permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or to share images.

<b>CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF IN RELATION TO E-SAFETY AND INTERNET USE</b>
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- Staff must exercise reasonable caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must give regard to the 'Staff Acceptable Use of ICT Policy' at all times both inside and outside of work.
- There should be no communication of a personal nature by text, e-mail, mobile phone or use of social media. This has been included to safeguard pupils and the safety and professional integrity of school staff. C2k email should only be used for Learning and Teaching purposes.
- Staff should exercise caution in their use of social media or any other web based presence that they may have. Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF IN RELATION TO CONFIDENTIALITY**

Staff in the school often have access to personal information about individual pupils and their family circumstances. All staff are expected to treat this with the utmost integrity and adhere to the following:

- Staff should maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the school community which could cause distress to school, staff, pupils or parents/carers;
- Staff should seek advice from a senior member of staff if in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them. Confidentiality must always be respected;
- Teachers are expected to keep all written confidential information secure and dispose of any documents which would identify personal information about an individual by shredding it. The school office will facilitate this;
- Data Protection Act: it is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the school's compliance with the Data Protection Act. Personal data must only be used to assist you to carry out your work; it must not be given to people who have no right to see it. All staff should maintain the security of all computerised databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. Staff should refer any queries to the Principal.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in regards to a Child Protection matter and this must always be referred to the Designated Child Protection Teacher or her Deputy.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF IN RELATION TO CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK**

Whilst St. Dominic's fully respects the right of staff to a private social life in the community it is important that staff bear in mind the following:

- Their own professional standing in the community and therefore avoid any behaviour in public which could undermine their professional reputation.
- Staff who are not related to pupils, are strongly advised not to socialise with pupils out of school hours other than at organised school events – mindful that this could lead to very serious personal and professional consequences. Exceptions to this could

include staff members who are related to pupils or where they are close family friends. Professional standards are expected at all times.

**The Board of Governors of St. Dominic's High School indemnifies its employees who act in accordance with the procedures and guidelines as set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.**

## **SECTION 7: APPENDICES**

### Appendix 1

#### **Extract from the Anti-Bullying Policy, including procedures for reporting incidents**

### **PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

In St Dominic's Grammar School, we strive to create and maintain a safe environment for students and staff and acknowledge the support which parents provide in meeting this aim. Parents and teachers may assist in the prevention of bullying by teaching students to have control over their words and actions.

Within the school community it is important that:

- students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and that any action taken will be sensitive and appropriate;
- good behaviour is valued and bullying considered unacceptable;
- a proactive approach is taken and, when possible, early intervention occurs;
- premises are monitored regularly;
- students are taught to assume responsibility for self and for others;
- good relationships are encouraged and that, through both the academic and the pastoral curriculum, students are taught about caring and empathic relationships;
- aggression control is encouraged and acts of aggression are not tolerated; and
- sensitive, empowering help and support is provided for students when required.

## **Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or English as a Second Language**

Students with Special Educational Needs, disabilities or those who are not fluent in English may be especially vulnerable and should be safeguarded in the same manner as other students. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator may have an important role to play in this context. Extra care should be taken to ensure that these students feel confident and are able to discuss any matters that might be worrying them.

## **The Role of Senior Students**

A number of Year 13 and 14 students are selected annually to act as Form Mentors to younger students. In addition, a number of senior students are selected to act as Academic Mentors. Under the supervision of staff, the Year 13 and 14 Pastoral Team offers peer support and engages in awareness-raising throughout the year. The work of the Year 13 and 14 Pastoral Team is highly valued by the school. These students receive training to equip them for the task.

The Student Voice provides students with an opportunity to have their voice heard.

## **The Role of Staff**

Each member of staff has a pastoral responsibility towards the young people in their charge. Members of staff are encouraged to avail of appropriate training, to follow procedures and to handle suspected incidents in a fair, sensitive, diplomatic and firm manner.

## **RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Members of staff and parents/guardians should watch for signs of distress in students. Possible symptoms that a young person is experiencing bullying may include:

- a pattern of physical illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- anxiety about travelling to and from school;
- reluctance to come to school;

- changes in temperament and/or behaviour e.g. a tendency to become more emotional, upset or angry than usual;
- signs of anxiety or distress e.g. sleep disturbance, not eating, weeping, stammering;
- unexplained damage to, or loss of, possessions and/or clothing;
- unexplained bruising or cuts;
- increased requests for and/or stealing money;
- decline in quality of school work for no obvious reason;
- the desire to remain with adults;
- fear of using the internet or mobile phone, nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

Individually, such signs and symptoms do not necessarily mean that a student is being bullied. However, if there is a combination or repetitive occurrence of these, then further investigation is needed in order to determine what is affecting the student.

## **ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF BULLYING WITH STUDENTS**

Staff, students and parents have a shared responsibility in any proactive strategy to sustain a positive ethos and to counteract bullying. In St Dominic's Grammar School, as part of the defined, evolving and responsive pastoral programme, emphasis is placed on the prevention of bullying. The issue of bullying is included in PSHE programmes.

Class Tutors explore with their students issues such as:

- the unacceptable nature of bullying behaviour;
- forms of bullying including bystander bullying;
- possible impacts on the target, perceived bully, bystanders and school community;
- the collective responsibility to ensure that bullying does not take place; and
- strategies to prevent bullying.

Students discuss many facets of relationships, such as: relating well with others; peer pressure; peer support; dealing with difficult situations; personal safety. Assemblies are used to promote a positive ethos and anti-bullying culture.

Parents/Guardians should contact their daughter's Class Tutor or Year Head if they are concerned about bullying.

## **ADVICE GIVEN TO STUDENTS**

We regard our school as an open, caring community and there is a range of staff available to listen and to counsel. No-one must suffer in silence and nobody should remain silent if they witness bullying in school. We are a listening and responding school which encourages and supports a 'telling' culture: TELL, LISTEN, ACT.

We encourage students who witness bullying behaviour to:

- tell a teacher, another adult or mentor in the school;
- tell their parents/guardians;
- describe accurately what happened.

Rather than viewing this as ‘telling tales’, students are encouraged to view such action as a matter of protecting personal safety, or the safety of others. Each person has the right to be safe from harassment or attacks.

## **ACTION TAKEN BY SCHOOL**

The School values behaviour that sustains a positive ethos and which counters bullying. Students are expected to treat each other with empathy and respect. However, each member of staff, including lunchtime supervisors, support staff, teachers and others, should be alert to the signs of bullying and treat any concerns or suspicions seriously and sensitively. Observed incidents or suspicions should be reported as soon as possible to the relevant Class Tutor, Year Head or member of Senior Staff who will follow procedures. The approach taken is to support and protect the targeted student and to focus on changing the behaviour of the bully/ies and those who collude with her/them.

### **Staff Witnessing a Bullying Incident**

If a member of staff witnesses a bullying incident they should, as far as the situation allows:

- remove the targeted student from the scene as quickly as possible and without challenging the person suspected of performing the bullying behaviours. This may prevent escalation of the situation;
- listen to and offer support to the targeted student;
- ensure that the targeted student is safe; she may be taken, for example, to her Class Tutor, Year Head, or the First Aid Room;

- ensure that the person suspected of exhibiting bullying behaviour is safe; she may be taken, for example, to her Class Tutor, Year Head or returned to class, telling her that the matter will be dealt with later, without specifying how or when. If physical violence or a threat of physical violence has been involved, the perpetrator should be isolated until events have been investigated;
- report the incident to the relevant Class Tutor, Year Head, Vice-Principal or Principal, without delay;
- offer pastoral support to all students involved.

### **Staff in Receipt of a Report from a Student who is the Alleged Victim**

If a student who is the alleged target reports an incident or concern to a member of staff, the details will be recorded and the Year Head contacted as soon as possible. The Year Head will seek agreement as required to speak with the alleged victim. Depending on circumstance, this may involve parental consultation.

The Year Head will:

- inform the interviewee that a record will be kept of alleged events (using the Report of Bullying Incident Form see Appendix 4);
- listen to the alleged target in a calm, non-judgmental way and reassure her that the matter is being taken seriously and will be dealt with;
- meet with individual witnesses, if applicable, to clarify events, informing them that a record will be kept of alleged events (using the Report of Bullying Incident Form);
- if considered serious enough, inform the parents/guardians in order that they may support their child and the school; arrange an interview if appropriate. Should the student request that this does not happen, this should be noted in the written records and the opinion of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or Deputy sought. The DT or DDT may use their discretion in this matter.
- arrange to meet with the alleged target at the next available opportunity to plan a self-protective strategy to help her to deal confidently with any possible recurrence;
- in the short term, arrange to see this student at regular intervals to provide support. The Class Tutor may be involved in monitoring the situation;

- ensure that the Class Tutor and Vice-Principal are made aware of the incident and action taken. Together with the Vice-Principal, a decision will be taken as to whether the Principal and subject teachers should be informed. The student has the right to know which members of staff have been informed; and
- continue to monitor and review the situation, including the effectiveness of the agreed support plan.

### **Staff in Receipt of a Report from a Student who is not the Alleged Victim**

If a student who is not the alleged victim reports an incident or concern to a member of staff, the details will be recorded and the Year Head contacted as soon as possible. The Class Tutor or Year Head will meet with the student who has reported the incident and clarify details.

The Class tutor or Year Head will:

- inform the interviewee that a record will be kept of alleged events (Report of Bullying Incident Form);
- listen to the interviewee in a calm, non-judgmental way, assure the student that she has done the right thing by reporting the incident and reassure her that the matter is being taken seriously and will be dealt with.

Once the details are established, the Year Head will seek agreement as required to speak with the alleged target. Depending on circumstance, this may involve parental consultation.

The Year Head will:

- inform the interviewee that a record will be kept of alleged events (Report of Bullying Incident Form);
- listen to the alleged target in a calm, non-judgmental way and reassure her that the matter is being taken seriously and will be dealt with;
- meet with individual witnesses, if applicable, to clarify events. Witnesses should be informed that a record will be kept of alleged events;
- if considered serious enough, inform the parents/guardians in order that they may support their child and the school and arrange an interview if appropriate. Should the student request that



this does not happen, this should be noted in the written records and the opinion of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or Deputy sought. The DT or DDT may use their discretion in this matter.

- arrange to meet with the alleged target to plan a self-protective strategy to help her to deal confidently with any possible recurrence;
- in the short term, arrange to see this student at regular intervals to provide support. The Class Tutor may be involved in monitoring the situation;
- ensure that the Class Tutor and Vice-Principal are made aware of the incident and the action taken. Together with the Vice-Principal, a decision will be taken as to whether the Principal and subject teachers should be informed. The student has the right to know which members of staff have been informed; and
- continue to monitor and review the situation, including the effectiveness of the agreed support plan.

### **Possible Sources of Support for Alleged Target**

Students who have been targeted, may benefit from the counselling service offered within School. This may include, for example, assertiveness skills training or a programme to build or re-build self-esteem.

The Year Head may identify a member of staff and/or a peer mentor or other suitable person as a point of referral for the student. The Year Head may seek to find a reliable friend or group to accompany the student and report any incidents which may occur.

If it is possible to identify times and places where incidents are occurring, the Year Head may seek to implement strategies to minimise opportunities for such behaviour. When appropriate, staff will be given specific advice regarding strategies to be used to reduce the likelihood of such incidents re-occurring e.g. changing seating arrangements in class.

### **Actions in Relation to a Student who is Alleged to Have Displayed Bullying Behaviours**

The Class Tutor/Year Head will meet with this student, as soon as possible after interviewing the student who reported the bullying, to further clarify events surrounding the incident.

The Class Tutor/Year Head will:

- as far as possible, respect the confidentiality of the person reporting the incident and any witnesses;
- inform the interviewee that a record will be kept of alleged events (using the Report of Bullying Incident Form);
- provide the student with an opportunity to give her point of view and explain her actions;
- listen in a calm, non-judgmental way and, if it is clear that bullying behaviour has occurred, stress that it is the behaviour, not the student herself, which is unacceptable;
- attempt to negotiate the situation whereby the student accepts responsibility for any harm/hurt or damage and facilitates recompense/reconciliation being made;
- suggest acceptable forms of behaviour and highlight any good behaviour demonstrated by the student. Agree behaviour targets and set any relevant sanctions;
- if considered sufficiently serious, inform the parents/guardians and arrange an interview to confirm the action being taken (behaviour targets, sanctions, support);
- in the short term, arrange to see the student at regular intervals to provide support. The Class Tutor may be involved in monitoring the situation;
- ensure that the Class Tutor and Vice-Principal are made aware of the incident and action taken. Together with the Vice-Principal, a decision will be taken as to whether the Principal and subject teachers should be informed. The student has the right to know which members of staff have been informed; and
- continue to monitor and review the situation, including the effectiveness of the agreed support plan.

### **Possible Sources of Support for Alleged Bully**

Students who have employed bullying actions against others, or who have been involved in ‘bystander bullying’ may benefit from the counselling service offered within the school.

The Year Head may identify a member of staff and/or a peer mentor or other suitable person as a point of referral for the student.

If it is possible to identify times and places where incidents are occurring, the Year Head may seek to implement strategies to minimise opportunities for such behaviour. When appropriate, staff will be given specific advice regarding strategies to be used to reduce the likelihood of such incidents re-occurring e.g. changing seating arrangements in class.

### **Disciplinary Steps**

Once behaviour has been adjudged to be bullying behaviour, the Year Head or Vice-Principal will determine the severity of the incident level and the appropriate level of response (see Table 1). In determining the level of severity, a number of factors will be considered, for example: nature; frequency; duration; perceptions of the targeted student; whether or not the targeted student acted provocatively. It should be noted that each suspected bullying incident should be individually assessed and an intervention selected which best meets individual student needs. Certain actions, such as assault, have a particular legal status.

