Presentation College

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

The policy was reviewed through a consultation process with the Board of Management, Student Council, Parents' Council and Staff between February and April 2024. In this policy the term 'Parent(s)' is taken to include the term 'Guardian(s)'.

Mission Statement

Presentation College is, by choice, a truly co-educational school. We aim to prepare all of our students, girls and boys alike for the challenges, responsibilities and experience of adult life. All members of the school community - students, parents, teachers and other staff - are held in very high regard and their dignity, worth and individuality are respected. We strive to build a sense of community based on Christian values. The school's Code of Conduct acknowledges this and aims to promote a culture of respect throughout the school. It recognises that good discipline enables good teaching and allows good learning to take place.

Presentation College is under CEIST Trusteeship. The core values of CEIST are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people at the heart of our school: students, staff and parent. Its key principles focus on:

- Promoting spiritual and human development,
- Achieving quality in teaching and learning,
- Showing respect for every person.
- Creating community.
- Being just and responsible

Inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, Presentation College provides the conditions and experiences which will promote the development of the full potential of each person including the spiritual, moral, physical, social, aesthetic, intellectual and vocational development. We strive to ensure that every member of the school community is held in very high regard and their dignity, worth and individuality is respected. Presentation College is committed to providing a safe working environment where effective teaching and learning can flourish and where there are clear procedures for dealing with behaviour that might provide a barrier to achieving this.

Rationale

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 Presentation 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 September 2013. This policy is also supported by the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023 and Cineáltas: DES Action Plan on Bullying (2022).

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) A positive school culture and climate which

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

- acknowledges that all forms of bullying are wrong and unacceptable, and will not be tolerated in Presentation College;

- encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community at all times. All members of the school community are entitled to good working and learning conditions free from harassment or abuse.

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) 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;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of students

(g) Supports for staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Code of Behaviour of the school states that the 'Code will be applied in the case of all students whose behaviour in or outside the school, or on the journey to/from school, or at any time before or after school hours, or during weekends and school holidays, may bring the school into disrepute'. As such, the school recognises that it must address bullying perpetrated outside school which has consequences within the school'. Nevertheless, the school has limited resources at its disposal to resolve bullying situations which arise outside of school time and we remind parents, as primary educators, of their responsibilities in dealing with such situations. Every effort should be made by the relevant students and their parents to bring a peaceful resolution to a bullying situation arising outside of

school time so that the impact on students' learning and experience in school is minimised. We encourage parents to bring any cyber-bullying situation to the attention of the Gardaí.

Definition of Bullying

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:

- <u>relational-bullying</u>: deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,

- <u>cyber-bullying</u> and

- <u>identity-based bullying</u> 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.*

Investigating Bullying

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying in Presentation College are as follows:

- ➢ The Deans of Discipline, in the first instance
- ➢ Principal
- ➢ Deputy Principal(s)
- ➢ Junior and Senior Student Support Teams
- ➢ Year Heads
- ➢ Guidance Counsellors

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it. See Section 6.8 of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures, 2013.

Procedures for Investigating

The school's procedures for investigation, 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 (See Section 6.8 of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures):

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

The school's procedures are consistent with the following approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including students, parents) understand this approach from the outset.

<u>Reporting Bullying Behaviour</u>

- Any student or parent may bring s possible bullying incidents will be reassured that they have taken the first step to resolving a bullying incident.
- Any student or parent may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant Dean of Discipline.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaning staff, must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the Dean.
- All staff will keep a written record of any bullying incidents witnessed by them or notified to them (in compliance with GDPR). All incidents will be reported to the relevant Dean and a written copy of the white 'Behaviour Slip' will be given to the Dean. The Pastoral Care Concern slip may be used for recording concerns (as opposed to incidents witnessed or notified).

<u>Investigating and Dealing with Incidents: Style of approach</u>

- Deans / Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach;
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the Dean will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parents and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All meetings will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of alleged bullying behaviour, the Dean will seek answers to questions of *what, where, when, who* and *why*. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member may be interviewed individually;
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;
- It may also be appropriate or helpful for the Dean to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s);

- In cases where it has been determined by the Dean that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the students;
- Where the Dean has determined that a student has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied. The student will be instructed to immediately stop the bullying behaviour and a restorative approach will be adopted to dealing with the issue;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

Follow-Up and Recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Dean will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
   - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
   - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved, as far as is practicable;
   - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
   - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal(s).
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Complaints Procedures.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's Complaints Procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)s of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents is done in an objective and factual manner

The Dean will use the recording template at **Appendix I** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstance:

In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within **twenty** school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred. When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the Dean in question and a copy maintained by the Principal.

Education and Prevention

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at Cyber-Bullying, and Identity-Based Bullying, including in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows: (See Section 6.5 of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures).

