



ST. MOGUE'S COLLEGE ANTI BULLYING POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St. Mogue's College has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the anti-Bullying procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, which were published in 2013.

This policy comprehends bullying that is either perpetrated by students or experienced by students in St. Mogue's College. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the following Cavan/Monaghan ETB policies:

Bullying Prevention Policy-complaint procedure for ETB staff

Harassment/Sexual Harassment prevention policy-complaint procedure for ETB staff.

The Board of Management of St. Mogue's College adopts the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools issued by the DES in 2013 as the basis for the way which St. Mogue's College addresses the issue of bullying.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students or staff and is therefore fully committed to following the key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our school believes that when children approach a teacher about bullying, they will be listened to, supported, validated and every attempt will be made to ensure the bullying is stopped. It is the right of staff and students to work and learn in an atmosphere free from intimidation or harassment. Everyone, staff, students, and parent(s) / guardian(s) have a responsibility to ensure that St. Mogue's College is a bully free school, and that bullying will be reported when it occurs. Teachers will do their best with all bullying issues in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Our school encourages a positive school culture and climate, one which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity. Students and staff are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment and promotes respectful relationships across the school community. Effective leadership promotes a culture of awareness and understanding of what bullying is and its impact. Implementation of education and prevention strategies that build empathy, respect and resilience in students is promoted. The school explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying, including, homophobic, and transphobic bullying. Effective supervision and monitoring of students is implemented. Record keeping and investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour is conducted.

Ongoing review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy is carried out.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The department of Education and Science (DES) guidelines on countering bullying in primary and post primary schools (1993) define bullying as “repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others”. This includes unacceptable behaviours such as: Verbal e.g. threatening behaviour through text messages, Physical e.g. tripping, Psychological e.g. isolation, Racist e.g. discrimination, Sexual e.g. name calling about sexual orientation, Relational e.g. manipulating friendships to exclude one person from a friendship group.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, does not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, **placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on social media site or any other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.**

Those who bully others in a non-physical way often do not realise that their actions may have serious legal consequences for them. The reality, however, is that bullying may constitute a criminal offence under Section 10 of the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Our commitment to provide a place for learning which is supportive and in which pupils feel safe demands that the staff at St. Mogue's College

- * Take the issue of bullying very seriously.
- * Do all we can to deal proactively with the problem (deliver an anti-bullying curriculum for 1st to 6th year students. Thereafter this procedure will be repeated with 1st and 3rd year groups).
- * Deliver Parental awareness programme.
- * Do all we can to promote a culture of reporting bullying in our school.
- * Include the monitoring of this issue at all year-head meetings.
- * Support teachers through meetings / in-service to recognise this issue and deal with it.
- * Evaluate our policy on a regular basis.
- * Administer questionnaire to students at intervals in order that they can report any incidents that may be occurring (once a term).
- * Class observation form and socio-gram may be used by the staff to establish the extent and nature of bullying problems.

PROCEDURES FOR TELLING

Students may tell using any of the following methods

- * Ask for an appointment with the pastoral care committee.
- * Put a note in with homework.

- * Ask a friend to tell on their behalf.
- * Ask parent(s) / guardian(s) to tell on their behalf.
- * Make a phone call / email to the school to inform staff of the problem.
- * Ask student council to tell on their behalf.
- * Post a note in the school letter box beside the secretary's office
- * Tell a teacher or other staff member

PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING, INVESTIGATING AND RESOVING

1. For the safety of all two teachers will meet with the student in a private and safe place to discuss the issue. The student will be offered a choice of writing and signing or telling their story in full.
2. An Incident Report Form will be completed by the investigating team. It will be filed in a safe place within the staffroom. Incidents will be dealt with confidentially within the child guidelines. Only those who need to know will be informed.
3. If year-head is involved with the initial reporting of an incident, the student will be given a choice of what other teacher shall be present at the investigation. However, if the year-head is not invoiced in the initial reporting of the incident, they will be made aware of what is taking place. The year-head and teacher in question will deal with the issue.
4. The Pastoral Care Committee may speak to the student again with their parent(s) / guardian(s). This will depend on the seriousness of the bullying and if the student is distressed.
5. The student who made the complaint will be kept informed discreetly that the situation is being dealt with.
6. The student who is alleged to be using bullying behaviour will be interviewed separately by two teachers
7. They may be asked to write an account of what happened and sign it.
8. A commitment about changing their behaviour will be expected. They may be asked to sign an agreement about future behaviour. This will be done using the Agreement of student(s) and action taken form.
9. Follow-up support will be offered to the student who is victimised and the student who is using bullying behaviour. This may take the form of

counselling or referral to other services. Future behaviour will be monitored.

10. Records will be kept on file for three years after all involved has left the school. After the three years these records will be shredded.

SANCTION SYSTEM

First Offence: Verbal warning and serious talk.

Second Offence: Detention with work given at break-time and lunchtime and serious talk. Inform Parent(s) / Guardian(s)

Third Offence: Parent(s) / Guardian(s) may be invited into the school.

FURTHER OFFENCES

Suspension with work given (which will be checked). The returning student and their Parent(s) / Guardian(s) will be asked to meet with the principal and BOM to discuss future behaviour.

New staff members will be made aware of policy and procedures at staff induction.

All incoming first year students will be made aware of this policy from their year-head. A short version is contained in the school journal and all students will be requested to sign their journal. This policy will be available to all education partners on the school website, www.stmoguescollege.ie

Policy Adoption and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 17th February 2022

Policy Dissemination and Publication

This policy will be made available to all education partners and will be published on the school website www.stmoguescollege.ie

This policy has been agreed by students, parent(s) / Guardian(s), staff and management at St. Mogue's College. It will be evaluated every two years by questionnaire to staff, students and parents(s)