Thereafter:

- the student/s who displayed bullying behaviour will be warned of the implications of their actions; it may be deemed appropriate to apply sanctions. This may include making amends as well as the application of sanctions as laid out in the School Behaviour Policy. As each case will be different, sanctions applied will be tailored to suit the situation;
- relevant intervention strategies will be implemented;
- the situation will be monitored by relevant staff member/s;
- if bullying behaviour recurs, parents/guardians of the student/s will normally be asked to attend for interview and further sanctions may be applied;
- if the bullying behaviour persists, the parents/guardians of the student/s will be asked to attend an interview with the Principal and suspension of the student will be considered.
- A one-off event of bullying which is deemed very serious will invoke a suspension or suspension leading to expulsion.

**Appendix 2 – E-safety - All pupils and parents are given advice and guidance on the safe use of the internet via presentations, workshops, advice in the Parents’ Handbook and letters**

<b>E-safety –Information for staff and parents</b>
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We have developed the following rules to ensure the privacy and safety of pupils when using the Internet and World Wide Web. Please understand them.

**Website**

- Pupils are only referred to by first initial and surnames on our web pages.
- Any images of pupils will not be labelled with their names.

**E-mail & Internet Use**

- Children and staff will never reveal their personal details, and home address and telephone numbers on the web or in dialogue with other Internet users.
- Pupils do not have individual e-mail addresses. (*All email addresses are C2K addresses*)
- All e-mail to classes will be moderated by the Class teacher.
- Pupils will not engage in conversation or dialogue with other users on the Internet without permission or supervision from their teacher.
- Children have no access to Newsgroups.
- Children are allowed to use the provided internet and e-mail facilities for curricular use only.
- All Internet access at School is filtered to screen undesirable sites at source – this facility must only be disabled by the ICT coordinator.

**Reporting Concerns**

- Any child finding herself uncomfortable or upset by anything she discovers on the Internet should report it to a teacher immediately.

A note to parents: - The school recognises that, under certain circumstances, the Internet can give children access to undesirable information and images. We have done all that is possible to ensure children are protected from such information through the use of security software, limiting of features and the construction of a website that provide as safe an environment as possible. The children are taught to use the facility sensibly and with proper consideration for others.

It is recommended that parents using Internet at home with pupils develop a similar set of rules.

## **Use of Pupil Images**

At St. Dominic's we take the issue of child safety very seriously, and this includes the use of images of pupils. Including images of pupils in school publications and on the school website can be motivating for the pupils involved, and provide a good opportunity to promote the work of the school. However, schools have a duty of care towards pupils, which means that pupils must remain unidentifiable, reducing the risk of inappropriate contact, if images are used in this way.

We ask that parents consent to the school taking and using photographs and images of their children. Any use of pupil images at St. Dominic's is underpinned by our school ICT Policy/ICT Safety document. We will never include the full name of the pupil alongside an image.

## **Use of Digital Video**

Digital video is an exciting new medium which can motivate and inspire pupils. Research has shown that using digital video in education can help encourage creativity, motivate and enthuse pupils, and improve communication and team-working skills.

St. Dominic's may use digital video. We ask that parents consent to their child taking part in the production of digital video, and/or appearing in films that will subsequently appear in the public domain.

Whereas the risks of using video in education are minimal, schools have a duty of care toward pupils. This means that pupils will remain unidentifiable, reducing the risk of inappropriate contact, if images or examples of their work (including digital video) are used on the school website. All digital video work at St. Dominic's is underpinned by our ICT Policy/ICT Safety document.

<b>Extract from policy on safe use of the Internet</b>
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St. Dominic's recognises the importance and potential of ICT to enhance learning and is committed to developing the use of ICT as a learning tool for all pupils. We wish our pupils have to access to, and maximise the potential of internet and digital technologies but are mindful of the need to ensure that we promote safe and acceptable working practices for all staff and pupils. This policy is in line with the guidance for Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools (DENI Circular Number 2007/1)

### **1. For Staff and Pupils**

- a) Pupils are responsible for their own behaviour in the use of ICT just as they are in the classroom or a school corridor. General school rules apply. In addition, a number of rules relating to use of ICT also apply.

- b)** St. Dominic's has implemented a filtered Internet and e-mail service through C2K. Pupils are not permitted to use any other e-mail service during use of the Internet in school.
- c)** Staff and students at St. Dominic's should know and understand that no ICT user is permitted to:
- retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures;
  - use obscene or racist language;
  - harass, insult or attack others;
  - damage computers, computer systems or computer networks;
  - damage any ICT equipment
  - violate copyright laws;
  - use another user's password;
  - trespass in another user's folders, work or files;
  - intentionally waste resources (such as on-line time and consumables);
  - use the network for unapproved commercial purposes;
  - access inappropriate / unacceptable sites;
- d)** Access to the use of ICT requires parental permission and a signed declaration by pupils agreeing to the school rules for use of ICT.
- e)** St. Dominic's will ensure that all pupils understand how they are to use ICT appropriately and why the rules exist.
- f)** ICT is provided for pupils to conduct research and communicate with others. While the use of information and communication technologies is a required aspect of the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum, access to ICT remains a privilege and not a right. It is given to pupils who act in a considerate and responsible manner, and shall be withdrawn if they fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.
- g)** During school hours, teachers will guide pupils towards appropriate materials. However, it is at all times the pupil's responsibility to ensure that only appropriate material is accessed. Outside school hours, families bear responsibility for such guidance as they must also exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.
- h)** When using ICT at St. Dominic's, all users must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws or other statutory obligations.

## **2. Sanctions**

- a) Violation of the above rules shall result in a temporary or permanent ban of use of the network.
- b) Parents/guardians shall be informed.
- c) Disciplinary action will be taken in line with existing school rules on inappropriate behaviour.
- d) Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.
- e) Serious or persistent misuse of ICT equipment may result in a situation where the nature or the gravity of the offence is such that, in the judgement of the Board of Governors, expulsion is the only remedy.

## Appendix 3-Incident Report Forms

**PROFORMA**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

### **CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER**

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, location, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:

Nature and description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:



Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher:

Yes:

☐☐

If 'No' state reason:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file

☐

If 'No' state reason:

Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY</b>
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"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them..... When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be best for the child".

*Extract from United Nations Convention on the  
Rights of the Child (1991)*

The welfare of the pupils in our care is paramount. St. Dominic's Child Protection Policy is designed to help protect all pupils in our care from harm.

When abuse is suspected or when a pupil makes an allegation that she is suffering or has suffered abuse, the school has a statutory obligation, under the Children (N.I.) Order 1995, to make a referral either to the social services of the local Health and Social Services Trust or to the Police.

*If a parent or guardian of a pupil has any concerns or wishes to make a complaint against a member of staff he/she should contact the Principal, Mrs Carol McCann or the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr Rory Galway.*

***Safeguarding Team***

*Chair of Board of Governors*

*Mr Rory Galway*

*Designated Governor*

*Mrs Lisa Magennis*

*Principal*

*Mrs Orla O'Neill*

*Designated Teacher*

*Ms Phyllis McNulty*

*Deputy Designated Teachers*

*Ms Aine Braniff and Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons*

### ROLE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND OTHER AGENCIES

Social Services have a statutory duty to investigate any case where they receive information suggesting that a child or young person may be in need of care, protection or control unless satisfied that such enquiries are unnecessary. Their objective is to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. They have a lead role in co-ordinating the work of all the agencies and professionals concerned with the child's family. A joint protocol has been established between the Social Services and the Police for investigative purposes. This will involve the police in investigating situations where a crime may have been committed.

When there is suspicion that a child has been abused, Social Services may convene a multi-disciplinary Case Conference which may involve principals or their nominees depending upon who is best placed to contribute effectively to the discussion of the child's welfare.

The objectives of the Case Conference are to:

- (i) share and exchange relevant information on a confidential basis;
- (i) determine the nature and degree of abuse or risk of abuse and whether to place the child's name on the Child Protection Register;
- (ii) devise a Child Protection plan which identifies the contribution that individual agencies and professionals will make;
- (iii) identify a case co-ordinator (normally from the Social Services Department) and to arrange for the review of the plan on at least six monthly basis

Decisions of Case Conferences will be forwarded to principals and should be stored separately and securely. If the child transfers to another school, the Social Services Co-ordinator should be informed, and the receiving school should be advised that the child's name is on the Child Protection Register. All Child Protection records held by the school from which the child transfers should be destroyed, including case conference records, the receiving school should approach the Social Services directly for information.

Social Services will send information in writing to the school about any child whose name has been included on the Child Protection Register, including whether the child is in the care of Social Services and what information has been made known to the parents about allegations or suspicions of abuse. Social Services will ask the school authorities to pay particular attention to such children in respect of their attendance record, emotional and social development and any other cause for further concern. A social worker will liaise with the principal and/or other education staff about the child's progress. When a child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register schools will be informed in writing by Social Services. Records should be destroyed when the child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register.

(Extract from C.C.M.S. Document on Child Protection)

<b>Guidelines for Child Protection Referrals</b>
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- ❑ Following a report/disclosure of suspected child abuse the first contact with social services is usually made by phone.
- ❑ The phone call should be followed as soon as possible by a written referral using the first five pages of the UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) form.

Further information should follow on a more completed UNOCINI.

- ❑ If a parent/guardian is not the suspected abuser, parents should be informed and parental consent should be sought. If consent of parent is not given the referral should be made and this should be noted.  
If a parent/guardian is suspected the referral must be made immediately.

- ❑ All documentation should be kept in a secure filing cabinet.
- ❑ If a child's name is removed from the child protection register all third party notes/cases conference minutes should be destroyed.
- ❑ The school should request any child protection information for new pupils from the previous school. It is also the responsibility of DTs in schools to pass this on to a new school unless requested.

A UNOCINI form should also be used to help identify and help children who are considered to be in need of support. It should be used as an assessment tool and to facilitate discussions when seeking advice from the EDUCATION AUTHORITY child protection officers. In any case where there is doubt the advice of the EDUCATION AUTHORITY officers should be obtained and noted.

### **Consent**

By law, young people have a right to have their wishes and feelings taken into account where any referral of a safeguarding nature is being considered. Where a young person is deemed to be competent to give or refuse consent to a referral being made – the Safeguarding Team's role is to give due consideration to those wishes. However, there may be occasions where the Safeguarding Team cannot comply with a young person's wish for a referral not to be made (eg in the case of alleged sexual assault/abuse).

Where a young person child does wish to proceed with a referral, the parent/guardian should be informed and consent should be sought. In this case the matter should be passed on regardless of the parent's wishes.

## Appendix 8

The following information is given to substitute teachers on their arrival in the school.

<b>Information for Substitute teachers</b>
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### **Mission Statement**

St. Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach her / his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.

We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated.

We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos

### **Behaviour**

St Dominic's operates a Positive Behaviour policy with electronic behaviour records attached to Lesson Monitor.

Should there be a behaviour issue with any pupil that cannot be resolved following normal classroom positive behaviour procedures, please refer to the main office who will contact a member of Senior Staff.

### **Work/study**

During classes supervised by a substitute teacher, pupils should complete the work left by the class teacher. If a pupil finishes that work before the end of the period, she should do revision for that subject or read a library book.

### **Child Protection**

Any issues relating to safeguarding or child protection please refer to the Designated Teacher (Ms Phyllis McNulty) or one of the Deputy Designated Teachers (Ms Aine Braniff and Mrs Joanna Fitzsimons) or to the Principal.

**Any such concern must be reported before leaving the school.**

### **Any other issues**

Please refer to Mr Darren Scott

<i><b>Related Policies</b></i>
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*Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy*

*Data Protection Policy*

*Safe Use of Internet Policies*

*RSE Policy*

*SEN Policy*

*Positive Behaviour Policy*

*Newcomer Policy*



# **Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures**

**Updated June 2021**

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### OUR MISSION

Each one of us is unique, created by a unique God, for a unique purpose

### VISION STATEMENT

*St Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach her/his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.*

*We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated. We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos.*

*St. Dominic's School is committed to being a self-evaluating and self-improving school*

### RATIONALE

The policy aims to promote a positive approach to relationships across the school and outlines a framework within which self-discipline and constructive relationships may flourish. Thus, students are enabled to sustain positive self-worth and respect for others in a safe, secure and respectful environment.

St Dominic's Grammar School recognises that not only does it have statutory responsibilities in relation to students' learning, but it also carries pastoral responsibility towards students in its care. The school accepts that students in its charge have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and will seek to do whatever is reasonable to safeguard and promote their safety and well-being.

## SECTION 2: CONTEXT

### 2.1 The Legislative Context:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Education (2006 Order) (Commencement No 2) Order (NI) 2007
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978
- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The Education (NI) Order 1998/25

### 2.2 The Policy & Guidance Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)

### 2.3 The International Context

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

### 2.4 Legal definition of “bullying”

#### **The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:**

(1) In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- (b) any other act, or
- (c) any combination of those,

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.

#### **(Note- harm and omission are defined in section 5)**

- Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
- Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:
  - *In school, during the school day;*
  - *While travelling to and from school;*
  - *When under control of school staff, but away from school;*
  - *When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere.*
- Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.

**The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003**, requires the Board of Governors to:

- ‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** sets out every child’s right to:

- *Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation (A.19)*
- *Be protected from discrimination (A.2)*
- *Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously (A.12)*
- *Education (A.28)*

These rights are enshrined in the Children Order (N.I.), 1995, a central focus of which is that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration. It is this essential principle which underpins the code of practice in St Dominic’s Grammar School.

### SECTION 3: ETHOS AND PRINCIPLES

The school strives for excellence in a caring community; pride is taken in being a community in which each individual is recognised and valued. The school strives to sustain a friendly atmosphere within a culture of strong pastoral care, a climate of concern and trust, and a positive working environment.

