



St. Clements College, South Circular Road, Limerick, Ireland  
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## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY:

St. Clement's College condemns all forms of bullying and commits itself to dealing quickly with all instances of bullying. The Board of Management strongly asserts the right of every member of the school community to work in a safe and non-threatening environment. A detailed policy is in place to deal in a pro-active manner with any instances of bullying.

### ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER:

Each student has the right to enjoy his learning and leisure free from bullying, both in the school and in the surrounding community and while engaged in school-related activities. Every member of staff has the right to enjoy his/her work and association with the St. Clement's College free from bullying, both in the school, in the surrounding community and while engaged in school-related activities. Pupils and staff alike should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying. We will be a school where RESPONSIBLE REPORTING is the norm. Victims of bullying will be offered help, advice and support. Perpetrators of bullying will be confronted and given realistic, firm and consistent guidelines to help control their behaviour.

Being a stakeholder in the school confers rights and responsibilities on you

My Rights	My Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I have the right to be safe in school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Physically safe</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Others are physically safe</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expect my property to be safe in school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The property of others is safe</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free from all forms of verbal bullying</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Others are free from verbal bullying</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free from extortion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Others are free from extortion</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free from emotional bullying</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Others are free from emotional bullying</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free from any hurtful remarks regarding person, ethnicity, religion and culture</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Others are free from any hurtful remarks regarding person, ethnicity, religion and culture.</li></ul>

### DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is an act of repeated aggressive behavior in order to intentionally hurt another person, physically or mentally. Bullying is characterized by an individual behaving in a certain way to gain power over another person (Besag, 1989). Behaviors may include name calling, verbal or written abuse, exclusion from activities, exclusion from social situations, physical abuse, or coercion (Carey, 2003; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Bullies may behave this way to be perceived as popular or tough or to get attention. They may bully out of jealousy or be acting out because they themselves are bullied (Crothers & Levinson, 2004).

### TYPES OF BULLYING

- Physical aggression:** that involves pushing, shoving, punching, picking, poking and tripping people up – may also take the form of severe physical assaults.
- Damage to property:** i.e. students personal property – clothing, books, bicycle, pupils lockers, etc.
- Extortion:** Demands for money may be accompanied threats if the person does not “pay”.
- Intimidation:** Aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon, i.e. a “look” of facial expression which conveys aggression or dislike.
- Abusive phone calls:** The abusive anonymous phone call is a form of verbal intimidation or bullying.
- Cyber Bullying:** Cyber bullying is the use of e-mails, instant messaging, chat rooms, cell phones, or other forms of information technology to deliberately harass, threaten, or intimidate someone. Cyber bullying can include such acts as making threats, sending provocative insults or racial or ethnic slurs, gay bashing, attempt to infect the victims computer with a virus, and flooding an email inbox with nonsense messages.
- Isolation:** a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some of the class groups.
- Name calling and Slagging:** Directed at the same individual(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behavior or remarks aimed again at the individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family – then it is bullying.

### THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

- Pupils being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable.
- Pupils' self-confidence may be damaged.
- Pupils' sufferings are indicated through changes in mood and behaviour.
- Bullying may result in suicide.



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## INDICATIONS OF BULLYING/BEHAVIOUR – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

1. Anxiety about traveling to and from school – requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for traveling to and from school.
2. Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching.
3. Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
4. Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches).
5. Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays.
6. Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, and difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
7. Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers.
8. Possessions missing or damaged.
9. Increased requests for money or stealing money.
10. Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing.
11. Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination those signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

## THE BULLY

1. It is accepted that bullying is learned behaviour.
2. The bully often convinces him/herself that the victim deserves the treatment meted out.

## PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. It is important to remember to report an incidence of bullying, you are not telling tales, but behaving responsibly.
2. Bring the incident to the attention of a teacher, class advisor, year head, school chaplain, and deputy principal or principal.
3. All pupils, in particular senior students, who are involved in our mentoring programme or a class teacher can be seen as a resource to assist in countering bullying. All students have responsibility for the safety and welfare of fellow students.
4. Parents are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying.
5. In the event of Cyber bullying take the following steps:
  - Do not reply
  - Block the sender
  - Save the message
  - Talk to someone

## ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

Where bullying is suspected the victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses are interviewed separately. If any degree of bullying is identified the following action should be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victim and the bullies.

We will support the victim in the following ways:

- a) By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with either their class advisor, year head, school counsellor or school chaplain.
- b) By informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- c) By offering continuing support when they need it.
- d) All incidents or reports of bullying will be recorded and given to the year head.
- e) By taking one or more of the steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We will try to prevent a reoccurrence of bullying in the following ways:

- a) Initial Investigation: a class teacher/counsellor communicates the victim's feelings to the bullies without accusing any individual. This will also involve – talk about what happened, discover why they became involved in order to get rid of the prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- b) By requesting the bully to seek counselling.
- c) By taking one or more of the steps described below to prevent bullying.

## OTHER METHODS USED AT ST. CLEMENT'S TO COUNTER ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

1. Mentoring Programme (Buddy System): this involves Senior Cycle Students, who are trained by the school's counselling staff in various mentoring techniques, e.g., listening skills, etc. This type of programme is mainly geared for first year/ new students.
2. Class Advisor Time: this is a group activity that allows students time and space to talk and listen to each other about their feelings under the supervision of the class advisor.
3. Questionnaires: Forms presented to the students that are designed to indicate the existence and extent of bullying.

**This policy will be applied in consideration of student's needs and is subject to periodic review.**