

BLACKROCK COLLEGE
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

VISION

Every person in the Blackrock College Community is entitled to participate in an environment free from fear and intimidation. Bullying is not tolerated in Blackrock College. It erodes relationships with God and with others. It undermines the spirit of the College. The school motto '**Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful, Be Grateful**' underpins this Anti-Bullying Policy.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by Tusla, the **Board of Management of Blackrock 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.

AIMS OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The aims of this Anti-Bullying Policy are:

1. To provide every student and staff member of the Blackrock College Community with an environment that is free from fear and intimidation.
2. To raise awareness of bullying as an inappropriate and uncaring mode of behaviour.
3. To ensure that all members of the Blackrock College Community, when aware of a bullying incident, feel comfortable in reporting such incidents.
4. To ensure that practices and procedures are in place to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying.
5. To put in place a programme of support for (i) those being bullied and (ii) those involved in bullying behaviour.
6. To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively by following the procedures that are in place.
7. To evaluate the effectiveness of school policy on Anti-Bullying behaviour.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is, therefore, fully committed to the following **key principles** of Best Practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

1. The creation of a **positive school culture and climate** which:
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non- threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;¹
2. The provision of **effective leadership**: where all persons in leadership roles – Principal, Deputy Principal, Deans, teachers, staff, pupils and parents - strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable.
3. The establishment of a **school-wide approach** which raises awareness among the entire school community – including school management, teachers, staff, pupils, parents, volunteers, etc. – that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
4. The building of a **shared understanding** of what bullying is and its impact;
5. The implementation of **education and prevention strategies** (including awareness raising measures) that:
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils and
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying.
6. The **effective supervision and monitoring of pupils** including through liaison with the Student Council and House Captains;
7. The **provision of supports for staff** to enable them to recognise bullying; and implement effective strategies to prevent it;
8. The consistent **recording, investigation and follow up** of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)² and
9. The **on-going evaluation** of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

¹ See Appendix 1 – Key Elements of a positive school culture and climate. Appendix 2 – Building a positive school culture and climate.

² See Appendix 6

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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.

TYPES OF BULLYING

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

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying (the act of bullying through electronic means)³
and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying; racist bullying; bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs; bullying based on religion, ethnicity, appearance, health condition or home circumstances; bullying based on a persons' membership of the Traveller community.

Once Off Private Messaging

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

Once Off Public Messaging

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 the definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the College'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* and in Appendix 4 to this Policy.

³ It takes place in a variety of ways which include: the posting of hurtful content on Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ etc.; the sending of abusive text messages and picture messages on a mobile phone; the sending of abusive emails, instant messages, on forums or on message boards; the creation of abusive accounts, pages or groups about someone; the posting of hurtful comments on other websites including Ask.fm or Spill.it.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF A BULLYING INCIDENT

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is the year Dean:

- i) The first point of contact for students/parents/guardians should be, at their election, the student's Counsellor, the Student's Dean, the School Chaplain, the Deputy Principal or the Principal.
- ii) If the first point of contact is the relevant Counsellor, the School Chaplain, the Deputy Principal or the Principal, he/she must report same to the Dean.
- iii) The relevant Counsellor is informed by the Dean about all cases of alleged bullying.
- iv) The Dean records the alleged bullying behaviour on the standardised recording template and reports same immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- v) Counselling for both the target of bullying and the transgressor is applied.
- vi) Meetings with parents/guardians are arranged.
- vii) The outcome of bullying incidents is recorded and kept on file.
- viii) Details of the Procedure are in Appendix 6.

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

It is our policy to develop in pupils a willingness to walk away from confrontation and find non-aggressive ways of dealing with problems. We discourage retaliation as it makes the situation worse rather than better. Pupils should inform a responsible person, e.g. Dean, Counsellor, Teacher, Chaplain, peer etc. of any difficulties so that appropriate action can be taken.

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, identity-based bullying including, in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:⁴

1. **Bullying Statement**

The posting of our Anti-Bullying Statement in all rooms and corridors of the school.

2. **Bullying Awareness Day**

The holding of a Bullying Awareness Day twice a year, usually at the start of both the academic (September) and calendar (January) year.

- The first day raises awareness around the issue of Bullying via whole-school engagement, distribution of letters explaining the purpose of the day to students and staff, poster campaigns, classroom lessons, use of T.V. screens in the schools and the reiteration of the College's Bullying Policy.
- The second day also raises awareness of the issue of bullying as well as promoting active involvement from the students, i.e. students attend talks from visiting speakers, e.g. from Facebook, lunchtime concert, student debates etc.