St Dominic’s Grammar School holds the following principles and values and accordingly adopts certain approaches:

- *students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear;*
- *the commitment to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school;*
- *students and staff have a right to express any concerns about bullying and feel confident that these will be dealt with;*
- *the welfare of students is paramount, and students’ needs, whether a targeted student or a student displaying bullying behaviour, must be separated from their behaviour;*
- *students who are targeted will be listened to and supported;*
- *students who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported to accept responsibility and change their behaviour;*
- *staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention, including effective, appropriate strategies for intervention;*
- *the views of students will be actively sought, valued, respected and taken into account through the Pupil Voice;*
- *where necessary, the active participation of parents in partnership with the school will be sought in order to resolve concerns involving their child.*
- *There is an understanding that everyone in the school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.*

### SECTION 4: CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

This policy is revised regularly in consultation with stakeholders.

The nature of the consultation process is dynamic and may be inclusive of, for example:

- Parental consultations through the website, Parent Link and questionnaires.
- Student consultations through the Senior Student Leadership Team and the Pupil Voice;
- Staff consultations, awareness-raising and ongoing professional development;
- Ratification by the Board of Governors, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

#### 4.1 RELEVANT PERSONNEL

The School Safeguarding Team is comprised of:

- The Chairperson of the Board of Governors, **Mr Rory Galway**;
- The Designated member of the Board of Governors for Child Protection, **Mrs Lisa Magennis**;
- The Principal, **Mrs O'Neill**, responsible for overseeing general student welfare;
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection, **Ms P McNulty** and the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection, **Mrs J Fitzsimons and Mrs A Braniff**.

Each member of staff has pastoral responsibility towards the young people in their charge.

Ms McNulty (Vice-Principal) has responsibility for:

- co-ordinating action by teachers when bullying behaviours are suspected;
- reviewing and updating the Anti-Bullying Policy and making it available to parents;
- reporting to the Board of Governors as required.

The SLT, Year Heads, Tutors, Teachers and Support staff support this work.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (Mrs M Kennedy) and members of The Learning Support Team assist students with Special Educational Needs.

Each Tutor Group is allocated a Tutor. Each Tutor Group from Years 8-10 are assigned at least two prefects. Selected members of Years 13 and 14 are also appointed to the position of Mentors. The SLT and Prefect Team work under staff supervision to offer peer support and to raise awareness throughout the school. The Pupil Voice provides students with an opportunity to have their voice heard.

St Dominic's Grammar School operates a counselling service about which parents receive information when their daughter joins the school. If parental permission has been given, students may be referred by a member of the Pastoral Team. Students may also self-refer, even in the absence of parental permission by placing their request in the allocated box on the lower corridor.

In addition to the school First-Aid Coordinator, Mrs Pauline Holland, a number of staff members possess first-aid qualifications.

## SECTION 5: WHAT IS BULLYING?

### 5.1 DEFINITION OF BULLYING

St Dominic's Grammar School accepts the following definitions of bullying:

*"The repeated use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others."*

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum 2005;

Legal Definition (Section 2) from 'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016

**'harm' is defined as:**

- *Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.*
- *Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.*

### 5.2 CRITERIA FOR BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

***When assessing a one-off incident, the school will make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying by considering the following criteria:***

- *severity and significance of the incident;*
- *evidence of pre-meditation;*
- *impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional);*
- *impact of the incidents on wider school community;*
- *previous relationships between those involved;*
- *any previous incidents involving the individuals*

***Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.***

### 5.3 METHODS OF BULLYING

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered as bullying behaviour:

- ***Verbal or written acts***
  - *saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others*
  - *making fun of others*
  - *calling another pupil mean and hurtful names*
  - *telling lies or spread false rumours about others, sending mean notes or inciting dislike against another*
  - *try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s*



- *Purposefully making another feel uncomfortable through, for example, staring or inappropriate facial expressions or making offensive gestures*
- **Physical acts**
  - *Hitting*
  - *kicking*
  - *pushing*
  - *shoving*
  - *material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions*
- **Omission (Exclusion)**
  - *Leaving someone out of eg. a game*
  - *Refusing to include someone in group work*
- **Electronic Acts (Pupil Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy)**
  - *Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out any of the written acts noted above*
  - *Impersonating someone online to cause hurt*
  - *Sharing images (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*
  - *Sending unwelcome texts or messages which make a person feel hurt or uncomfortable*
  - *Inappropriate chat room use- sending offensive or threatening responses to young people when in a web-based chat room*
- **Imbalance of power (target displays a lack of resilience)**

*This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.*

#### **5.4 POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

These include but are not limited to:

- *Age*
- *Appearance*
- *Breakdown in peer relationships*
- *Community background*
- *Political affiliation*
- *Gender identity*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Pregnancy*
- *Marital status*
- *Race*
- *Religion*
- *Disability/SEN*
- *Ability*
- *Looked after Child status*
- *Young Carer status*

- Bystanders to bullying behaviour may be guilty by association, perhaps providing the student displaying bullying behaviour with the attention she seeks, whilst deriving personal enjoyment from the perceived status of belonging to the group.
- Bystanders will, therefore, be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school.
- On certain occasions, when bullying takes place outside a school, the authority of the school may be restricted. On other occasions, external bullying may have direct impacts within the school or potential to impair the welfare of a student. In such situations, St Dominic's Grammar School will seek to take appropriate and proportionate action.
- Should parents/guardians become aware of any such instances, they are advised to inform the school of the situation so that action may be taken to reduce the impact of the bullying and to offer support to the students.
- There may be occasions when it is necessary and appropriate for staff to consult with EA Child Protection personnel, Social Services and/or the PSNI. On other occasions, parents/guardians may be advised to contact the relevant authorities themselves.

***Bullying behaviour of any kind by any member of our school community towards any other member of our community is completely unacceptable.***

## **5.5 LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

All staff will ensure that they use supportive, understanding language when dealing with bullying behaviour.

A child will not be referred to as 'a bully', nor will a child be referred to as 'a victim'. Instead, the language used will be:

- ***A child displaying bullying behaviours;***
- ***A child experiencing bullying behaviours;***

*All members of the school community will be encouraged to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.*

# **SECTION 6: PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

## **6.1 PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

- In St Dominic's Grammar School, we strive to create and maintain a safe environment for students and staff and acknowledge the support which parents provide in meeting this aim.
- Staff, students and parents have a shared responsibility in any proactive strategy to sustain a positive ethos and to counteract bullying.
- In St Dominic's Grammar School, as part of the defined, evolving and responsive pastoral programme, emphasis is placed on the prevention of bullying. The issue of bullying is included in PSHE programmes.

The following are examples of actions aimed at preventing bullying behaviour within the school community and creating a safe learning environment. These include:

- *Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy;*

- *Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion;*
- *Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PSHE, Year Assemblies, ICT and LLW;*
- *Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity;*
- *Through the preventative curriculum which actively promotes positive emotional health and well-being including talks and workshops delivered by Mensana /the Samaritans and SBNI;*
- *Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities;*
- *Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc;*
- *Development of peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messages within the school (e.g. student voice);*
- *Assemblies which promote a positive ethos and anti-bullying culture;*
- *Ensuring the provision and promotion of extra- curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks;*
- *Adopting a proactive approach and ensuring that early intervention is put in place;*
- *Monitoring the premises regularly;*
- *Encouraging the students to assume responsibility for self and for others;*
- *Encouraging good relationships and ensuring that students are taught about caring and empathic relationships through both the pastoral and academic curriculum;*
- *Intolerance of acts of aggression;*
- *Providing sensitive and empowering help and support for students when required.*
- *Being a Listening and Responding School whereby students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to, and that that any action taken will be sensitive and appropriate.*

## **6.2 STEPS TO PREVENT ONLINE BULLYING INCLUDE:**

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PSHE/LLW/ICT, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use;
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages;
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year;
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy and Bring Your Own Device policy etc).

## **6.3 STEPS TO PREVENT BULLYING BEHAVIOUR ON THE WAY TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

These include all of section 6.1 and points listed below:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school;
- Encouraging pupils to report any inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour during the journey to and from school;
- Regular engagement with transport providers (eg. Translink, etc.) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns;

- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from the school day to the journey home (eg. staff duty at school gate/bus stops, where appropriate).

#### **6.4 STEPS TO PREVENT BULLYING BEHAVIOUR WHILE PUPIL IS RECEIVING EDUCATIONAL PROVISION ELSEWHERE THAN ON PREMISES OF SCHOOL.**

These include all of section 6.1 and points listed below;

- Pupils must abide by and Parents/Guardians and pupils must sign the agreement set down in the Educational Visit Code of Conduct (Educational Visit Policy- EV3)
- Staff complete Risk Assessments (Educational Visit Policy)

#### **6.5 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, DISABILITIES OR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

- Students with Special Educational Needs, disabilities or those who are not fluent in English may be especially vulnerable and should be safeguarded in the same manner as other students.
  - The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator may have an important role to play in this context. (SEN policy)
- “Effective interventions and support are in place to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning.” (ESAGS)
- Extra care should be taken to ensure that these students feel confident and are able to discuss any matters that might be worrying them.

### **SECTION 7: RESPONSIBILITY**

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

- foster positive self-esteem;
- behave towards others in a mutually respectful way;
- model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour;
- inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour;
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour;
- intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff;
- emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed;
- explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others;
- listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken;
- know how to seek support – internal and external;

- resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and to meet the needs of all parties.

### 7.1 THE ROLE OF SENIOR STUDENTS

- A number of Year 13 and 14 students are selected annually to act as Form Mentors to younger students.
- In addition, a number of senior students are selected to act as Academic Mentors.
- Under the supervision of staff, the Year 13 and 14 Pastoral Team offers peer support and engages in awareness-raising activities throughout the year.
- The work of the Year 13 and 14 Pastoral Team is highly valued by the school. These students receive training to equip them for the task.
- The Student Voice provides students with an opportunity to have their voice heard.

### 7.2 THE ROLE OF STAFF

Each member of staff has a pastoral responsibility towards the young people in their care. Members of staff are encouraged to avail of appropriate training, to follow procedures and to handle suspected incidents in a fair, sensitive, diplomatic and firm manner.

### 7.3 RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF BULLYING

Members of staff and parents/guardians should watch for signs of distress in students.

Possible symptoms that a young person is experiencing bullying may include:

- *a pattern of physical illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches;*
- *anxiety about travelling to and from school;*
- *reluctance to come to school;*
- *changes in temperament and/or behaviour e.g. a tendency to become more emotional, upset or angry than usual;*
- *signs of anxiety or distress e.g. sleep disturbance, not eating, weeping, stammering;*
- *unexplained damage to, or loss of, possessions and/or clothing;*
- *unexplained bruising or cuts;*
- *increased requests for and/or stealing money;*
- *decline in the quality of schoolwork for no obvious reason;*
- *the desire to remain with adults;*
- *fear of using the internet, nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.*

Individually, such signs and symptoms do not necessarily mean that a student is being bullied. However, if there is a combination or repetitive occurrence of these, then further investigation is needed in order to determine what is affecting the student.

## SECTION 8: REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN

We encourage students who witness bullying behaviour to:

- talk to a teacher, another adult or mentor in the school;
- talk to their parents/guardians;
- describe accurately what happened.

Rather than viewing this as ‘telling tales’, students are encouraged to view such action as getting help and a matter of protecting personal safety, or the safety of others. Each person has the right to be safe from harassment or attacks.

The most effective ways for students to deal with Bullying Behaviours Online are:

- do not respond and do not interact;
- keep copies of all nasty emails or conversations;
- seek help and advice from the relevant source: parents; staff; appropriate websites; the PSNI.

The parents/guardians of the student/s generating the material may be invited to a meeting with the Principal, Vice-Principal or other member of senior staff at which copies of the offending material may be handed across and sanctions applied if relevant.

### **8.1 THE ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

At St Dominic’s Grammar School, members of staff aim to work in partnership with parents/guardians in order to promote and sustain good relationships between students.

Parents/guardians should look out for signs of distress or unusual behaviour which may be evidence of bullying.

- If a parent/guardian has a concern that his/her daughter is the target of bullying behaviour he/she should contact the Class Tutor or Year Head immediately;
- This concern will be investigated, clarified and addressed in a firm and sensitive manner;
- They should advise their daughter to avoid retaliation and insist that she informs a member of staff;
- In cases of serious bullying, parents/guardians will be asked to attend for interview to discuss strategies and to support the action being taken by the school;
- Parents/guardians of targets of bullying behaviour or the pupil displaying bullying behaviour are encouraged to co-operate with the school in the resolution of bullying incidents;
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Year Head, Head of School or Vice-Principal, as applicable;
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Year/ Head of School /Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal;
- Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to then a formal, written complaint should be submitted to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school is open to receiving such reports from anyone. All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and feedback will be made to the person who made the report. No information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

## **SECTION 9: RESPONDING TO A BULLYING CONCERN**

The School values behaviour that sustains a positive ethos and which counters bullying. Students are expected to treat each other with empathy and respect. However, each member of staff, including lunchtime supervisors, support staff, teachers and others, should be alert to the signs of bullying and treat any concerns or suspicions seriously and sensitively. Observed incidents or suspicions should be reported as soon as possible to the relevant Class Tutor, Year Head and/ or member of Senior Staff who will follow procedures. The approach taken is to support and protect the targeted student and

to focus on changing the behaviour of the pupil/s displaying bullying behaviour/s and those who collude with her/them.

