

ANTI BULLYING AND CHILD PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION

Salesian College, through its Christian ethos, overtly promotes the value of each individual and the need for tolerance and mutual respect. We actively campaign against bullying and as a community we acknowledge our responsibility to protect all individuals, both pupils and staff, in our College and to act promptly if any cases of bullying are discovered. We place great importance on pupils developing within a supportive Catholic community.

As in any community, there is always a possibility that some form of bullying may occur. It is essential that we do our utmost to prevent bullying from taking place in our College and to encourage an ethos where bullying is acknowledged as totally wrong and the reporting of bullying is viewed as the correct and responsible action. No individual, pupil or staff, should have to accept any form of intimidating behaviour, verbal or physical, and such anti-social behaviour has no place in our College. We are committed to ensure that each child can benefit to the full from all the opportunities available at Salesian College. We guarantee that any cases of bullying will always be investigated, eradicated if possible, and the issues resolved.

INCIDENTS OFF THE COLLEGE PREMISES

The College will take steps to see that any bullying that occurs outside College does not spill over into the College, and will also take steps to ensure that behaviour outside the College does not harm the good name and reputation of the College. Students are expected to observe the College code of conduct on journeys to and from College.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING:

Any form of behaviour which isolates, humiliates, belittles, or which mentally or physically hurts another person. Bullying is an abuse of power, physical or mental, which causes distress or loss of self-esteem to the victim.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be -

- (A) **PHYSICAL** - A child can be threatened, punched, pushed, kicked, hit, spat at, tripped up or attacked in some other way.
- (B) **VERBAL** - Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or persistent teasing. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, physical appearance, social disability, or any individual characteristics.
- (C) **EXCLUSION** - A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussion, conversations or activities, by those they believe to be their friends.

- (D) **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT** - Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Threats may be used by the bully to force the pupil to hand over property or money to the bully.
- (E) It may be **DIRECT** or by text messaging or **MSN, INSTANT MESSAGING, BEBO, MYSPACE OR FACEBOOK**

STUDENTS' RESPONSE TO BULLYING

Pupils are advised to tell someone, and not to suffer in silence. It is important that pupils do not think that silence is the best policy and that the bullying will just go away or that the situation will get worse if you report it. If bullies are identified, they will be dealt with and the pupil(s) will be helping to prevent the bullying being done to someone else too. Pupils' positive action in reporting any bullying is something to be proud of.

THESE GUIDELINES ARE GIVEN TO HELP:

- *Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.*
- *Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!*
- *Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.*
- *Be assertive – try to ignore the bullying and say NO firmly. Walk confidently away. **Go straight to a teacher or a member of staff.***
- *Stay with a group of people. There is safety in numbers.*
- *Fighting back may make things worse. You could get hurt or blamed for starting the trouble. Don't fight back.*

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING BULLIED:

Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim more unhappy and on their own.

If the pupil feels that he/she cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers will always take bullying seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse.

Pupils are always advised that they should not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

PARENT'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING:

ADVICE TO PARENTS

- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent, etc.

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend College, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the College IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Tell your own son/daughter there is nothing wrong with him. It is not his fault that he is being bullied.
- It is important that you advise your son/daughter not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Make sure your son/daughter is fully aware of the College policy concerning bullying, and assure him that he must not be afraid to ask for help.
- The College has designated a member of staff, Mr Patrick Wilson, Headmaster, who is the CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER. Parents or students may approach him in confidence if they have serious concerns about the welfare of a student.

THE COLLEGE'S RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM OF BULLYING:

Through all our communication with pupils we indicate our disapproval of any form of bullying and our conscious affirmation of the uniqueness and worth of each individual in our community. In all our assemblies, registration periods and lessons (particularly Personal and Social Education) we confirm that bullying is wrong and that it will not be tolerated in our community.

FURTHERMORE, WE AIM TO:

- *ensure that all students have the confidence not to suffer in silence – the confidence to disclose;*
- *encourage students to treat everyone with respect;*
- *use opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards one another, e.g., in the PSHE programme;*
- *encourage students to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes to other people; this includes a review of what friendship really is;*
- *organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying;*
- *have a firm but fair discipline structure where the rules are few, simple and easy to understand;*
- *deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary;*

THE COLLEGE WILL ALWAYS TREAT BULLYING AS A SERIOUS OFFENCE
AND TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE ACTION TO ERADICATE IT FROM OUR
COMMUNITY.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

HELP AND SUPPORT WILL BE GIVEN AS IS APPROPRIATE TO BOTH THE VICTIMS AND THE BULLIES:

We support the victims in the following ways:

- *by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their form tutor, Chaplain, or another teacher if they choose;*
- *by informing the victim's parents/guardians where appropriate;*
- *by offering continued support when they feel they need it;*
- *by arranging for them to be escorted when they feel they need it;*
- *by arranging for them to be escorted to and from the College premises;*
- *by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.*

We also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- *by talking about what has happened, to discover why they have become involved;*
- *by informing the bullies' parents/guardians;*
- *by continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible;*
- *by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.*

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

- *The bullies will be warned officially to stop offending and may have to apologise to their victim.*
- *The bullies' parents/guardians will be informed.*
- *They may be excluded from the recreational areas at break and lunch times.*
- *We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the College premises.*
- *If they do not stop bullying, they will be suspended for a minor fixed period (one or two days).*
- *If they carry on, they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period.*
- *If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion).*