3. **Post of Responsibility**

The appointment of a Post of Responsibility-holder, currently Head of Guidance and Counselling, to prepare, oversee and review the Bullying Awareness Days.

4. **Year Assemblies**

The re-enforcement of the School Policy by the Deans at Year Assemblies.

⁴ More detail is contained in Appendix 3.

5. Vigilance

The vigilance of the Blackrock College community in identifying bullying incidents and initiating interventions when necessary. In this vigilance, we must develop a culture whereby incidents must be reported by highlighting the ‘Bystander Effect’.

6. Counsellor Meetings

The Counsellor in each year group meets the boys individually to establish a relationship of trust, and provide a confidential support service.

7. E-Mail Support Service

The provision of a confidential email support service:

tacklingbullying@blackrockcollege.com for students to inform about bullying incidents.

8. Report to Board of Management

The provision of a report from the Principal to the Board of Management each term identifying:

- (i) the overall number of bullying cases recorded
- (ii) confirming that all cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and the 2013 D.E.S procedures.

9. Other Reinforcement

The Anti-Bullying Message will be reinforced through

- RSE classes at the commencement of Transition Year with particular attention paid to the issue of identity based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Use of Notice Boards and T.V. screens to display relevant information throughout the College.
- Use of visiting speakers.
- Students’ attendance at key events such as Bullying Ambassador Training Days and the Cycle Against Suicide Student Leaders’ Congress
- Literacy Strategy - Use of appropriate language.

- In 2nd Year SPHE classes at the start of the academic year the Teacher will present to the boys on interpersonal skills and appropriate behaviour.

PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS AFFECTED BY BULLYING

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

- The relevant Counsellor will be informed by the Dean of all cases of bullying.
- Counselling for both the target of bullying and the transgressor will be applied with a view to resolving any issues and to restore, insofar as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- The Dean will liaise with parents of both parties involved and give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the College and the supports for our students.
- The Guidance & Counselling intervention team made up of the Head of Department, Year Counsellor, Dean and Principal/Deputy Principal will oversee all intervention strategies in support of the welfare of the student.
- House Captains

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF PUPILS

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place both to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible. These include the supervision schedule (part of Supervision and Substitution Scheme), the use of CCTV and the key role played by Deans, House Captains, Teachers, Coaches and Support Personnel.

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 pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils 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.

POLICY REVIEW

Blackrock College Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed annually as per the recommendation in the 2013 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. This Blackrock College Anti-Bullying Policy was last reviewed and updated in January, 2015.

The Committee involved in this review and update included Ms. Carleen McGee, Ms. Mary McMahon, Ms. Siobhan O'Connor and Mr. Niall Toolan in conjunction with the School Management.

The Policy was considered by both the Student and Parent Councils.

CONCLUSION

A whole-school approach to Bullying whereby parents, staff and pupils are vigilant and aware, promotes an environment where all pupils can be happy in the school community.

The school rules – **Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful, Be Grateful** – underscore this Policy and promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility amongst all members of our community.

We strongly disapprove of vulgar, offensive, sectarian, racist or other abusive behaviour and we actively promote **respect** for the dignity of the individual, qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding, and an awareness of the interdependence of people in group and community.

Staff members share a collegiate responsibility with the school management to act in preventing bullying behaviour by any member of the school community.

ADOPTION OF THIS POLICY BY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21 January, 2015.

PUBLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This Policy has been made available to College personnel, published on the College website and provided to both the Parents' Association and the Student Council. A copy of this Policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested.

REVIEW OF POLICY

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 College personnel, published on the College Website and provided to the Parents' Association.⁵ A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

APPENDICES

The Appendices to this Policy Document are:

- Appendix 1 Key Elements of a Positive School Culture and Climate
- Appendix 2 Practical Tips for Building a Positive School Culture and Climate
- Appendix 3 Education and Prevention Strategies
- Appendix 4 Signs and Symptoms of Bullying
- Appendix 5 Types of Bullying Behaviour
- Appendix 6 Investigation Procedures

⁵ See Appendix 9

Appendix 7 Report Form – to be submitted by Dean to Principal.

Appendix 8 Checklist for Board of Management Annual Review

Appendix 9 Board of Management Notification of Annual Review

Appendix 10 Further sources of information

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

**Chairperson
Board of Management**

Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: March 2017

APPENDIX 1

KEY ELEMENTS OF A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Through its Catholic identity, Blackrock College seeks to ensure an appreciation of the uniqueness and value of each member of the College community. It seeks to provide an environment that encourages an appreciation of self and of others. Respect for the dignity of each individual underpins the **Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful, Be Grateful** maxim of the College.