### 9.1 ROLE OF STAFF WITNESSING A BULLYING INCIDENT

Staff should;

- remove the targeted student from the scene as quickly as possible and without challenging the person suspected of performing the bullying behaviours. This may prevent escalation of the situation;
- listen to and offer support to the targeted student;
- ensure that the targeted student is safe; she may be taken, for example, to her Class Tutor, Year Head, or the First Aid Room;
- ensure that the person suspected of exhibiting bullying behaviour is safe; she may be taken, for example, to her Class Tutor, Year Head or returned to class, telling her that the matter will be dealt with later, without specifying how or when.
- If physical violence or a threat of physical violence has been involved, the pupil should be isolated until events have been investigated;
- report the incident to the relevant Class Tutor, Year Head, Head of School, Vice-Principal or Principal, without delay;
- offer pastoral support to all students involved.

The member of staff responsible shall:

- *Clarify facts and perceptions;*
- *Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour;*
- *When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions (Appendix 3) aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the well-being of those involved;*
- *Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour/s.*

**Note:** any information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

### 9.2 GENERAL ACTIONS BY STAFF IN RELATION TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Staff should:

- follow the procedures as outlined in Appendix 1

If the behaviour has been judged to be bullying behaviour, the Tutor/Year Head/Head of School or Vice-Principal will determine the severity of the incident level and the appropriate level of intervention (Appendix 2)

- Explain that a record will be kept of alleged events using the **Bullying Pro-forma**

1. Select an appropriate intervention

The main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying that is taking place, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all those involved.

In selecting an intervention, the following list is some of the factors that should be taken into account:

- the level of severity;
- the legal status of the act eg. Assault;
- the age and ability of those involved;
- whether an individual pupil or group is involved;
- the level of staff agreement in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach;
- the agreement and support of parents/carers in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach;
- whether the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying and act appropriately;
- whether or not the pupil experiencing bullying has acted provocatively.

### 9.3 WHEN PUPILS ARE ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS

- Refer to Educational Visits Policy – Educational Visit Code of Conduct

### 9.4 ANONYMOUS INFORMATION

Should St Dominic's Grammar School receive anonymous information regarding alleged bullying, the Principal or Vice-Principal will consider carefully whether the allegation may have substance; as in the case of information from a named source, the impetus for action will be the potential risk to student/s.

If it is concluded that the allegation may have substance, appropriate action will be taken.

If unsubstantiated anonymous information is received which the Principal or Vice-Principal believe to be malicious or mischievous, or if unsure about the appropriate course of action, advice may be taken from the Education Authority, Social Services or PSNI.

### 9.5 POSSIBLE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR ALLEGED TARGETTED STUDENT

Students who have been targeted, may benefit from the counselling service offered by the school. This may include, for example, assertiveness skills training or a programme to build or re-build self-esteem.

The Year Head/Head of School may identify a member of staff and/or a peer mentor or other suitable person as a point of referral for the student. The Year Head may seek to find a reliable friend or group to accompany the student and report any incidents which may occur.

If it is possible to identify times and places where incidents are occurring, the Year Head/Head of School may seek to implement strategies to minimise opportunities for such behaviour. When appropriate, staff will be given specific advice regarding strategies to be used to reduce the likelihood of such incidents recurring e.g. changing seating arrangements in class.



## 9.6 MAKING AMENDS

A student who has engaged in bullying behaviour may reasonably be expected to make amends for the distress caused - exactly how this is done may depend upon circumstances and should be the subject of mediated discussion between students and with the agreement of the targeted student and parents where applicable.

Reparation aims to show that bullying is unacceptable, has a cost and must not be repeated. No-one displaying, receiving or witnessing bullying behaviour feels good about themselves; the expectation of making amends offers an opportunity for relationships to be re-constructed and for those at fault to atone for their actions and move forward.

## SECTION 10: RECORDING AND SANCTIONS

Members of staff are asked to keep secure and accurate written records of all incidents involving bullying and pass them along the route of referral e.g. to the Year Head/Head of School. Details and correspondence will be placed in each student's file.

In any case where physical violence has been witnessed or threatened, the Vice-Principal or Principal should be contacted immediately.

The school will record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method);
- the motivation for the behaviour;
- how each incident was addressed by the school;
- the outcome of the interventions employed.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

In determining the level of severity, a number of factors will be considered, for example: nature; frequency; duration; perceptions of the targeted student; whether or not the targeted student acted provocatively. It should be noted that each suspected bullying incident should be individually assessed and an intervention selected which best meets individual student needs. Certain actions, such as assault, have a particular legal status.

Thereafter:

- the student/s who displayed bullying behaviour/s will be warned of the implications of their actions; it may be deemed appropriate to apply sanctions. This may include making amends as well as the application of sanctions as laid out in the School Behaviour Policy.

As each case will be different, sanctions applied will be tailored to suit the situation;

- relevant intervention strategies will be implemented;

- the situation will be monitored by relevant staff member/s;
- if bullying behaviour recurs, parents/guardians of the student/s will normally be asked to attend for interview and further sanctions may be applied;
- if the bullying behaviour persists, the parents/guardians of the student/s will be asked to attend an interview with the Principal and suspension of the student will be considered;
- A one-off act of bullying which is deemed very serious will invoke a suspension or suspension leading to expulsion.

## **SECTION 11: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF**

Provision will be made each year for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff.

- All staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions.
- The impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures will be noted such as any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
- Opportunities for safeguarding training will be afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
- CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

## **SECTION 12: MONITORING AND REVIEW OF POLICY**

### **12.1 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE SITUATION**

The Vice-Principal, Heads of School and/or Class Tutors and Heads of Year will normally have responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the situation. On occasion, they may delegate this to other relevant members of staff.

- Relevant teaching staff or staff on duty may be asked to observe behaviours in an unobtrusive manner and to report back to the relevant staff member.
- Peer Mentors may be asked to monitor behaviour and progress.
- The Year Head or delegated staff member will, at the agreed interval/s, interview the alleged target and alleged perpetrator individually to review progress made. If the matter has been resolved, notes will be filed with each student's records. If the matter has not been resolved, new targets will be set and the procedure repeated.
- The Year Head or delegated staff member will make contact with parents/guardians of both the alleged target and the student alleged to have displayed bullying behaviours to ascertain their view on progress made and apprise them of the school's position.

- Staff members will review the effectiveness of strategies implemented and, if required, modify them.

## 12.2 REVIEW OF THE POLICY

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

- maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted;
- identify trends and priorities for action;
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour;
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour;

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, **on or before May 2023**.

## 12.3 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy is one of a number of inter-related policies concerned with student welfare, including the Child Protection Policy, the Drugs Policy and the Behaviour Policy. The policy draws upon advice published by relevant bodies and sources.

“St Dominic’s Behaviour Policy is designed to help create a climate....in which all work in a spirit of mutual respect and where there is proper concern for the individual and the community”.  
(Behaviour Policy)

“The aim of St Dominic’s Child Protection Policy is to help protect all students in our care from harm”.  
(Child Protection /Safeguarding Policy)

“St Dominic’s Grammar School sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the safety and well-being of both students and staff. The school wishes to promote the development of the whole person, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, moral, social and environmental health.” (Drugs)

*In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:*

- *Positive Behaviour Policy*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *Special Educational Needs Policy*
- *Health and Safety Policy*
- *Relationships and Sexuality Education*
- *Acceptable Use of Internet Policy*
- *Out of School Visits Policy*
- *Staff Code of Conduct*

#### **12.4 DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY**

The Anti-Bullying Policy is available to the school community through the school’s website/app. Hard copies are also available from the School Office.

**Appendix 1: Bullying Pro-forma** (Copies to pupil file and Bullying File)

Name and class of pupil displaying bullying behaviours

**Date of incident:**

**Reported to**

**Details**

**Any previous history**      Yes / No

Does it meet the criteria as Bullying Behaviour?

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying behavior when, on the basis of the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met:  
The school will treat any incident which meets these criteria as bullying behaviours.

Is the behaviour intentional?	Yes/No
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	Yes/No
Is the behaviour repeated?	Yes/No
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	Yes/No
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	Yes/No

<b>YES</b> the above criteria have been met and bullying behaviour has occurred.	<b>NO</b> the above criteria have not been met and bullying behaviour has not occurred. The behaviour is deemed to be socially unacceptable.
The criteria having been met, proceed, refer to the Incident and Intervention table below and refer also to Positive Behaviour Policy of the school. Take appropriate action and review impact. Monitor the situation.	The criteria having not been met, refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy of the school. Continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate.
Year Head:	
Head of School:	
Date:	
People Informed:	

**Action Taken/Solution**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

## PART 2 (BCAF)

### 2.1 Who was targeted by this behaviour?

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Individual to individual 1:1
- ☐ Individual to group
- ☐ Group to individual
- ☐ Group to group

### 2.2 In what way did the bullying behaviour present?

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Physical (includes for example, jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking)
- ☐ Any other physical contact (which may include use of weapons)
- ☐ Verbal (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)
- ☐ Indirect (includes omission, isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)
- ☐ Electronic (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)
- ☐ Written
- ☐ Other Acts - Please specify:

### 2.3 Motivation (underlying themes): this is not a definitive list

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Age
- ☐ Appearance
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Political Affiliation
- ☐ Community background
- ☐ Gender Identity
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)
- ☐ Looked After Status (LAC)
- ☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown
- ☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)
- ☐ Ability
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Race
- ☐ Not known
- ☐ Other – Please specify:

### PART 3A

**RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR:**

**PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR: [ ]**

**Pupil Name:**

**REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

**Parent / carer informed:**

**Date:**

**By whom:**

**Staff involved:**

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Outcomes of Intervention

**Record of participation in planning for interventions**

**Pupil:**

**Parent/carers:**

**Other Agencies:**

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

### PART 3B

#### RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR:

PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR: [ ]

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent / carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Outcomes of Intervention

#### Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carers:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved



## PART 4

### FOLLOW UP OF BULLYING CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO

DATE

Date of Review Meeting:

#### Part 4A Following the Review Meeting, to what extent have the success criteria been met?

- ☐ 1 – Fully
- ☐ 2 – Partially
- ☐ 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give

details:

#### Part 4B If the interventions have not been successful continue to:

- ☐ Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level
- ☐ Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention
- ☐ Follow Anti-bullying policy
- ☐ Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on
- ☐ Follow Safeguarding Policy
- ☐ Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- ☐ Engage with Board of Governors

## APPENDIX 2 -Overview of Table for Incident and Intervention Levels

These levels are for guidance and a range of interventions across all levels can be used.  
Every bullying incident should be individually assessed and an intervention  
chosen which best meets the individual pupils needs.

Incident/Intervention Level	Purpose	Personnel	Possible Strategies
<b>Level One</b> Low Level Bullying Behaviour (minor or first-offence)	To assist individuals to recognize their unacceptable behaviour To support/strengthen student/s experiencing bullying	All relevant staff - HOS, HOY, Class Tutor	Classroom management Supervision strategies Whole class approaches e.g. PD/LLW Circle time Parents/Guardians informed Regular monitoring and reviewing by Tutor.

<b>Level Two</b> Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour (continuing, more severe)	Shift from individual support to group intervention	All relevant staff - HOS, HOY, Class Tutor	Level One strategies plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whole class approaches e.g. PD/LLW Circle time, Quality Circles, Group Support Method</li> </ul>
<b>Level Three</b> Complex Bullying Behaviour (severe, resistant to change)	To determine a plan of intervention and, if required, Risk Assessment	Heads of School and Year SENCo Vice-Principal Multi-agency discussion if required including EA	Level One and Two strategies Plus: one-to-one meetings; individual support; peer mentoring; strength building and/or Behaviour Management programme; group interventions such as PIKAS Method of Shared Concern
<b>Level Four</b> High Risk Bullying Behaviour (significant concerns such as mental health, criminal and/or Child Protection)	To avert high-risk	Heads of School SENCo Vice-Principal Principal PSNI HSSC Trust Gateway Team	Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding procedures invoked  Advice available from Child Protection Support Service for Schools

### **APPENDIX 3: CONTACTS, USEFUL ORGANISATIONS AND HELPLINES**

Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC - Child Protection Hotline	0800 800 5000
Contact Us - Youthline	01244 311200
Parenting NI	0808 8010/722
Kidscape	02078235430

[www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

<http://www.safenetwork.org.uk>

<http://ceop.police.org> (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre)

*The No Blame Approach*, video and inset books  
Lucky Duck Publishing, 34 Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol

The Rainbow Project  
23 -31 Waring Street  
Belfast BT1 2D7  
90319030  
[www.rainbow-project.com](http://www.rainbow-project.com)

Include Youth  
5<sup>th</sup> Flor  
14 College Square North  
Belfast  
90311007  
[www.includeyouth.org](http://www.includeyouth.org)

Childline NI  
Lanyon Building  
North Derby Street  
Belfast  
0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
NSPCC  
0808 800 5000  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Save the Children  
[www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk)

Children's Law Centre  
127-131 Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
90245704

Aware NI  
40-44 Duncairn Gardens  
Belfast  
028 90 35 78 20

Nexus NI  
119 University Street  
Belfast  
128 90 32 6803

#### Appendix 4 – Drugs Policy

## St Dominic's GS for Girls

# Drugs Policy

#### Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory	December 2019	September 2022	2021	September 2024	Designated Teacher for Drugs

#### Related Documents and Location

1. Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
2. Managing Critical Incidents Policy
3. Administration of Medication in School Policy
4. Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy
5. Educational Visits Policy
6. Health and Safety Policy
7. Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
8. DE Guidance and Circulars (Appendix 1)

All policies are available on the School Website

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## **1. Introduction and Rationale**

It is a statutory requirement for all schools in Northern Ireland to have a Drugs Policy and to provide drugs education as part of the school's curricular provision. St Dominic's Belfast is committed to providing a safe, caring environment which promotes the protection and safeguarding of each individual child.

