



## Anti-Bullying Policy – Plunket College of Further Education

15<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### Plunket College of Further Education Mission Statement

*To create and sustain an environment where staff and students will feel comfortable, motivated, and supported in their efforts to grow as human beings, and to realise their personal potential. We are fully committed to the highest standard of teaching, learning, and performance.*

1. In accordance with the requirements of the **Education (Welfare) Act 2000** and the **Code of Behaviour Guidelines**, issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of Plunket College of Further Education 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 September 2013 by the Department of Education and Skills (DES).
2. This policy focuses on students in their relationships with others in Plunket College of Further Education, i.e. student/student, student/teacher and teacher/student. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the following City of Dublin Education Training Board (CDETb) policies:
  - **Staff Handbook (2011): City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb)**
  - **Complaints Procedure: CDETb**
  - **Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Bullying and Harassment in CDETb Workplaces (2006)**
  - **Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers: The Teaching Council**
3. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
  - A positive school culture and climate which-
    - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
    - encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
    - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
  - Effective leadership;
  - A school-wide approach;
  - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
  - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
    - build empathy, respect and resilience in students; and

- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

4. In accordance with the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** bullying is defined as follows:

**‘Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological, or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time’.**

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s membership of the Traveller community, and bullying of those with disabilities, or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do 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 a social network site, or other public forum where that message, image, or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools**.

**5. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:**

**Where bullying occurs *between students* the relevant teacher (s) for investigating and dealing with this are:**

Teachers, Class Tutors, Guidance Counsellors, Deputy Principal, Principal.

**Where bullying occurs *between student/teacher or teacher/student* the relevant members of college staff for investigating and dealing with this are:**

Designated Assistant Principal 1, Deputy Principal, Principal.

### Investigating, Intervening and Recording by relevant Teacher(s)

Action Taken	Procedure	Support and /or Sanction may include:
<p><b>Teacher</b></p> <p><b>Class Tutor</b></p> <p><i>When a professional judgement is formed that bullying can be resolved</i></p>	<p>Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable</p> <p>Report incident(s)/inform Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator/Senior Tutor/Course Co-ordinator of bullying incident.</p> <p>When delegated responsibility to investigate bullying incident teacher/class tutor to speak to both parties separately and try to resolve issues</p> <p>Record to be kept: may be students' accounts/teacher/tutor account or Report Template (Appendix 1)</p> <p>Follow up progress with victim, and student who is bullying</p>	<p>Serious talk with student(s) about the effects of their behaviour</p> <p>Inform parent(s)/guardian</p> <p>Verbal warning: Student(s) involved warned to stop</p> <p>Seek verbal agreement about future behaviour</p> <p>Outline a fair outcome if appropriate</p> <p>Address issue of bullying through class programmes or referral to Care Team</p>

Action Taken	Procedure	Support and /or Sanction may include:
<p><b>Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator/Senior Tutor/Course Co-ordinator (assisted by class tutor, or other member(s) of staff</b></p>	<p>Incident(s) investigated by Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator/Senior Tutor/Course Co-ordinator</p> <p>Principal/deputy principal informed</p> <p>Parents informed and invited to a school meeting, Senior Tutor</p> <p>Keep a record: Appendix 1 Standard Template</p> <p>Follow up progress with victim and student responsible for bullying behaviour</p>	<p>Serious talk with student(s) about their behaviour and future behaviour</p> <p>Signed written agreement (contract) (student/parent/guardian) about future behaviour.</p> <p>Student to attend school counsellor</p> <p>In-house suspension, Withdrawal of privileges, Suspension</p> <p>Monitor future behaviour</p>

Action Taken	Procedure	Support and /or Sanction may include
Principal or Deputy Principal	Parent(s) and student (s) meet with Principal and / or Deputy Principal	Parents are met and conditions set regarding student(s)' future behaviour
	Feedback to Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator/ Senior Tutor/Course Co-ordinators/Class Tutor	Student(s) to attend counselling Contact with support agencies
	Records kept	Referral, where appropriate, to CDETb psychologist/An Garda Síochána /HSE/CAMHS
	Follow up progress with victim and student(s) responsible for bullying behaviour	
Incident(s) referred to College Committee		Suspension and or Exclusion

**6. Education and Prevention Strategies used by the college (including e.g. cyber-bullying, identity-based bullying e.g. homophobic and transphobic)**