A central foundation to the creation of the positive culture and climate of the School is the role of the Dean, as co-ordinator of each boy's school experience. The Dean liaises with the parents, through the year committee and individually, and along with all of the other members of the community, seeks to promote a culture where each boy feels valued and contented. An integral part of this is affirmation and positive messaging.

Through the provision of an extensive and integrated curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programme, the house system, student leadership roles, guidance and counselling, Blackrock College seeks to provide its pupils with coping mechanisms to fulfil their spiritual, emotional, social, cultural, intellectual and academic potential.

Our school culture impels the boys to be both independent and collaborative learners, to be confident and creative, to be compassionate and concerned, to be Christian in outlook.

APPENDIX 2:
PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL
CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.

Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.

Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school.
Involve pupils in the development of these messages.

Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.

Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.

Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.

Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.

Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.

Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.

Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness-raising campaigns around social media.

Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.

Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil-friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.

All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.

Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.

College staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.

- Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of Student Councils.

APPENDIX 3:
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

A schoolwide approach is taken to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

The Principal, Deputy Principal, and the Dean lead in:

- Promoting the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Raising awareness on all aspects of bullying, to include students, parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- A Post of Responsibility has been established to prepare, oversee and review the Bullying Awareness Days.
- There is a focus on professional development with specific focus on training of the Deans.
- Councillors are provided for each Year group. The councillors meet the boys individually to establish a relationship of trust, and to provide a confidential support service.
- The Student Council is involved in contributing to a safe school environment by helping to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The Anti-Bullying code for the school is 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/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code Of Behaviour of the school every year.
- Regular whole school awareness measures are implemented, e.g. bullying awareness days, poster campaigns, student surveys, visiting speakers, year assemblies by the Principal/Deputy-Principal/Deans.
- A culture of telling is encouraged, with particular emphasis on the importance of the bystanders. In that way students will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It is made clear to students that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales or 'ratting' but are behaving responsibly. Students are encouraged that they may:
 - Make a direct approach to Dean/Counsellor/Teacher
 - Email
 - Use the ISPC Anti-Bullying Reporting Tool available on ...
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) friend to tell on their behalf

- Clear protocols have been established to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The Protocol will be kept under review and consultation with parents.
- The implementation of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school which includes the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the students' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports to the school, e.g. on school noticeboards, on the school website, the past pupils' union, the wider community, etc.
- The provision of a report from the Principal to the Board Of Management termly of the overall number of bullying cases recorded and confirmation that all cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the 2013 D.E.S. procedures.
- The attendance by students at key events such as Bullying Ambassador Training Days and the Cycle Against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress.
- The school-wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. #UP2US, Connect With Respect, etc.
- The school-wide delivery on Cyber Bullying (#UP2US, Connect With Respect)
- The school specifically considers 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.¹¹
- The encouragement of the Literacy Strategy – use of appropriate language, i.e. language is not to be used in a derogatory manner and, if it is, should be corrected as soon as is appropriate.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-academic staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to the Principal or Deputy-Principal. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

Implementation of curricula

The Anti-Bullying message is also reinforced in the full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula.

SPHE RESOURCES

- Investigating and Resolving Bullying Issues In Schools – First Steps for Teachers
- Responding to Bullying – First Steps for Teachers
- R U B n Bullied – Tips for Teens
- B4U Decide
- Busy Bodies Booklet
- Working Things Out through SPHE
- Be SAFE_Be WEBWISE

SPHE/Curricula Supports:

Department of Education and Skills – www.education.ie

Health Service Executive – www.hse.ie

Leaflets/Resources – www.healthpromotion.ie

Department of Health and Children – www.dohc.ie

Department of Children and Youth affairs – www.dcy.gov.ie

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment – www.ncca.ie

Mental Health Information – www.reachout.com

Mental Health Promotion Information and Support – www.headsup.ie

- There is continuous professional development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- RSE classes at the commencement of Transition Year will convey the anti-bullying message with specific reference to identity-based bullying such as racist, religious, homophobic or transphobic bullying.

APPENDIX 4:
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

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

- Anxiety about travelling to or from school - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching;
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- 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;
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about pupils or teachers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- Unexplained bruising, cuts or damaged clothing;
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him.

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

WHEN/WHERE DOES BULLYING HAPPEN?

- On the way to and from school – bus, DART, LUAS, local shops;
- Between classes – toilets, corridors, assembly areas, refectory, church;
- During class – sneering, isolation, interference with books/property;
- After school – changing rooms, showers, pitches;

All the time - cyber-bullying via social networking sites, online forums, message boards, emails, text messages.