One of the key aims of the school's Drugs Policy is to keep all our students safe. It is increasingly important that we equip our students, through our ethos, the Preventative Curriculum and in particular drugs education, to make informed and responsible decisions to help them cope with living in an increasingly substance-tolerant society. According to Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), "In today's society, most people will be exposed to and/or use some sort of drug at some time in their lives. Substance misuse affects all communities in Northern Ireland, crossing gender, cultural and social boundaries. No school, parent or carer can afford to be complacent or think that children and young people are not at risk. Research continues to show that by post-primary school age a significant number of young people are engaging with substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, including electronic cigarettes, or solvents and/or have misused prescribed medicines or other substances."

This policy reflects the guidance and procedures set out in Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015) and the DE Guidance and Circulars listed on Page 13. It should be considered with the Related Documents listed on Page 1, in particular the school's Managing Critical Incidents Policy and Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

*There is a public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner city areas. Drug misuse is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities: it extends across socio-economic, geographical and cultural boundaries. Educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers."*(DENI 1996/16)

All staff (teaching and non-teaching), should familiarize themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the **Designated Teacher for Drugs, Ms P McNulty, the Principal, Mrs O O'Neill or the Deputy Designated Teachers for Drugs A Braniff and J Fizzsimons.**

Students, parents, staff and governors were consulted in the drafting of this policy.

## **2. School Ethos**

**Motto:** Veritas

**Vision Statement:** St. Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected encouraged and empowered to reach her/his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism. We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, self-belief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated. We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican ethos

**Mission Statement:** Each one of us is unique created by a unique God for a unique purpose

The school is committed to ensuring that all of our pupils and indeed wider school community reach their potential and are able to play a meaningful role in the world. We

recognise each individual's giftedness and aim always at building our pupils' self-esteem and confidence so that they can live fulfilled and happy lives.

**3. Designated Teacher for Drugs, Ms P McNulty, the Principal, Mrs O O'Neill or the Deputy Designated Teachers for Drugs A. Braniff and J Fizzimons.**

#### **4. Definitions**

The terms **Drug** and **Substance** include any product that, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or how a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

**Substances** include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), and electronic cigarettes;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine;
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs\*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs;
- other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

**Drug Use** refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.

**Drug Misuse** refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

**3.1 Controlled substances** are legally classified according to their benefit when used in medical treatment or harm if misused. The Misuse of Drugs Act sets out a range of substances that are controlled under the act. It is an offence to possess, possess with intent to supply, supply, or allow premises you occupy or management to be used unlawfully for the purpose of producing or supplying controlled drugs. The Act has four separate categories: Class A, Class B, Class C and temporary class drugs. Substances may be reclassified. The Misuse of Drugs regulations, created under the Misuse of Drugs Act, license production, possession and supply of substances classified under the act. These include five schedules that classify all controlled medicines and drugs.

- Schedule 1 has the highest level of control, but drugs in this group are very rarely used in medicines
- Schedule 5 has a much lower level of control.

Main Types of Controlled Substances by Class/The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)

Class	Substance	Possession	Supply and production
A	Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth)	Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to life in prison an unlimited fine or both
B	Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids,	Up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

	synthetic cathinones (for example mephedrone or methoxetamine)		
C	Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GBH), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), Ketamine, piperazines (BZP)	Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
Temporary class substance	NBOMe and Benzofuran compounds	None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class substance	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

[www.gov.uk/penalties-drugs-possession-dealing](http://www.gov.uk/penalties-drugs-possession-dealing)

Please note the above table refers to some commonly available drugs. It is not a complete list of controlled drugs.

\* The term 'legal high' is no longer used as it is misleading. These substances are not regulated and there is no way of knowing what chemicals they contain.

## 5. **Aims and Objectives**

1. To protect our students from the harm associated with the use and misuse of drugs and substances.
2. To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
3. To develop a consistent approach to drug-related issues in line with the School's pastoral care provision.
4. To ensure that students, parents and staff are clear about the school's Drugs Policy and how it applies to them.
5. To establish clear procedures for managing specific incidents of suspected drug/substance misuse.
6. To provide a Drugs Education Programme to help students develop appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours to resist societal pressures to drink alcohol and/or misuse drugs.
7. To enable students to make informed and responsible decisions and help them cope with living in an increasingly substance-tolerant society.
8. To help to build the factors that protect young people from becoming involved in drug/substance misuse.
9. To provide additional pastoral support for those students identified as potentially vulnerable.
10. To direct students to appropriate services and support, where misuse has been identified.

## 6. **Roles and Responsibilities in St. Dominic's**

### **The role of the individual staff member (teaching and non-teaching)**

All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's Drug Policy. They should also be fully aware of their responsibilities, should a suspected drug-related incident occur. It is not the staff's responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident, but they should: -

- Assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- Notify the Principal and the designated teacher for drugs at the earliest opportunity;



- Deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff, if necessary forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher for drugs, who will respond accordingly;
- Use the school's Drugs Incident Report Form to complete a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the designated teacher for drugs (see Appendix 10);
- Consider the needs and safety of a pupil when discharging him or her into the care of a parent or carer who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent and, if concerned, should discuss with the parent alternative arrangements for caring for the pupil); and invoke safeguarding procedures, if a parent or carer's behaviour may place a pupil at risk

A summary of relevant legislation is available at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).

**6.1 The Designated Teacher for Drugs** is responsible for:

- Coordinating the school's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents and training and inducting new and existing staff in these procedures;
- Ensuring that the school's disciplinary policy has an appropriate statement about any disciplinary response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- Liaising with other staff responsible for pastoral care;
- Being the contact point for outside agencies that may have work with the school or with a pupil or pupils concerned;
- Responding to advice from first aiders, in the event of an incident, and informing the principal, who should contact the pupil's parents or carers immediately taking possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found in a suspected incident;
- Dealing with pupil(s) involved in a suspected incident;
- Completing a factual report using the schools Drug-Related Incident Form, which they forward to the Principal, and
- Reviewing and if required updating the policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

\* The Deputy Designated Teacher for Drugs will assume these responsibilities in the absence of the Designated Teacher for Drugs.

**6.2 The Principal** is responsible for:

- determining the circumstances of all incidents;
- contacting the parent(s) of those students involved in any suspected drug-related incident;
- liaising with the PSNI with regards to any incident involving a controlled substance. **Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence.**

It is the role of the **PSNI** to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. After contacting the PSNI, the **Principal** should confine her responsibility to:

- the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the School;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- deciding any pastoral or disciplinary response;
- reporting the incident to the Education Authority, if appropriate;
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Designated Officer in the Education Authority.

### **6.3 The Board of Governors** should:

- collaborate with appropriate staff, students and parents to support the development and review of the School's Drugs Policy;
- facilitate the consultative process where the School community can respond and contribute to the effectiveness and quality of the school's Drugs Policy;
- ensure that details of this policy are published in the information booklet with the School prospectus;
- ensure this policy is reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident;
- be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

As a matter of good practice, the BOG should have a designated governor for drugs who has received specific training in drug-related issues

**Parents** have the right to expect that the School is a safe and caring environment for their children. They also have a vital role to play in the prevention of drug misuse. Parents should:

- ensure that their child acts in accordance with the School's Drugs Policy, the School's Administration of Medication in School Policy, the School's Rules for Students and the School's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- report any alleged drug-related incident of which they are aware to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- inform the Designated Teacher for Drugs if they suspect their child is involved in drug misuse;
- liaise with external agencies, as appropriate, to access additional support.

**Students** have specific responsibilities to ensure the School environment is safe and free from drugs and alcohol. Students must at all times:

- behave in a safe and appropriate manner to ensure their safety and the safety of all members of the School community;
- report immediately to a member of staff when a student is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol;
- act in accordance with the School's Drugs Policy, the School's Administration of Medication in School Policy, the School Rules for Students and the School's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- adhere to the School's agreed Code of Conduct for Students on an Educational Visit;

- make informed and responsible decisions in an increasingly substance-tolerant society;
- engage positively in the curricular opportunities provided to develop appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours to resist societal pressures to drink alcohol and/or misuse drugs.

#### **6.4 The School's Legal Duties**

It is a statutory requirement for all schools in Northern Ireland to:

- have a Drugs Policy and publish details in relation to the policy in their prospectus (Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003);
- deliver drugs education to include legal and illegal substances (The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007); and
- inform the PSNI if they believe or suspect a student to be in possession of a controlled substance (Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967).

### **7. Drugs Education in the Curriculum**

In accordance with the statutory requirement of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, drugs education is delivered through the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work, to shape attitudes, values and aspirations that bring about resilience in young people.

Drugs education is also actively promoted through:

- Personal Development lessons;
- Learning for Life and Work;
- Relationship and Sexuality Education/EFL lessons;
- Mentor lessons;
- Assembly;
- Talks by external agencies (approved by SLT);
- Focus of the Week;
- English/Drama/Home Economics/Science/PE.

### **8. Procedures for Managing Suspected Drug-Related Incidents**

#### **8.1 Managing Suspected Drug-Related Incidents**

Dealing with suspected drug-related incidents requires extreme sensitivity and the following procedures will help those charged with handling difficult and complex issues to be fair and consistent in their dealings with students.

For the purposes of this policy, a drug-related incident may include:

- a student displaying unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour;
- an allegation;
- suspicion of possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of any substance as defined on Page 4;
- finding substance-related paraphernalia.

A Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities When Managing an Incident is provided in Appendix 2. Appendices 3-7 outline how the school will manage suspected drug-related incidents on

School premises, when travelling to and/or from the school and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.

Appendix 3	Finding a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia on or close to school premises.
Appendix 4	Student suspected of having taken drugs/alcohol on school premises, when travelling to and/or from the school and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 5	Student suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance on school premises, when travelling to and/or from the school and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 6	Student in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on school premises, when travelling to and/or from the school and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 7	A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance.

## **8.2 Taking Possession of a Suspected Controlled Substance and/or Associated Paraphernalia**

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a student from harm and prevent the student committing the offence of possession. The member of staff should, using appropriate safety precautions, take the suspected substance and any associated equipment and/or paraphernalia to the Designated Teacher for Drugs as soon as possible. He should arrange for its safe storage until the school can hand it over to a PSNI officer to identify whether it is a controlled substance. School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance. An adult witness should be present when staff confiscate the substance and the school should keep a record of the details, using the School's Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 10).

## **8.3 An Allegation of a Suspected Controlled Drug-Related Incident: Carrying Out a Search**

If the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs receives an allegation of possession, he/she may need to search a student's locker (if the pupil has a locker), if he/she has cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs. However, staff should only search the student's personal belongings, including schoolbag, coat or other items with the student's consent. The Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs should carry out this search in the presence of the student and another adult witness.

If the school suspects a student of concealing controlled drugs on his/her person or in his/her personal belongings, staff should make every effort to encourage the student to produce these substances voluntarily. The Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs should ask the student to turn out her pockets or schoolbag(s). If the student refuses, the Principal should contact a parent and the PSNI to deal with the situation. **A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a student, unless there is compelling evidence that the student has committed an offence.** If staff recover a substance or an object that they suspect has a connection with drugs, they should take possession of it and make a full record using the School's Drug Incident Report Form.

#### **8.4 Detaining a Student**

When managing a suspected drug-related incident, the School should invite the student(s) concerned to remain in school under the supervision of appropriate members of staff until their parent(s) and the PSNI arrive. If a student refuses to remain, the school cannot detain him/her against his/her will. However, if a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the student has in his/her possession or has taken a controlled substance, he/she can make a citizen's arrest under Article 26A of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order (PACE) 1989.

The member of staff should make the student fully aware of the implications before making the arrest, confirming:

- that the student is not free to leave once he/she has been informed by the arresting person why he/she is being arrested; and
- that he/she will be detained until he/she is handed over to a PSNI officer who will then deal with the investigation.

Staff must be able to recognise the point where a young person becomes a danger to either him/herself or others. They should also be aware of their duty of protection because they are in loco parentis.

#### **9. Confidentiality**

Staff should not give a student any undertaking of confidentiality when dealing with a drug-related incident. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to students and reassure the student that only those who need to know will be informed. If a student discloses information concerning controlled substances, the member of staff must notify the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs who will then coordinate the School's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents.

When an allegation is made against a student or a member of staff, the School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

#### **10. Disciplinary or Pastoral Care Responses**

##### **10.1 Disciplinary Responses**

In accordance with Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), the School has developed a repertoire of responses to reflect different kinds of substance/drug-related offences and to ensure the safety and well-being of other students. In all cases, the Principal, having taken account of various factors, reserves the right to apply what she considers to be the most appropriate sanctions in relation to any incident/behaviour which is deemed unacceptable. The sanctions outlined below apply to a student who is on School premises, travelling to and/or from the school and/or engaged in authorised school-related activities.

- Any student found to be in possession of and/or possession with the intent to supply a controlled drug/new psychoactive substance will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.

- Any student found to be under the influence of a controlled drug/new psychoactive substances will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.
- Any student who supplies (either gives or sells) a controlled drug/new psychoactive substance to others will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.
- Any student found to be in possession of alcohol will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.
- Any student found to be under the influence of alcohol will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.
- Any student who sells or shares alcohol with other students will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.

## **10.2 Pastoral Care Responses**

During and after any incident, the School will consider the individual needs of any student involved. Where appropriate, this may involve discussion with the student, his/her parent(s), a PSNI officer, the Designated Teacher for Drugs and appropriate pastoral care staff. A referral to counselling or a referral pathway to specific support agencies may be part of a pastoral care response.

