Anti-Bullying Policy

ST. OLIVER'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASPIRES TO PROVIDE A JUST AND CARING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE CAN LEARN AND GROW TO OUR FULL POTENTIAL.

1. 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 St. Oliver's Community College has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour and within the context of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) child protection guidelines. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. St Oliver's Community College (SOCC) believes that all members of the school community are entitled to a school environment, which is free from bullying and the fear of bullying. All members of the school community will be encouraged to support such an environment. All members of the school community will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying.

3. The primary aim of the policy is to resolve any issues and restore relationships as far as is practicable.

4. 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:

- A positive school culture and climate which-
  - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - encourages pupils 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 pupils; and
  - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- 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.

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5. Definitions

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as "**unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (s) and which is repeated over time.**

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

Verbal bullying such as name-calling, jeering, teasing, taunting, slagging, threatening.

Physical bullying such as hitting, spitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, stealing, vandalising, damaging property, intimidating.

Psychological bullying such as excluding, isolating, ridiculing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, passing notes, using peer pressure to intimidate, threatening gestures or looks.

Reciprocal aggression with ongoing hurtful banter.

Sexual bullying such as unwelcome sexual comments, touching body parts, spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation, taunting a person of different sexual orientation.

Racist bullying such as discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, or cultural ethnicity.

Relational victimisation, manipulating relationships eg. ignoring or excluding from the group, ostracism, breaking confidence, spreading rumours, huddling together as a way of excluding others, talking loudly so that the excluded person can hear, looking "daggers", abusive letters, drawings, texts, e-mail, social media messages, phone calls.

Extortionate bullying to extort items such as money and other property or to force students to carry out actions against their will.

Identity-based bullying such homophobic, transphobic or transgender; or bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs. It also includes bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community.

Cyber bullying is a form of social bullying that uses technological communications to humiliate, harass, embarrass tease, intimidate, threaten or slander an individual or group of people. Cyber bullies use instant messages, texts, e-mails, chat rooms, mobile phones, social networking or blogs and interactive games. Cyber bullying is the act of being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or compromising photographs online or through a mobile phone.

6. Clarification of exclusions

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

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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.

7. Effects of Bullying on Young People

Some of the effects which may become obvious or apparent when a student is being bullied include:

Fear	Reluctance to go to school
Anxiety	Negative attitude/Difficult/Argumentative
Depression	Bruises, Cuts, Sprains, scracthes or torn clothes
Reduced self-esteem	Damage to or loss of property
Lack of concentration on school work	Suicidal thoughts and self-harm
Feeling of isolation	Withdrawal – Non-engagement

8. Reporting a bullying incident

A student, parent/guardian or other person may report an incident of bullying or suspected bullying.
Reports of bullying incidents can be made to:

Any staff member	Form teacher
Year head	Principal
Deputy principal	Guidance counsellor
HSCL staff	SCP staff
Office staff	Caretaker
Chaplain	Student mentor
Student friend	

Reports of bullying incidents can be made via:

- Verbal report
- Note to staff member
- E-mail info@socc.ie
- Website worry box

9. Parental support

What can parents do to help their children cope during a bullying incident.

- It is not advisable to advocate hitting back
- Teach them some coping strategies
- Encourage them to tell
- Stay with friends - avoid bullies
- Avoid provoking a bully
- Encourage assertiveness and not aggression
- save any abusive phone, online or multimedia message and report them to the Garda.

What should a parent do if they know that their son/daughter is being bullied?

- Assure them that it is not their fault and that you will help them sort it out
- Contact the school - arrange an appointment with the relevant teacher
- Prepare for that meeting - bring notes and details of the events from your child's point of view
- Ask that the incident be investigated and what supports the school can offer your child
- Work with the school to develop a strategy to deal with the problem

10. Procedures for Investigation, Recording and Follow up of bullying behaviour

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:

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and/or dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

Any staff member	Form teacher
Year head	Principal
Deputy principal	Guidance counsellor
HSCL staff	SCP staff

When a student reports an incident of bullying they will be reassured that they have made an important step towards the resolution of the situation.

The student will be interviewed privately and asked how they would like the situation to be resolved. A written statement will be taken. (S)he will be regularly met with to ensure that bullying has stopped and is not resumed.

The student against whom the allegations have been made will be interviewed separately and their side of the story listened to. A written statement will be taken. (S)he will be regularly met to ensure any bullying behaviour which may have happened has stopped.

Anyone else who may have witnessed the incident will also be interviewed in order to get a fuller understanding of the incident and written statements taken.

DRAFT

Parents will be contacted, informed and their support sought.

Any student affected by the bullying will be supported and referred, if appropriate, to counselling or other support services available.

