Plean Scoile

St Fiacc's NS

Anti-Cyberbullying Policy

St. Fiacc's N.S.
Fírinne le Misneach

Formulated/Ratified/Reviewed	By
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Signed Chairperson BOM

Liam Dooley

Anti-Cyber-Bullying Policy

Introduction
Cyber-Bullying can be very damaging to individuals, and disruptive to school life. Though new technology brings incredible opportunities for educators as well as young people, it is crucial that everyone knows how to use this technology responsibly and that policies are in place to support and encourage responsible use.

Scope
This document is aimed at combating cyber-bullying. Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons. Cyber-bullying includes is the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone. It may take the form of general insults or impersonation, defamation or prejudice based bullying.

While this policy addresses issues related to cyber-bullying of students (i.e. situations in which one or more students are the victim(s) of bullying), the policy also applies to teaching and other school staff, parents/guardians, and others insofar as measures under the policy relate to them.

This policy applies to activities and events that take place:

- During school time (including break times)
- Going to and from school
- School tours/trips
- Extra-curricular activities

St Fiacc's reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

Objectives:
This policy aims to ensure that:

1. Students, staff and parents know about cyber bullying and its effects;

2. Members of the school community have the knowledge, policies and procedures to prevent and, if necessary, to deal with cyber-bullying in school or within the school community; and

3. The school monitors the effectiveness of its procedures and amends them where necessary.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school (school's mission/vision/aims)
St Fiacc's is committed, to the extent permissible by available resources, to helping members of the school community to enhance their learning experiences through the use of modern technology. The school acknowledges that information and Communication Technologies can play an important role in supporting learning, but also that they can be misused and can present risks.

The School aims to equip members of the school community with the skills and knowledge needed to use these technologies in a safe and responsible manner and to assisting those that encounter difficulties. The School also recognises that it must be vigilant towards bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School.

St Fiacc's aims to create a caring environment where those in the school community can work and learn without fear of being bullied. St Fiacc's aims to educate and inform its students as to how to use communications equipment responsibly and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

Goals

1. To create a school ethos which encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of cyber-bullying behavior.

2. To raise awareness of cyber-bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour with school management, teachers, students, parents/guardians.

3. To ensure that the school's Social, Personal and Health Education programme raises awareness of the factors associated with cyber-bullying behavior and develops appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours.

4. To take practical actions to prevent incidents of cyber-bullying behavior e.g. to ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.

5. To develop procedures for reporting and recording incidents of cyber-bullying behavior.

6. To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of cyber-bullying behavior.

7. To develop a programme of support for those affected by cyber-bullying behavior and those involved in cyber-bullying behavior.

8. To work with, and through, the various local agencies in countering all forms of cyber-bullying and anti-social behavior.

Key Measures
- Mr Bolton will act as a Cyber-Safety Officer, to oversee the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and monitor their effectiveness.

- The Cyber-Safety Officer will ensure that the school maintains details of agencies and resources that may assist in preventing and addressing bullying.

- Staff will be trained to identify signs of cyber bullying and will be helped to keep informed about the technologies that children commonly use.

- A code of advice will be developed, periodically reviewed and communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying (as perpetrator or as victim) and to advise them on reporting any incidents.

- Students will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at the School.

- Students and staff are expected to comply with the school's policy on the use of computers in the School.

- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.

Definition of Cyber-Bullying:

Cyber-Bullying is aggression conducted by an individual or a group against others - such aggressive behavior being committed via electronic means or via exclusion from electronic communities or interactions.

Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) the communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons. Cyber-bullying includes is the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone. It may take the form of general insults or impersonation, defamation or prejudice based bullying.

Types of behavior involved

These guidelines provide assistance in identifying and describing the types of behavior involved in cyber-bullying. The means of cyber-bullying are constantly changing and the following list of types of bullying behaviour can be expanded in light of the experience of the school community:

Hate sites
- Building websites that are dedicated to making fun out of someone.

- Encouraging other people to join the bullying by publishing someone's personal details or linking to their social network page.

Abusive messages
- Transmitting abusive and/or threatening messages.

Chat rooms and discussion forums
- Posting cruel and/or or abusive comments about someone.

Mobile phone
- Sending humiliating and abusive video messages or photographic images messages.

- Making silent or abusive phone calls.

- Sending abusive text messages.

Interactive gaming

- Locking victims out of games.

- Spreading false rumours about someone

- Hacking into someone's account.

Sending viruses

- Sending hacking programs to another person.

- Unauthorised interference with a computer device.

Abusing personal information
- Transmitting personal photos, videos emails

Blogs
Posting blogs where others could see them without the owner of the blog's permission.

Prevention and Response
The school informs students about cyber bullying and also takes available steps to counter and respond to it.

The following measures represent the core of the School's anti cyber-bullying activities:

- A positive school culture and climate;

- School-wide approach;

- Effective leadership;

- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;

- Anti-bullying policies;

- Consistent recording of reported bullying behaviour;

- Education and training;

- Prevention strategies including awareness raising;

- Intervention strategies.

St Fiacc's trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it.

St Fiacc's records all reported incidents of bullying behaviour including anonymous bullying reports.

St Fiacc's provides information on cyber-bullying to all members of the school community.

St Fiacc's engages prevention and awareness raising measures and implements strategies to engage students in addressing problems when they see them.

St Fiacc's is a "telling school". If a member of the school community "speaks out" and reports an incident of cyber-bullying appropriate action will be taken.

St Fiacc's endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in the Computer Room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the centre of what we do, St Fiacc's reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.

St Fiacc's supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Gardaí and other State agencies to identify those involved in criminal acts and to support victims.

St Fiacc's will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both inside and outside the school.

All members of the School community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Principal any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

Linkage with other policies

Code of Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy: The Cyber Bullying policy is part of the school's anti-bullying policy and code of behavior by association.

Health & Safety Policy; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy; ICT Policy; Digital Learning Framework; Online learning Policy