## **11. Provision of Counselling Services in the School**

The school has a team of caring pastoral staff, as well as an external counsellor from Familyworks who attends twice a week. The Familyworks provision is part of the DE funded Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) - an independent, confidential, school-based professional counselling service which uses a process of talking, listening and empowerment to help students make their own decisions. Students are encouraged to self-refer to the Counselling Services or ask a teacher to arrange an initial meeting. The Familyworks counsellor is also available to students for 'drop-in' sessions during lunch or break. The school counsellors are happy to support students with any issue which may cause worry or concern. The Counselling Services provided in the school are monitored and evaluated by the Vice Principal (Pastoral). Annual counselling reports are submitted to the Principal. A list of useful contacts for parents is provided in Appendix 11. Where appropriate, a parent may be advised to consult with a GP and/or secure a referral to an external agency.

## **12. Guidelines for Administering Prescribed Medication**

St. Dominic's is committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students with medication needs. Prescription and non-prescription medication, as outlined in Section 7.6 of the School's Administration of Medication in School Policy, will be administered in the Medical Inspection suite under the supervision of the School First-Aider. The First-Aider will keep a record (Form AM4) of the date, time and dosage of the administration of medication.

The School will endeavour to support students engaged in a smoking cessation programme on receipt of written advice from his/her GP. Further information is available for students and parents on 'Stopping Smoking Made Easier' - [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net).

### **13. Emergency First-Aid Procedures**

In the event of a medical emergency, staff should contact the School First-Aider (Mrs Holland ) and follow the procedures outlined in Appendix 9. In the event of Mrs Holland not being present, the Office should be contacted and office staff will contact a First Aider. The emergency services should be contacted, if appropriate.

### **14. Staff Use of Alcohol and Smoking on School Premises, on Educational Visits and Other Social Events**

In accordance with DE Circulars 2004/01 (21/01/04) and 2014/25 (15/12/14), St. Dominic's is a smoke-free and e-cigarette-free environment. The consumption of alcohol is also prohibited on school premises during the school day. Alcohol may be served to adults at specified events with the permission of the Principal.

Staff/volunteers are at all times bound to follow St. Dominic's agreed Professional Standards and Expectations for Staff/Volunteers and the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

*"Whilst St. Dominic's fully respects the right of staff to a private social life in the community it is important that staff bear in mind the following:*

- Their own professional standing in the community and therefore avoid any behaviour in public which could undermine their professional reputation.*
- Do not socialise with pupils out of school hours other than at organised school events – mindful that this could lead to very serious personal and professional consequences."*

Leaders:

- must not use illegal drugs/new psychoactive substances (NPS) during the educational visit;
- must not drink alcohol during the educational visit;
- must not smoke or use nicotine containing products (e-cigarettes) in the presence of students during the educational visit.

When dealing with drug and/or alcohol use/misuse by staff, the Principal and the Board of Governors may consider:

- the Work Place Policy on Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol ([www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk));
- Don't Mix It: A Guide for Employers on Alcohol at Work ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk));
- Drugs Misuse at Work: A Guide for Employers ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)).

### **15. Procedures for Communicating to Staff, Parents or Other Relevant Agencies**

**15.1 Policy:** This policy is available for students, parents and staff on the School Website. A hard copy of the School's Drugs Policy is also available on request from the school office. A summary of this policy is included in the in the Student Planner (2020-21).

**15.2 Communication Following a Suspected or Confirmed Drug-Related Incident:** The School should carefully consider how it communicates information about a suspected or confirmed drug-related incident to staff, students and parents. It should only disclose information to members of staff concerned with the pastoral needs of the individual student(s). It should inform only the parents of the student(s) directly

involved of the incident and the subsequent outcomes. Staff should not discuss individual cases with other students. The school may, however, need to make a general statement informing the school community after an incident where rumours may create a negative atmosphere.

**15:3 Dealing with the Media:** The Principal will deal with enquiries from the media. She will respect the privacy of students and their families and may liaise with the PSNI before issuing a statement.

## **16. Procedures for Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing this Policy**

The Designated Teacher for Drugs and Heads of School will monitor and evaluate the success of this policy and its implementation by means of:

- the number of drug-related incidents relating to students of the School;
- feedback from Student Councils;
- student and parental questionnaires;
- discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings;
- post-incident reviews to monitor how effectively drug-related incidents have been dealt with.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs and Heads of School will review and, if required, update this policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice. This review should reflect changing circumstances and trends in substance use in the local community. Any recommendations for change are made to the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) prior to consultation with students and parents.

Students and parents are encouraged to contact the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) at any time to express their views on the policy.

## **Procedures for Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the Drugs Education Programme**

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Heads of School will monitor and evaluate the Drugs Education Programme as part of the annual review of the Personal Development Programmes by means of:

- student and parental questionnaires;
- student focus group meetings with Heads of Year;
- discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings;
- Feedback from parents

The Heads of School will review and, if required, update the Drugs Education Programme to reflect the needs of students and the local community.

## **18. Training**

Training to support staff and governors in the implementation of the School's Drugs Policy will be provided as deemed necessary by the Principal of the School.

A list of useful contacts for parents is provided in Appendix 11.



**19. How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint about the Administration of this Policy**

If you have a concern or complaint about the administration of this policy please contact Mrs McCann Principal, in the first instance. If necessary, you may then access and follow the School's Parental Complaints Procedure which is available on the School website. Should you remain dissatisfied with the School's response after completing the internal complaints procedure, you can bring your complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman within six months.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)**

Date:

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

Date:

## **DE Guidance and Circulars**

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999)

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001)

DE: Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs (2008)

New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, Phase 2, 2011-2016 (DHSSPS)

Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS) (2013)

Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015)

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Factsheet: Public Health Agency (May 2016)

DE Circular 2003/15 (05/09/03) - Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003

DE Circular 2004/01 (21/01/04) - Encouraging a Smoke-Free Environment in Schools

DE Circular 2012/19 (10/09/12) - Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Changes for Pre-employment Vetting Checks for Volunteers Working in Schools from 10 September 2012

DE Circular 2013/01 (January 2013) - Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff Working In or Providing a Service for Schools

DE Circular 2014/25 (15/12/14) - Encouraging a Smoke-free and E-cigarette-free Environment in Schools and Youth Organisations

DE Circular 2015/23 (26/08/15) - Drugs Guidance

## **Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities**

### **When Managing an Incident**

Individual **staff members** should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff (Appendix 9);
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- write a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the Designated Teacher for Drugs.

The **Designated Teacher for Drugs** should:

- coordinate the School's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents;
- respond to advice from first-aiders, in the event of an incident;
- inform the Principal, who should contact the student's parent(s) immediately;
- take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- take initial responsibility for student(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- complete the School's Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 10) and forward it to the Principal.

The **Principal** should:

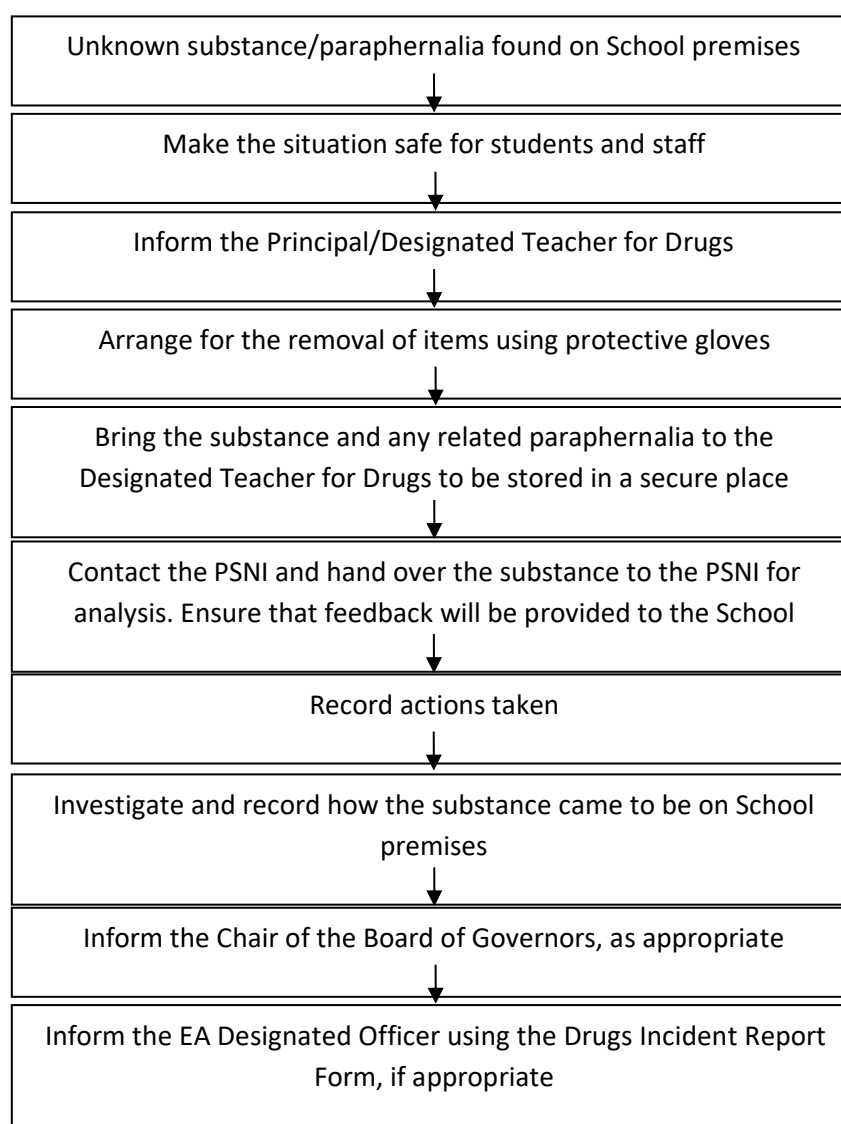
- determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- contact the parent(s) of those students involved in any suspected drug-related incident;
- liaise with the PSNI with regards to any incident involving a controlled substance;
- consider the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the School;
- oversee health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- inform the Board of Governors;
- decide any pastoral or disciplinary response;
- complete a written report and forward a copy to the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Designated Officer in the Education Authority;
- ensure procedures are reviewed and amended, if necessary.

## **Finding a Suspected Substance or Drug-Related Paraphernalia**

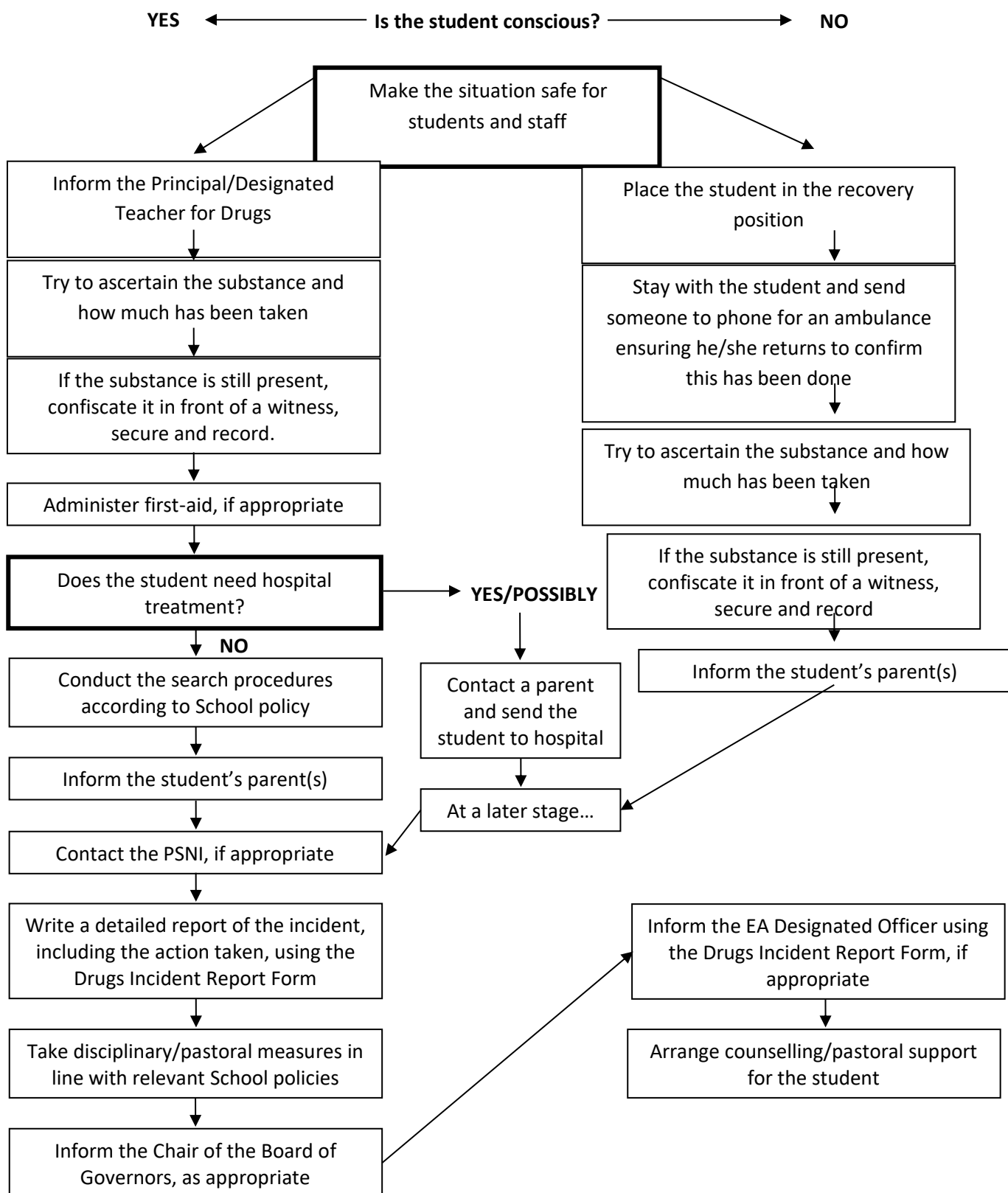
### **On or Close to School Premises**

Paraphernalia on School premises is an indication of drug use or misuse. Any member of the School community who encounters any paraphernalia should exercise extreme care, as these items may be hazardous. Anyone who finds a suspected substance or paraphernalia associated with drug use or misuse should report it to the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs, who will assess the situation and respond accordingly. This response may include contacting the PSNI.