- i. Plunket College of Further Education **will distribute the Anti-Bullying Policy**, developed following consultation with staff, students, and parents, to **all members of the school community**. The policy will be published on the college **website**, be included in **college shared drives**. Copies of the policy will be made available to **non-teaching staff, parents /guardians**. The overall aim is that all members of the school community will be familiar with, and consistently apply, the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- ii. Plunket College of Further Education Anti-Bullying Policy to be **reflected in the Code of Behaviour** for students under and over eighteen years of age. **Measures for dealing with bullying behaviour to be specified within the framework of the Code of Behaviour**. Clear indicators to be included in both the Anti-Bullying Policy and College Codes of Behaviour on what the school is doing to prevent bullying behaviour, what teachers, students and parents can do, who to contact, and how incidents are handled.
- iii. An **Anti-Bullying Charter** will be displayed in a prominent position within the college.
- iv. Plunket College of Further Education, which has an open and inclusive admission's policy, will continue to develop a positive school culture and climate where respectful relationships among all members of the school community are the norm.
- v. Plunket College of Further Education aims to promote a culture (**Fallon & Kent: [www.antibullyingcampaign.ie](http://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie)**) where bullying is **'Recognised'** for what it is, **'Rejected'** for what it does, and **'Reported'** so that it can be effectively dealt with.
- vi. By working together, and maintaining school wide **vigilance**, the Principal/Deputy Principal, and teachers, through application of the teaching council Code of

Professional Conduct, will provide effective leadership in the **modelling** of appropriate behaviour among members of the school community. Non-teaching staff, and parent(s) /guardian(s), will also be asked to work with the college in the achievement of this aim.

- vii. The Plunket College of Further Education Anti-Bullying Policy will be highlighted to students during student **induction** sessions.
- viii. Awareness of bullying and its effects, including identity-based bullying, such as homophobic and transphobic, will be achieved through the **display of posters (including LGBT posters), class/group discussions, videos and workshops for students.**
- ix. The college aims to develop a shared understanding of what bullying is, its impact, and how it is dealt with by organising ongoing activities and events that continually raise awareness of bullying. The aim will be to change attitudes and behaviour.
- x. **All reasonable steps will be taken by the college to prevent harassment**, and sexual harassment, on the grounds of gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the traveller community. Particular attention will be given to the most vulnerable students.
- xi. The college will continue to organise the **supervision of students**
- xii. Plunket College of Further Education **Student Council**, which represents students of all ages, to be enabled, through **training**, to act as an important 'voice' for students in relation to the problem of bullying.
- xiii. Parents to be encouraged and supported in their efforts to implement measures to counter-act bullying problems.
- xiv. Measures to prevent **cyber-bullying** will include advising students and their parents about appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe online, and developing a culture of reporting concerns.
- xv. To ensure that opportunities for cyber-bullying do not arise within the college the **Computer & Network Usage Policy (CDETB)** and Plunket College of Further Education IT Policy will continue to be implemented and closely monitored.
- xvi. **Plunket College of Further Education Code of Behaviour in relation to the use of student iPhones, mobile/camera phones with wi-fi access within the college to be reviewed.**
- xvii. The college, through curricular and extra-curricular activities, will continue to provide opportunities for students to develop their **self-esteem**. This may be achieved by participating in sport, School Completion Programme (SCP) activities, outdoor education, music, Sports and Cultural Council (SCC) activities such as Debating and the Student Council.
- xviii. **Curricular initiatives to promote respect for diversity and inclusiveness** will continue to be highlighted within Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), and Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programmes.

- xix. Opportunities to highlight the problem of bullying will be pursued within **all subject areas** such as English literature, Geography, History, Art, Religion and Physical Education.
- xx. Opportunities for discussion in dealing with Bullying behaviour to be included for adult students in modules such as **Communications, Health & Safety, Philosophy, Psychology, Human Growth & Development, Law, Internet, English Literature, Behavioural Studies, Social Studies, Child Development, Counselling Theory, Counselling Skills, Cultural Studies.**
- xxi. **Students** in Plunket College of Further Education will continue to be **supported** by school management, teachers, the tutor/pastoral care system, class tutors, guidance and counselling, resource/learning support, and Student Award Scheme.
- xxii. Through discussion, and instruction, the college, in partnership with others will continue to **equip students with strategies for dealing with bullying** problems as they arise.

**7. The Schools procedures for investigating, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:**

**Investigating:**

**The primary aim of investigating and dealing with issues of bullying is to resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable; the relationship of the parties involved (rather than apportion blame).**

- i. Any student, member of staff (teaching/ non-teaching), or parent may report concerns about bullying.
- ii. All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated using a calm, problem-solving approach (What, Where, When, Who, Why) outside classrooms. Due regard to be maintained in relation to the sensitivity of bullying incidents and issues of confidentiality.
- iii. Reports or allegations of bullying should be initially reported to the the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, Class Tutor for investigation.
- iv. The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, Class Tutor may delegate another teacher to carry out initial enquiries.
- v. It may be helpful or appropriate to ask those involved to write down their account of the bullying incident(s).
- vi. If a group is accused of being involved in bullying, they should be interviewed individually.
- vii. If a reported incident is perceived to be of a very serious nature, it will be dealt with and investigated directly by the Principal /Deputy Principal.

