



GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

# **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 Catherine Finnegan**;
- The Principal, **Mrs C McCann**, 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 Mc Nulty (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 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**
- 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



## 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:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stage on Code of Practice</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Outcomes of Intervention</b>

**Record of participation in planning for interventions**

**Pupil:**

**Parent/carer:**

**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/carer:**

**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

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.

<b>Incident/Intervention Level</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Possible Strategies</b>
<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)

Newlife Counselling  
25 Ardoyne Road  
028 90 391630

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