The following list is not exhaustive. It gives staff an idea of what may indicate the presence of controlled substances: small bottles or pill boxes; hypodermic needles; twists of paper; cigarette papers, lighters and spent matches; electronic cigarette liquid refill bottles (there is a potential risk that refillable cartridges used in some electronic cigarettes could be filled with substances other than nicotine, serving as a new and potentially dangerous way to deliver drugs); roaches (ends of rolled-up cigarettes); punctured cans, plastic bottles or containers; aerosols or butane gas refills; and drugs themselves.



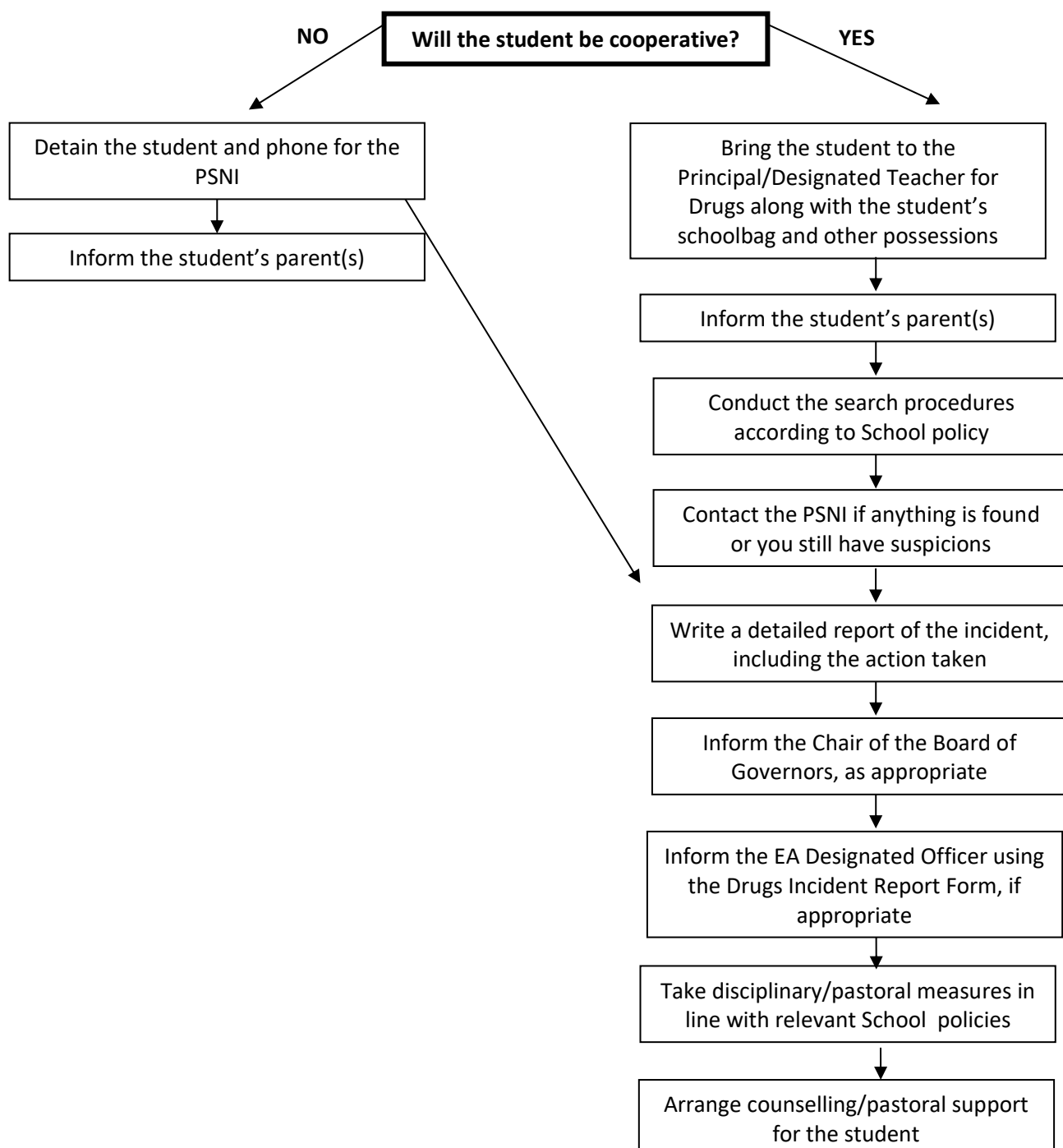
**Student Suspected of Having Taken Drugs/Alcohol on School Premises,**  
**When Travelling To and/or From the School and/or**  
**When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities**



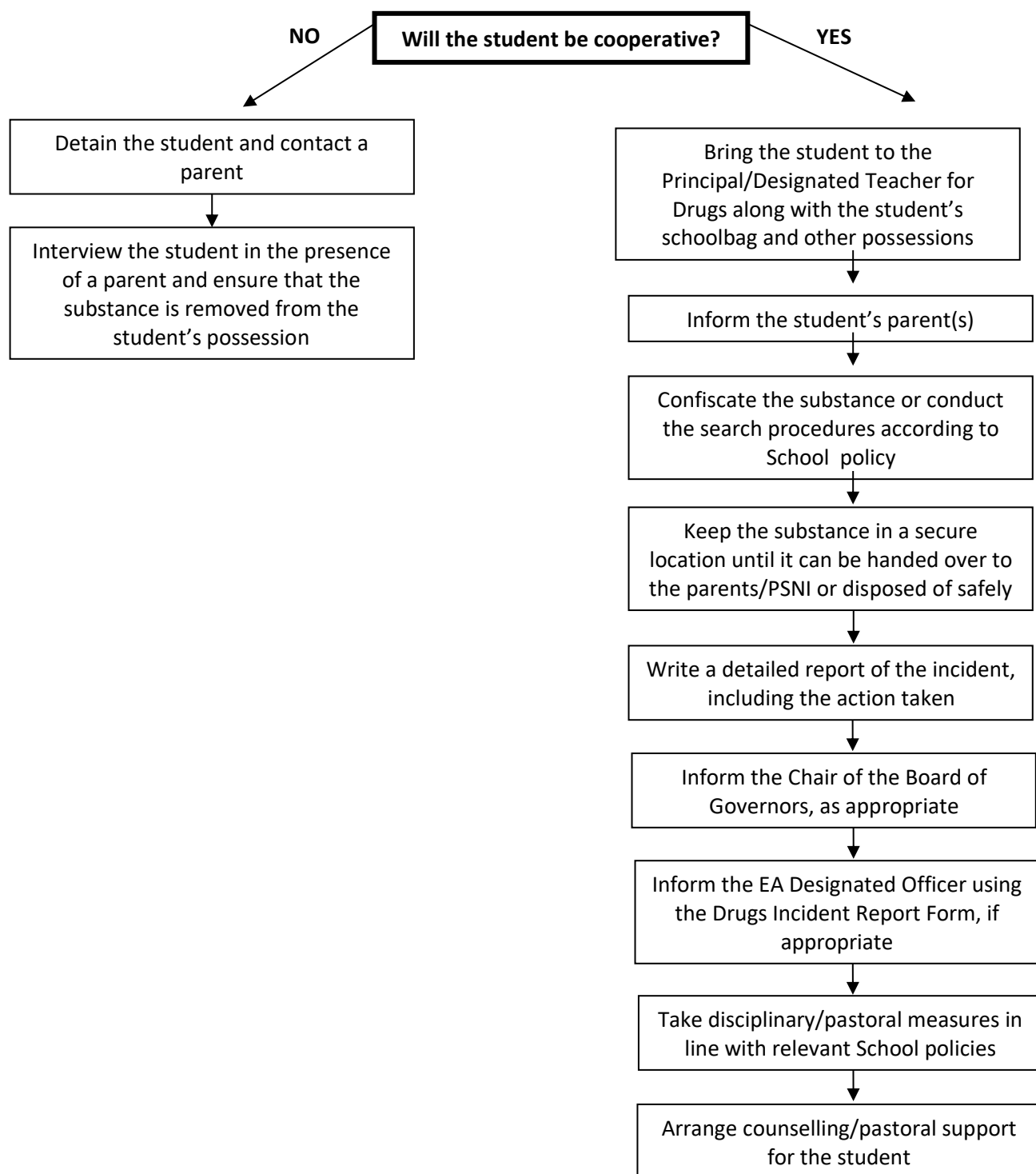
**Student Suspected of Possessing/Distributing an Illegal Substance on  
School**

**Premises, When Travelling To and/or From the School and/or**

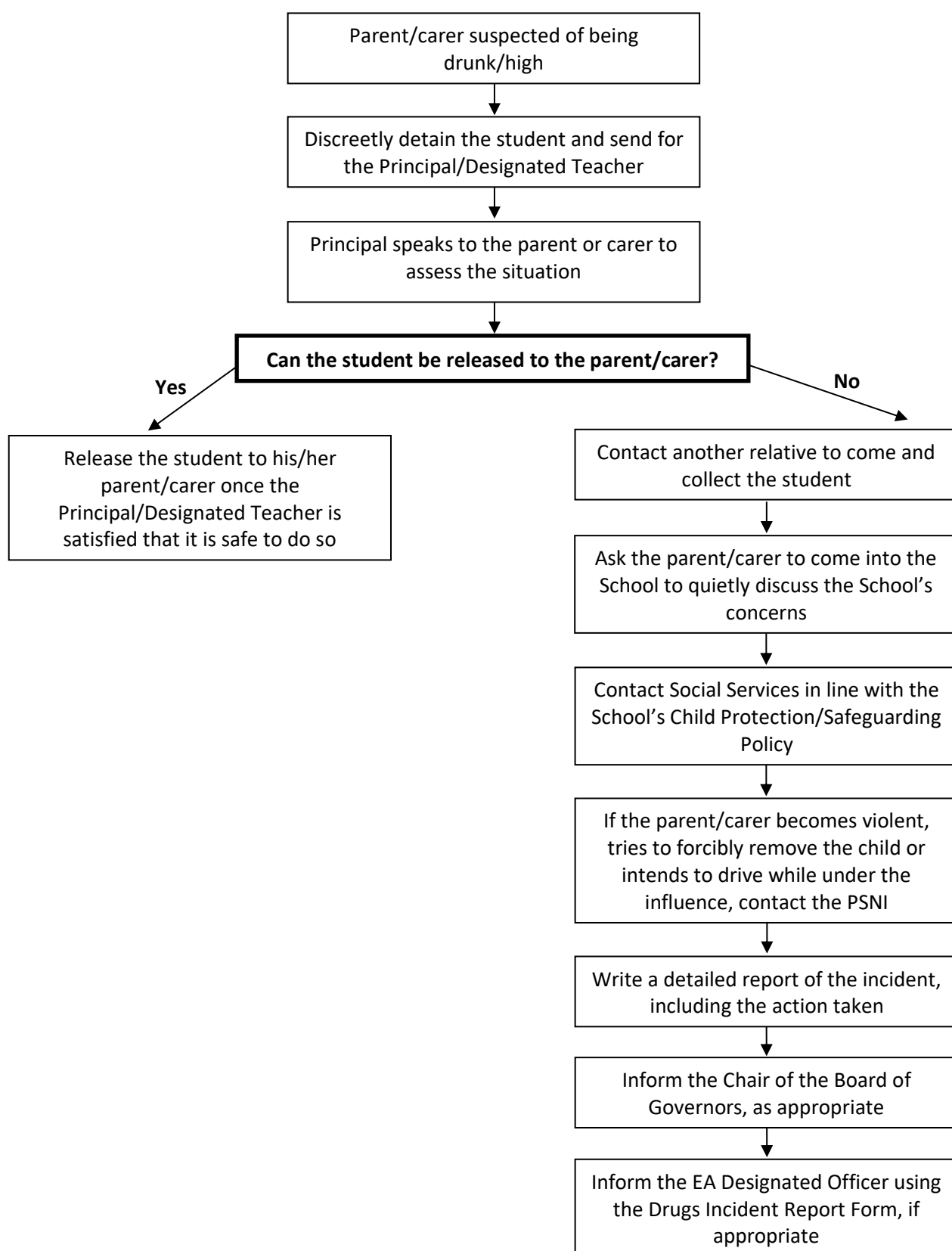
**When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities**



**Student in Possession of Alcohol or Unauthorised Prescribed  
Medication  
on School Premises, When Travelling To and/or From the school and/or  
When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities**



**A Parent or Carer Arrives at School to Collect a Child and  
Appears to Be Under the Influence of Alcohol or Another Substance**





## **Recognising Signs of Substance Use**

### **What to look out for**

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, he/she may be:

- anxious;
- tense;
- panicky;
- overheated and dehydrated;
- drowsy; or
- having difficulty with breathing.

### **What to do**

The first things you should do are:

- stay calm;
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them;
- try to find out what they've taken; and
- stay with them.

If they are anxious, tense or panicky, you should:

- sit them in a quiet and calm room;
- keep them away from crowds, bright lights and loud noises;
- tell them to take slow deep breaths; and
- stay with them.

If they are **really drowsy**, you should:

- sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake;
- if they become unconscious or don't respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position;
- **not** scare them, shout at them or shock them;
- **not** give them coffee to wake them up; and
- **not** put them in a cold shower to 'wake them up'.

If they are **unconscious** or having difficulty breathing, you should:

- call an ambulance immediately;
- place them into the recovery position;
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives; and
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away.