Education and Prevention Strategies

School-Wide Approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community, in accordance with our Mission Statement and the values of the CEIST Charter.
- The school seeks to promote a positive and supportive climate at all times.
- The Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is implemented, reviewed and communicated to the school community annually.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Students will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on students' lives and the need to respond to it - prevention and intervention.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include students, parents and the wider school community.
- Curricular areas such as SPHE, CSPE, RSE, as part of the Wellbeing Policy and RE foster values that promote respect for oneself and each other.
- Co-curricular and Extra-curricular activities promote the holistic development of students, contributing to their well-being, social and emotional development (e.g. Friends for Life Programme).
- Deans, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors and Senior Management communicate on students' needs and progress through the Junior and Senior Student Care Teams.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to the Deans. Supervision will also apply to monitoring students' use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the Prefects / Meitheal Leaders / Student Council and other Student Groups in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Meitheal system, Mentoring, Learning Hub, Lunchtime Club and other student support activities that can help to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Year Head's weekly Tutorial class with First Year students as part of Wellbeing programme.
- Guidance-related learning with First Year students on the theme of Online Safety and Responsible Use of Social Media;; Digital Media Literacy with all students in Junior Cycle.
- The need for ethical and responsible use of digital technologies by students, staff and parents is outlined in our Acceptable Use Policy, available on www.presentationcollegecarlow.com In line with our Mission Statement cyber-bullying is always wrong as it exhibits disrespect for another. We remind parents of their responsibility to help resolve situations that arise outside of school and every effort should be made to ensure that the situation does not impact on students in the school or their learning. We encourage parents to report cyber-bullying to the Gardaí.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying Code for the school - to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's Anti-Bullying policy is discussed with students and all parents are given access to a copy on our website, www.presentationcollegecarlow.com as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.

- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying-prevention and parents seminars; annual or term student surveys; focus-group discussions as part of our School Self-Evaluation process; regular Year Group assemblies by Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads etc. stress the importance of respect and the importance of reporting matters of concern.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way students will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It is made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to Dean / teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Ask a parent or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - The Dean may administer a confidential questionnaire from time-to-time to all students.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Clear protocols are in place to encourage parents to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The parent should contact the relevant Dean, in the first instance, by phone and should supply a written account of the situation to the Dean. If the Dean is unavailable the parent should contact the Principal.
- The development and implementation of the whole-school Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the students' use of mobile phones and iPads. Ethical and responsible use of digital technologies is fostered through the implementation of the AUP.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. GLEN www.glen.ie, BeLonGTo www.belongto.org

Implementation of Curricula
- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programmes. Planning for the full implementation of Well-being is under way.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. #UP2US, Friends for Life/My Friends Youth Programme, Lockers Programme.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (e.g. Rape Crisis Centre KAS Programme with Transition Year students), **Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web-Wise, Think Before you Click, Lockers, BeInCntrl, talk about cyber-safety/cyber-crimes and sexting to Transition Year students and parents, Cyber-Safety talks from guest speakers students in Junior Cycle), **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack, Transition Year talk on LGBT from Carlow Regional Youth Services) **Diversity and Inter-culturalism.**
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN students with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately.

Presentation College

Links to Other Policies

- Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment, Acceptable Use Policy, CCTV Policy, Data Protection Policy, SPHE Policy, RSE Policy, Substance Use Policy, Non Discrimination Policy, Safety Statement.

Programme of Supports

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

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and   social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Junior / Senior Student Support Team system
- Meitheal / Peer-Mentoring system
- Year Head and Dean system
- Friends for Life or other relevant programme as appropriate
- Guidance Counselling.

If students require counselling of further supports the Guidance Counsellor will endeavour to support the student, subject to available resources.

Alternatively/additionally, the Guidance Counsellor may endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise support where it is not possible to provide appropriate support in the school. This may be for the student affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Students should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teach.

Presentation College

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.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website www.presentationcollegecarlow.com (or is otherwise readily accessible to parents and students from the School Office on request) and provided to the Parents' Council. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the Patron if requested.

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 and provided to the Parents' Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department of Education and Skills.

Oversight

At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:
- The Number of bullying cases reported.
- Confirmation that all cases being dealt with by the anti-bullying policy.

The minutes of the Board of Management will reflect the annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 16ᵗʰ May 2024.

Signed: _____   Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)
For and on behalf the Board of Management

Date: _____16/5/24_____   Date: _____16/5/'24_____

Presentation College

Appendix I

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of student being bullied and class group:
   Name:_____   Class:_____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es)):

Student Concerned	
Other Student	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es)):

Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Locker Area	
Hall / Dining Area	
School Grounds (external)	
Changing Room	
School Bus	
Other	

4. Name of person (s) who reported the bullying concern

5. Type of Bullying behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation/ Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other(specify)	

6. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability /SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

7. **Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

8. **Details of action taken**

Signed:_____ (Dean); Date:_____

Date submitted to Principal: _____

Presentation College

Appendix II

Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents'	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template)	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____   Date: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____   Date: _____
Principal

![Presentation College logo] **Presentation College**

Appendix III

Notification Regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

To: The Parents' Council and School Community of Presentation College, Carlow.

The Board of Management of Presentation College wishes to inform you that:

• The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 16th May 2024.

• This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 2 of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)*.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)

Date of next Review: May 2025

Presentation College

Appendix IV

Optional Template for Dean's Notes

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Date of reporting to Dean: _____

Times and locations of alleged bullying: _____

_____

_____

Category of Bullying:

General Bullying Behaviour (e.g. exclusion, disrespect, threats, verbal, violence)

Homophobic / Transgender Bullying ☐   Damage to property ☐

Cyber Bullying ☐   Sexual ☐

Identity Based Bullying ☐   Race, ethnic background, membership of Traveller Community ☐

Relational ☐   Special Educational Needs / Disability ☐

Details of Alleged Incidents: _____

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Actions Taken on Investigation and Follow-Up: _____

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Parents notified ☐   Principal notified ☐   Year Head notified ☐   Guidance Counsellor notified ☐

Dean's Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix VII

Established Intervention Strategies
- Teacher interviews with all students.
- Negotiating agreements between students and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parents to support school interventions
- 'No Blame' Approach
- Mentoring by a member of staff
- Mentoring by Meitheal Leader
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given
- Sessions with Guidance Counsellor (which may include Resilience-Building).

The following intervention strategies may be implemented also (see Ken Rigby; www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf):
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the student who was bullied
- The Method of Shared Concern
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method