- viii. If it is established that bullying has taken place, the parents of those involved who are under 18 years must be informed at an early stage and offered an opportunity to help resolve the issue.
- ix. If it is established that bullying has taken place all parties involved should be referred to the schools Anti Bullying Code.
- x. If disciplinary action is taken against a student(s) as a result of a breach of the Schools Anti-Bullying policy, it will be made clear to students, and parents, that the action is a private matter between the student, their parents, and the school.

### **Recording and Follow-up of Bullying Behaviour**

#### **Recording:**

- i. If it is established that bullying has occurred, appropriate written records/accounts must be kept by Teachers, Class Tutors, and the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.
- ii. If it is established that bullying has occurred, appropriate written records must be kept to help resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- iii. The Principal/Deputy Principal must be provided with, or made aware of, written records/accounts on each bullying incident.
- iv. Due care to be taken, in the interests of Data Protection, in relation to storage/ access to Bullying Reports/accounts.
- v. In cases where the relevant investigating teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 days after the initial determination that bullying behaviour occurred, this fact must be recorded on the Template of recording bullying behaviour (Appendix 1)
- vi. Appendix 1 is also completed by the investigating teacher where bullying behaviour is being reported directly to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- vii. A report on bullying is made at every meeting of the College Committee and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

#### **Follow-up:**

- i. In determining whether the bullying incident has been adequately addressed, the investigating teacher will consider in their professional judgement:
  - a. Has the bullying behaviour ceased?
  - b. Have the issues been resolved as far as practicable?
  - c. Has the relationship between the parties been resolved as far as practicable?
  - d. Has feedback been received from all parties involved
- ii. Parent(s) /student(s) who are not satisfied that the school has dealt with a case of bullying in accordance with DES guidelines may refer the matter to the College's Complaints Procedures.

- iii. If a parent/student has exhausted the college's anti-bullying procedures, and are not satisfied with the outcome, they will be advised of their right to make a complaint to the **Ombudsman / Ombudsman for Children**
- iv. A review of the schools Anti-Bullying Policy is to be carried out annually.

### **8. Established Intervention Strategies:**

If it is established that bullying has occurred, the following options or combination of options are available for dealing with the issue:

- i. Teacher / Class Tutor / Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator speak with the individuals involved.
- ii. The Principal /Deputy Principal speak with the individuals involved.
- iii. Parents are informed.
- iv. Verbal warnings that bullying must stop. Verbal agreements sought from student(s).
- v. Heightened level of supervision of students.
- vi. Peer pressure support for students to be provided.
- vii. Address issue of bullying through class programmes / or refer to Care Team.
- viii. Signed written agreements / contracts from students and signed by parent(s)/guardian
- ix. Disciplinary action is implemented according to College Code of Behaviour.
- x. Conditions set regarding future behaviour
- xi. A referral made to the Guidance Counsellor.
- xii. Referral made to the Psychological service where serious bullying behaviour occurs
- xiii. Referral of serious cases to the HSE/CAMHS/An Garda Siochána
- xiv. Code of Behaviour to be understood and signed by all students.

### **9. The school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:**

The School/College will put in place a programme of supports for students who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements.

- Students **who have been bullied** will be:
  - ✓ offered appropriate counselling; and
  - ✓ provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self- esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
- Students **who have been involved in bullying** behaviour will be:
  - ✓ Provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others; and
  - ✓ Provided with appropriate opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.

- Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and their parents and to avail of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.
  - Supports to be provided for students through teachers, Class Tutors and Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.
  - As part of Induction, students are made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy
  - Access to on-line supports and information (i.e External Agencies)
  - Anti-bullying posters to be displayed in school
  - Counselling service available by the CDET B Psychological Services

## 10. Supervision and Monitoring of Students

The Board of Management confirms that the Anti-Bullying Policy in place will both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and facilitate early intervention where possible.

## 11. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

**12.** This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **30/11/2021**.

**13.** This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and students on request). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the CDET B if requested.

**14.** This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and students on request). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the CDET B and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 30/11/2021

**APPENDIX 1**

**Name of Student being bullied and class group**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Name(s) and class(es) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Source of bullying concern/report (tick where relevant)		Location of incidents (tick where relevant)		
Student concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant boxes)**

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Brief description of the bullying behaviour and its impact**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Details of actions taken**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal** \_\_\_\_\_