## **Emergency First-Aid Procedures**

According to Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), this is the current best advice available on what to do if someone is in difficulty because of misusing drugs.

- It is important to find out what they have taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example, it will help the ambulance crew. Loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately.
- If the person has taken a depressant substance, for example, solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills or painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake by talking to them or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. You should not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear their airway if blocked and keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, starting with chest compressions. (If you have not been trained in CPR or are worried about giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to a stranger, you can do chest compression-only (or hands-only) CPR). Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.
- If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking, try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply and slowly. Help them by counting aloud slowly. If they start to hyperventilate and can't control their breathing, ask them to breathe in and out of a paper (not a plastic) bag, if there is one available.
- If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms or cannabis in combination with ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed and fearful. They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person – tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the substance and that these will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them until the ambulance arrives.

**Drugs Incident Report Form**

Student Details			
Student Name		Tutor Group	
Date of Birth		Address	

Incident Details			
Date of Incident		Reported by:	
Time of Incident		Location of Incident	

First Aid Given	YES / NO	Administered by:	
Ambulance Called	YES / NO	Time of Call	

Parent Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	
PSNI Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	
Name of PSNI Officer		Referral Number	
EA Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	

Where Substance is Retained OR		Witnessed by:	
Destroyed/ Passed to PSNI	SUBSTANCE DESTROYED /PASSED to PSNI	Date and Time	

Form Completed by:		Position	
Signature		Date	
Principal's Signature		Date	

**Description of the Incident**

Form Completed by:		Position	
Signature		Date	
Principal's Signature		Date	

## **Useful Contacts**

Local/national organisations that provide information and advice and/or resources about cigarettes, alcohol and drugs:

[www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

[www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk) (Action on Smoking and Health)

[www.camh.org.uk](http://www.camh.org.uk) (Child and Adolescent Mental Health)

[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) (Dealing with Young People's Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse - a guide for parents and carers)

[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk) (The Power of Teachers in a Young Person's World)

[www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk) (iMatter programme)

[www.drugsandalcoholni.info](http://www.drugsandalcoholni.info)

[www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk)

[www.fasaonline.org](http://www.fasaonline.org) (The Forum for Action on Substance Abuse)

[www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing](http://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing)

[www.lifeline.org.uk](http://www.lifeline.org.uk)

[www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)

[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pages/Topics.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pages/Topics.aspx)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net) (Stopping Smoking Made Easier)

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com) (Call FRANK: Tel: 0300 123 6600)

[www.thesite.org/drinkanddrugs](http://www.thesite.org/drinkanddrugs)

[www.want2stop.info](http://www.want2stop.info) (Tobacco and NRT)

# **St. Dominic's High School**

## **Policy for the Acceptable Use of All Information Communication Technologies (ICT) (Pupils)**

**Updated: December 2020**

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## ST. DOMINIC'S HIGH SCHOOL POLICY FOR THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF ALL INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

(Pupils) updated December 2020

<b>Each one of us is unique, created by a unique God, for a unique purpose</b>
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<h3>Vision Statement</h3>
<i>St Dominic's is a community committed to mutual respect where every individual is valued, respected, encouraged and empowered to reach her/his potential in an atmosphere of love, forgiveness, honesty, openness and optimism.</i>
<i>We are committed to celebrating difference, to promoting equality, selfbelief and a culture of confidence where success is celebrated. We strive to unlock our individual and collective potential and to be prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, reflecting our strong Dominican Ethos.</i>
<i>St. Dominic's School is committed to being a self-evaluating and self-improving school</i>

### Preamble

St Dominic's encourages use by students of the rich information sources available on the Internet, together with the development of appropriate skills to analyse and evaluate such resources. Online sources offer a broader range of up-to-date resources to pupils; provide an independent research facility; facilitate a variety of learning styles and abilities and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. Internet and e-mail literacy are fundamental requirements for all students as preparation for the Information Age – an era where ICT is a dominant factor in work and home life. We wish our pupils and staff to have to access to, and maximise the potential of, internet and digital technologies but are mindful of the need to ensure that we promote safe and acceptable working practices for all staff and pupils. This policy is in line with the guidance for Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools (DENI Circular Number 2007/1) and (DENI Circular Number 2016/27 "Online Safety").



## Knowledge and Understanding

- a) Pupils are responsible for good behaviour in the use of ICT just as they are in the classroom or a school corridor. General school rules apply. In addition, a number of rules relating to use of ICT also apply.
- b) St. Dominic's has implemented a filtered Internet and e-mail service through C2K. Pupils are permitted to use the C2k e-mail. They are **not permitted** to use any other e-mail service while using the Internet in school. There is consistency in filtering for users across all devices. Users who access C2k from home or in another school, are covered by the C2k filtering policy operated by the school. C2k uses an internationally recognised filtering service, which has the most accurate, current and comprehensive classification of websites to ensure prompt immediate blocking of inappropriate sites.
- c) Pupils at St. Dominic's should **know and understand** that no ICT user is permitted to:
- retrieve, send, copy or display offensive, inappropriate messages or pictures;
  - use obscene or discriminatory language eg. racist or homophobic
  - harass, bully, intimidate or attack others;
  - damage computers, computer systems or computer networks;
  - damage any ICT equipment;
  - use another user's password;
  - trespass in another user's folders, work or files;
  - intentionally waste resources (such as online time and consumables);
  - use the network for unapproved commercial purposes;
  - access inappropriate / unacceptable sites;
  - attempt to change or modify settings of the school's ICT equipment;
- d) Access to the use of ICT for pupils requires a parents or guardian's permission and a signed declaration by pupils agreeing to the school rules and conditions for use of ICT.
- e) St. Dominic's will ensure that all pupils understand how they are to use ICT appropriately and why the rules exist.
- f) ICT is provided for pupils to conduct research, complete tasks and communicate with others. While the use of information and communication technologies is a required aspect of the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum, access to ICT remains a privilege and not a right. It is given to pupils who act in a considerate and responsible manner, and shall be withdrawn if they fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.
- g) During school hours teachers will guide pupils towards appropriate materials. However, it is at all times the pupil's responsibility to ensure that only appropriate material is accessed. Outside school hours families bear responsibility for such guidance as they must also exercise caution with information sources such as television, phones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.
- h) When using ICT at St. Dominic's, all users must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws or other statutory obligations.

- i) Users must keep their passwords and IDs confidential. The sharing of user IDs or passwords is prohibited.
- j) Pupils must never use ICT to do anything that might harm the school's reputation.
- k) When pupils use their own ICT equipment in school they must follow the Bring Your Own Device (B.Y.O.D.) policy
- l) When a student has to borrow school equipment they are agreeing to return it at the time agreed with the ICT Technician. Failure to adhere to the agreed deadlines for return could result in the pupil responsible not being allowed to borrow equipment in the future. Pupils should also note they are responsible for taking care of the school equipment while it is in their possession.

### **Use of Mobile Phones / smart watches / smart devices**

Mobile phones must not be used by any pupils irrespective of their age or year group in the school building at any time. Anyone found in breach of this rule will have their phone confiscated. Parents will have to come to the school to collect the phone.

### **Sanctions**

- a) Violation of the above rules shall result in a temporary or permanent ban of use of the network.
- b) Parents/guardians shall be informed.
- c) Disciplinary action will be taken in line with existing school rules on inappropriate behaviour.
- d) Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.
- e) Serious or persistent misuse of ICT equipment may result in a situation where the nature or the gravity of the offence is such that, in the judgement of the Board of Governors, expulsion is the only remedy.

## **Blended/online/live learning**

To support online or blended learning please note the following:

- a) Pupils must not record any visual or audio elements of live streamed lessons. In the event of this happening, pupils may not be permitted to engage with further online lessons;
- b) Parents must not take part or be present if live streaming lessons are taking place. If this happens live-streaming for that pupil may no longer be permitted;
- c) One-to-one live streaming with pupils will not be permitted unless that pupil is shielding and an agreement has been made with SENCO, the teacher and the parent. In this situation a parent should be present in the house during live streaming lessons;
- d) Live-streaming should only take place during normal class times for pupils learning remotely or when previously arranged for booster sessions to support the regular practice within school;
- e) Pupils should be clear about the expected behaviour during live lessons such as taking turns to speak, not interrupting teachers or other pupils, not muting others and not browsing other websites or apps while they are supposed to be learning;
- f) Support will be provided to pupils who do not have access to ICT equipment or who need help with technical issues. This will be provided on a case-by-case basis;
- g) The technology used by staff will allow them to mute their own microphones as well as pupils. Staff will also be able to remove pupils from the session if deemed necessary;
- h) Live streamed lessons will only be undertaken through use of a school approved platform, which is currently Collaborate Ultra and Google Meets. Lessons may only be joined using school accounts and no personal accounts. Only under exceptional circumstances (eg school counsellor) will alternatives be used following approval on a case-by-case basis;
- i) Pupils are not permitted to join a class through FaceTime or similar platform.

## Monitoring and Privacy

- a) Users of the school's ICT resources, including Internet and e-mail facilities, should be aware, and must accept as a condition of use, that their usage of such facilities might be monitored and should have no expectation of privacy whether use is for the conduct of official school work or for personal use.
- b) The school reserves the right to inspect and examine any and all ICT equipment (including personally owned equipment) used on school premises or that have been used to harm the school's reputation, bully or intimidate, in order to ensure compliance with the school's Internet and e-mail usage policies.
- c) The Principal or appointed member of senior staff can request an Internet Usage report for any pupil or member of staff using the Core

EnNI service

## Information for Parents for the use of the Internet and ICT at home

Parents are informed **in writing** of the school policy on acceptable use of ICT, and asked for permission for their child/children to use ICT in school. Without this ICT access will not be given.

Pupils are also required to sign a policy agreement, agreeing to their proper use of ICT facilities. Details of the letter sent to parents and additional guidance information are included below.

In addition to the above St. Dominic's offers the following advice to parents:

1. A home computer with Internet access should be situated in a location where parents can monitor access to the Internet;
2. Parents should agree with their children suitable days/times for accessing the Internet.
3. Parents should discuss with their children the school rules for using ICT and implement these at home. Parents and children should decide together when, how long, and what comprises appropriate use;
4. Parents should get to know the sites their children visit, and talk to them about what they are learning;

5. Parents should consider using appropriate Internet filtering software for blocking access to unsuitable / inappropriate materials.
6. It is recommended that any child under 16 should not be given unmonitored access to newsgroups or chat facilities;
7. Pupils are not to engage with any social media, group chats, instant messaging apps or similar that discuss the school unless officially sanctioned by the school
8. Parents should ensure that they give their agreement before their children give out personal identifying information in any electronic communication on the Internet, such as a picture (especially when wearing the school uniform), an address, a phone number, the school name, or financial information such as credit card or bank details. In this way they can protect their children (and themselves) from unwanted or unacceptable overtures from strangers, from unplanned expenditure and from fraud.
9. Parents should encourage their children not to respond to any unwelcome, unpleasant or abusive messages, and to tell them if they receive any such messages or images. If the message comes from an Internet service connection provided by the school, they should immediately inform the school.

### **Free Advice**

Further free advice for parents is available from the following sources:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/onlinesafety/>

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/online-abuse/>

This policy acknowledges and complies with DENI circular 2007/1 on the subject of Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies for Schools and the Acceptable Use Policy developed by National Association of Coordinators and Teachers of IT and (DENI Circular Number 2016/27 "Online Safety").

Dear Parent,

### **ICT Permission Form**

The Internet is the global network of computers that has become integral to everyday life. As part of the St. Dominic's ICT strategy we offer pupils access to a **filtered** Internet connection and e-mail service provided by C2K school.

Before being allowed to use the ICT facilities within the school, all pupils must obtain parental permission and both they and you must sign and return the enclosed form as evidence of your approval and their acceptance of the school rules on this matter.

Access to the ICT will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with other users throughout the world. You should be aware that some material accessible via ICT facilities may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people.

Whilst our aim for ICT users is to further educational goals and objectives, pupils may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to pupils from access to ICT, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. We have put in place a filtered Internet and e-mail service to minimise the dangers of pupils gaining access to unsuitable materials. In addition, a clear set of rules and procedures for pupil use of ICT has been implemented. But ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

**Clear rules and procedures are in place for proper use of ICT. Misuse of ICT may lead to the following sanctions:**

### **Sanctions**

- a) Violation of the rules relating to ICT shall result in a temporary or permanent ban of use of the network.
- b) Parents/guardians shall be informed.
- c) Disciplinary action will be taken in line with existing school rules on inappropriate behaviour.
- d) Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.
- e) Serious or persistent misuse of ICT equipment may result in a situation where the nature of the gravity or the offence is such that, in the judgement of the Board of Governors, expulsion is the only remedy.

In addition to the enclosed guidance documents free advice for parents is available from the following sources:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/online-abuse/>

We would be grateful if you could read the enclosed guidance documents and then complete the permission form which follows.

Yours sincerely

Orla O'Neill (Mrs)

Principal

**Please complete and return this form to your daughter's form teacher.**

### **ICT Parent/Guardian Permission Form**

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Form class: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Pupil**

As a school user of ICT, I have read and I agree to comply with the school's rules and conditions of usage as outlined in the policy. I will use ICT in a responsible way and observe all the restrictions explained to me by the school.

**Pupil's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Parent/Guardian**

As the parent or legal guardian of the pupil signing above, I grant permission for my daughter to use ICT. **I understand that pupils will be held accountable for their own actions.** I also understand that some materials available through ICT may be objectionable and I accept responsibility for setting standards for my child to follow when selecting, sharing and exploring computer information and media. **I have read and agreed to the school's powers/rights/abilities as outlined and understand the sanctions which will be imposed if the rules governing the use of ICT are breached.**

**Parent /Guardian's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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