CYBER-BULLYING⁶:

- i) Students should NOT reply to any messages or comments made.
- ii) Students should inform someone they trust of what is happening e.g. friend, parent, staff member. Alternatively, students can email:
tacklingbullying@blackrockcollege.com
- iii) Students should keep records of all hurtful comments/texts e.g. screenshots, photos, etc.
- iii) Students should use blocking facilities to prevent the person/group from bullying on Social Networking sites.
- iv) Students should report the cyber-bully(ies) to the Social Network or use Social Reporting.
- v) If the problem persists, it may be necessary for students to delete their account(s).

⁶ It takes place in a variety of ways which include: the posting of hurtful content on Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ etc.; the sending of abusive text messages and picture messages on a mobile phone; the sending of abusive emails, instant messages, on forums or on message boards; the creation of abusive accounts, pages or groups about someone; the posting of hurtful comments on other websites including Ask.fm or Spill.it.

APPENDIX 5:

TYPES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

<p>General behaviours which apply to all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression. • Damage to property. • Name calling. • Slagging. • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person. • Offensive graffiti. • Extortion. • Intimidation. • Insulting or offensive gestures. • Invasion of personal space. • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation. • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual. • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name. • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight. • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online. • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images. • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group in order to cause hurt. • Cyber-stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his safety. • Silent or abusive telephone/mobile phone calls. • Abusive text messages and/or abusive emails. • Abusive communication on social networks, e.g. Facebook, Ask.fm, Twitter, You tube or on games consoles. • Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures. • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.
<p>IDENTITY BASED BEHAVIOURS</p> <p>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability,</p>	

race and membership of the traveller community).	
Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation. • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation. • Name calling, e.g. gay, queer...used in a derogatory manner. • Physical intimidation or attacks. • Threats.
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background. • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above.
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying.</p> <p>Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Malicious gossip. • Isolation and exclusion. • Ignoring. • Excluding from the group. • Taking someone’s friends away. • Spreading rumours. • Breaking confidence. • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear.
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching. • Harassment.
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling. • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs. • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying. • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person’s disability. • Setting others up for ridicule.

APPENDIX 6:

INVESTIGATION 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 apportion blame).

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.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to the Student's Counsellor, the Student's Dean, the School Chaplain, the Deputy Principal or the Principal.
- Teaching and Support staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant Dean;

Investigating and Dealing with Incidents

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant Dean.
- The Dean will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of 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 will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- 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 Dean.

- The Dean will consider whether it may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- The Dean will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- In cases where it has been determined by the Dean that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given 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 pupils.
- Where the Dean has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It will be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.
- The Dean will attempt to negotiate agreement between pupils and will follow these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils 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.

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 parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

Dissatisfaction with Outcome

- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be advised of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Pupils.

Recording of Bullying Behaviour

The school's procedures for noting and recording bullying behaviour are as follows:

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the Dean.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Dean, the Dean must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The Dean must inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.
- If it is established by the Dean that bullying has occurred, the Dean must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The Dean must use the recording template at **Appendix 7** to record the bullying behaviour.

The recording template must be retained by the Dean in question and a copy maintained by the Principal.

The records are retained on the boy's file in the Principal's Office and only the Principal and Deputy Principal have access to these files. The file is kept there until the pupil leaves the school. Thereafter the file is maintained on site with access available to the Principal only.

APPENDIX 8:

CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Management undertakes an annual review of the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation. The following checklist is 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 will be required, involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate, across the various elements, of the implementation of the College's Anti-Bullying Policy.]

YES/NO

Has the Board formally adopted an Anti-Bullying Policy that fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?	
Has the Board published the Policy on the College Website and provided a copy to the Parents' Association?	
Has the Board ensured that the Policy has been made available to College staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that College 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 College 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 College 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 College's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	

Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the College'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) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the College'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)

APPENDIX 9:

**NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S ANNUAL
REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY⁷**

TO: _____

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

- **The Board of Management's annual review of the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].**

This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Principal

⁷ To be provided to DEA (or Department)

APPENDIX 10:

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information please refer to the other policy documents of Blackrock College:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Best Practice – Relationships Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Mission Statement
- Serious Misconduct Policy
- S.E.N Policy
- Student Council Constitution

All of the above policies can be viewed online at:

<http://www.blackrockcollege.ie/blackrock/www/index.asp?magpage=24>

The following Anti-Bullying Agencies – websites provide useful information.

- <http://www.abc.tcd.ie/school.html>
- <http://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie/>
- <http://www.antibullyingireland.com/>
- <http://www.barnardos.ie>
- <http://childline.ie>
- <http://esafety.ie>
- <http://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/>
- <http://npcpp.ie>
- <http://www.reachout.com>
- <http://www.samaritans.org>
- <http://www.teenline.ie/>
- <http://www.webwise.ie/>