Those found to be bullying will be supported in order to raise their awareness of the effects of their actions and to prevent such behaviour continuing. If appropriate he/she will be sanctioned in line with the SOCC Code of Behaviour.

If the bullied student is agreeable, follow up meetings with those involved will be arranged.

All interventions will be noted by the relevant teacher* on the (yellow) SOCC bullying report form. If the bullying behaviour continues and / or the situation is not resolved this form will be passed to the year head / D. Principal / Principal / Pastoral team** for further action. This may include seeking the assistance of outside agencies where appropriate and available.

*The relevant teacher is the teacher actively involved in the intervention.

**The pastoral team will include the Principal and/or Deputy, Year Head, Form Teacher, HSCL, Guidance Councillor, SCP staff.

When the intervention is complete the files will be passed on to the appropriate year head(s) for retention.

N.B. THE STAFF MEMBER TO WHOM THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS INITIALLY BEEN REPORTED IS REQUIRED TO CHECK THAT THE INCIDENT HAS BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS OF THE REPORT BEING MADE.

SHOULD (S)HE NOT BE SATISFIED THAT THAT IS THE CASE, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL / D. PRINCIPAL.

11. Education and Prevention Strategies
The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) in place in the school include:

11.1 Education Strategies
To create the positive school environment in which an anti-bullying ethos and culture is maintained, it is important to ensure that all members of the school community are made aware and are prepared to meet the challenges and issues presented by bullying incidents. In this light, the following educational strategies form part of the SOCC anti-bullying approach.

- Anti-bullying policy to be included in the Information pack issued to all parents/guardians.

- All students to be informed of the anti-bullying policy and procedures. 1st years to be informed of these during the induction days.

- Policy and strategies to be outlined to parents/guardians of incoming first years at the Information meeting in May.

- SPHE programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying)

- RSE programme (includes material on cyber, homophobic and transphobic bullying)

- An anti-bullying programme.

- PX2 personal development programme.

- Anti-bullying week.

- Friendship week.

- Acceptable use of the internet policy (includes material on cyber bullying).

- Specific lesson plans have been drawn up to deal with cyber bullying for the use of any staff member.

- Subject Dept. specific action plan to prevent bullying in the classroom.

- Subject dept. exploration of issues such as inclusion, diversity and interdependence.

- Meditation exercises in Suaimhneas for those affected by bullying.

- Guest speakers for parents, students and staff.(CPD)

- Awareness raising events such as Anti-bullying week co-ordinated by SPHE dept.

- Training of new staff in an anti-bullying programme by SPHE dept.

- School clubs, teams etc highlight interdependence.

- Support programmes for those affected by bullying eg SCP, HSCL, Counselling, SEN, JCSP

- Counselling service for individuals affected.

- Collation and dissemination of background information from primary schools to teaching staff.

11.2   Prevention Strategies

To perpetuate SOCC anti-bullying ethos it is important that the anti-bullying message is kept to the forefront of everyone's mind.

11.2.1 Students

The following measures are undertaken to raise awareness of the need of positive school climate among the student body.

- SPHE programme.

- Reinforcing positive student efforts.

- Building student self confidence.

- Subject specific preventative measures.

- Assemblies

- Liaising with primary schools.

- Anti-bullying week

DRAFT

- Friendship week.

- Welcome ceremony for 1st years.

- Graduation ceremony for 6th years.

- School tours / bonding trips

- Inclusive & Anti-bullying posters / leaflets.

- Plasmas screen messages.

- Mentor"buddies" for 1st years.

- Worry box / web page link.

- Student surveys.

- Visible teacher presence.

- Support programmes from SCP / HSCL / SEN / RSE /JCSP

- Clear instructions re."who to tell" & "how to tell" & "what to expect"

11.2.2 Staff

This process of raising awareness among all staff members in the school community is achieved in the following ways.

- Staff meetings

- Training for new members in an anti-bullying programme.

- C.P.D.

- All staff have a copy of the policy and procedures.

- Some staff are trained in PX2 programme.

- Whole staff participation in awareness raising events eg.Anti-bullying week, Friendship week etc.

- Each subject dept. has an action plan re. Preventative measures.

- Meditation programme in Suaimhneas.

- Support programmes in SPHE / RSE / SCP / HSCL / Guidance / JCSP / SEN.

11.2.3 Curriculum.

The curriculum actively supports the creation of a positive school culture with a focus on preventing and minimising the impact of bullying on students.

- SPHE - an anti-bullying programme is integrated into the school curriculum. It is taught to all incoming 1st classes. Strategies suggested in the programme will be used as appropriate.

- RSE programme.

- Each subject dept. promotes an anti-bullying ethos and has agreed specific preventative measures.

- The 1st year induction program includes an anti-bullying section.

- The information pack relevant to those wishing to enrol includes SOCC anti-bullying strategy.

11.2.5 Initiatives

Other examples of school initiatives which support the creation of a positive environment and the anti-bullying ethos include:

- Display anti-bullying and welcoming diversity posters.

- Liaise with primary schools.

- June "fun days".

- 1st year induction days.

- 1st year "welcome ceremony".

- Provide supervision for all social areas before and after school and during morning and afternoon breaks.

- SNA supervision for SEN students 8.15am – 9.00am and 3.30pm-4.00pm

- Subject specific preventative measures for classrooms.

- Group exercises eg school trips, extra curricular clubs and societies, team sports.

- Principal's weekly awards.

- Student council to raise concerns.

- Student surveys.

- Raising awareness among non-teaching staff.

- Extending supervision beyond the confines of the school grounds.

- Parent courses in positive parenting.eg. Settling your child into secondary school.

- School brochure issued in September outlining how to support your child.

- STEPS programme.

- Cyber bullying lesson plan available for any staff member.

- Student mentor involvement with 1st years.

- SCP programme.

- Dissemination of background information to staff.

- HSCL home visits.

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12. Programmes of Support

Anti-bullying support programmes have been developed in:

- SPHE
- SCP
- RSE
- HSCL
- JCSP
- SEN
- Guidance
- NEPS (Effective Communication Programmes)
- IT department

13. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

14. 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.

15. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

16. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

17. 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' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____   Date: _____
            (Chairperson, Student Council)

Signed: _____   Date: _____
            (Chairperson, Parent Council)

Signed: _____   Date: _____
            (On behalf of Staff of SOCC)

Signed: _____   Date: _____
            (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date of next review: _____

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Appendix 1   SOCC Anti-Bullying Procedures

ANTI – BULLYING PROCEDURES

SOCC anti bullying policy and procedures are to be read and followed in the context of the D.E.S. CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES.

Teachers should take a calm, unemotional, problem solving approach when dealing with reported incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.

LEVEL ONE: Adopt an informal approach to resolving the issue.

Speak to all parties in private. Useful questions...who what where when why.

Ask the student how s/he would like the situation to be resolved.

Get a written account from all parties.

If a group is involved interview each member individually.

Thereafter, if appropriate, interview the group together when each member should be asked for his/her account.

Contact parents of all involved at an early stage to inform them and explain actions being taken and to give parents an opportunity to discuss how they can help.

If it has been determined that bullying has happened the offence should be made clear to the student and efforts should be made to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

Record all steps on the bullying report form and give the report to the year head for a) filing b) further action.

If the bullied student is agreeable, follow up meetings with those involved should be arranged

LEVEL TWO: If the incident is serious / unresolved / part of a pattern report the matter to the Year Head who will

Consult with staff members and form teachers.

Collate all evidence.

Contact parents / guardians

Maintain regular links with the bullied student.

Monitor the student who has bullied.

Refer those affected to a relevant agency as appropriate eg. HSCL / Guidance / SCP/ NEPS / other.

The Code of discipline may be used as an intervention.

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LEVEL THREE: If the problem persists refer to the pastoral team (Guidance /HSCL / SCP/ Form teacher/ Yearhead /SPHE rep. / Deputy Principal / Principal) who will

Inform / meet with parents

Liaise with bullied student

Monitor student who has bullied.

Liaise with HSCL / SCP / Guidance / NEPS / HSE Child & Family services/ Social services / Gardai /other agencies.

N.B. IF THE RELEVANT TEACHER CONSIDERS THAT THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS AFTER IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY.

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Appendix 2   Bullying Incident Report Form

Insert St. Oliver's Bullying Report Form (Yellow Form) here

Appendix 3　Form for Recording Bullying Behaviour and Report to Principal/D. Principal from Staff Member if the staff member considers the bullying incident HAS NOT been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after it has been determined that bullying has occurred.

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____Class_____

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

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

Pupil concerned		Teacher	
Other Pupil		Other	
Parent			

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

		Please give further details/notes
Outdoor area		
Classroom		
Corridor/Common area		
Toilets		
School Bus		
Other		

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

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

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

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

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

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4   Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy by BOM

	Y/N
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 school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
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 handling of a bullying situation?	
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) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
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)

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Appendix 5 - Useful Numbers and Contact Details

How to contact online service providers

- **To report content on Facebook**
  www.facebok.com/help

- **To report content on YouTube**
  http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/bin/request.py

- **To report content on AskFM**
  http://ask.fm/about/safety

- **To report content on Instagram**
  http://help.instagram.com/527320407282978
  Press 'Report Inappropriate' button

Useful advice

- **Webwise**
  www.webwise.ie
  Provides parents, teachers and students advice and information about potential dangers online

- **Child Line**
  www.childline.ie
  Advice on child protection issues

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