

# DE LA SALLE COLLEGE



## COUNTER-BULLYING POLICY

*“YOU SHALL NOT TAKE VENGEANCE OR BEAR A GRUDGE AGAINST THE SONS OF YOUR OWN PEOPLE, BUT YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF: I AM THE LORD.”*

**LEVITICUS 19:18**

Compiled by: The College Director	Last Reviewed: June 2025
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De La Salle College recognises its responsibility under the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child to act as duty holders to protect the rights of the child.

As such, this policy aims to encourage non-discrimination (Article 2) and protect pupils rights to be safe (Article 6) and to access their right to an education (Articles 28 and 29).

It was created in consultation with our school Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, taking on board their views (Article 12).

## Confidentiality

In the College's endeavours to safeguard and protect all students within our community, the College cannot guarantee confidentiality in matters relating to Pastoral care. If any member of staff has any safeguarding concerns for your son, either through conversation or observation, they are duty bound to report the concern to the appropriate safeguarding lead at the College, in line with the College Safeguarding policy.

## Definition of Bullying

De La Salle College adopts the definition of the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

***Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms. To be classed as a bullying act, the perpetrator needs to have a social and premeditated awareness that the act is malicious and will cause physical and or emotional harm.***

***Accounts of children and young people, backed up by research, identify bullying as any behaviour that is:***

- Emotional and physically harmful
- It can be carried out by an individual or a group
- Deliberate and wilful with a premeditated intent to cause harm
- Occurs more than once
- An imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling threatened

Children and young people or adults can instigate bullying and each can be bullied, in any combination. Research shows that two-thirds of children who bully others do so because they themselves are being bullied elsewhere.

We recognise that bullying behaviours can occur in any settings, and we do not view activity to counter bullying as an indicator that the College has a particular problem with bullying. Instead, we take this to be an indicator that the College takes the responsibility to counter bullying seriously.

Although we facilitate such approaches to friendship disputes, we recognise that conflict resolution and peer mediation does not work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset students who have been bullied.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and the Behavioural Policy.

## Aims

- The aim of our Counter Bullying policy is to increase understanding and awareness of the main issues around bullying for students, parents and staff.
- We want to clearly state for boys, parents and staff that all forms of bullying are always completely unacceptable and that no individual should be subjected to it.
- Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in school, and to be protected when he is feeling vulnerable. We want all students to enjoy school in a safe environment.
- We wish to encourage an environment where independence, diversity and difference is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear.
- We aim to guide our students, parents and staff on how to appropriately respond to bullying situations and what steps to take to respond in a productive and positive manner.
- We also want to ensure all parties involved in the bullying event are supported appropriately. This includes both the victim and perpetrator(s) as both parties will have underlying need for support in the aftermath of such an event.

## Types of Bullying

Bullying generally takes the form of emotionally or physically harmful behaviour. It can include any of the following: name calling, taunting, threats, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings, gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untrue rumours. These activities can take place face-to-face, via third parties, or via other means such as text messages and emails. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

## Forms of Bullying

There are two forms of Bullying: **Direct** and **Indirect**.

### Direct

Direct bullying is classed as the process of carrying out an act of bullying as described above. A person can be accused of direct bullying if they proactively engage in acts that involve 'actual' harm of another person emotionally, socially and/or physically.

### Indirect

Indirect bullying is by means of incitement and other forms of the 'encouraging and supporting' of others to harm or bully another person. Examples of this include passing on messages, liking on Facebook or other media; watching physical acts without action and any other means of facilitating acts of aggression and harm.

## Different types of bullying include

**Physical** – hitting, kicking, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings

**Verbal** – name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down

**Emotional/Psychological** – excluding someone from a group, humiliation, encouraging hate, highlighting differences and highlighting weaknesses

**Racist** – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence, use of racial motivated imagery

**Sexual** – sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact, encouragement of posting inappropriate photographs and other material

**Homophobic** – insulting language/gestures, name-calling based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti and homophobic violence

**Electronic/Cyber** – bullying by text message, bullying on the internet (in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and through instant messaging services), hate websites, using photographs, happy slapping etc.

## Creating a culture of counter-bullying

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community, regardless of role, status or age, to facilitate a culture of non-aggression and emotional support in school. Although Anti-Bullying Week is an opportunity to focus some specific work around bullying in school, creating and maintaining a counter-bullying culture in school is a priority at De La Salle all year round.

### Guidelines for Boys

If you are being bullied, please tell us straight away or someone you trust who can help. If this is not possible for some reason, talk to a friend, but don't ignore it as it might not go away. You can tell someone discreetly, someone you feel will listen, this may be:

- Your parents
- Someone you trust at school
- An Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- A teacher, your House Tutor, your Class Teacher, your Head of House or a senior teacher
- School Counsellor
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- A member of the Office Staff
- A member of the Sixth Form Leadership team

We will always do our best to manage the situation appropriately and will do all that we can to support you.

If you know of someone else who is being bullied, try to immediately support that person if you can. Advise them to tell someone from the list above, and go with them to give them moral support. If they do not want to, either write a confidential note for the suggestion box, or privately speak to a person from the list above.

*Be proud to be kind and choose to be respectful.*

## Guidelines for Parents

If you think that your child may be being bullied, or he tells you that he is being bullied, please let us know straight away.

Reassure your son that we will deal with the matter sensitively but firmly.

### Useful Suggestions to Help

- Support your son as soon as you become aware there is a problem.
- Listen to your son - be patient and sensitive.
- Assure your son that the bullying is not their fault.
- Try to agree a way forward with your son.
- Make a note of everything you have been told.
- Contact the school at an early stage.
- Be honest and stick to the facts.

### We Advise Against

- Jumping to conclusions – many situations are easily resolvable.
- Interrogating your son – this can increase the stress on an already anxious child.
- Making promises you cannot keep - e.g., on confidentiality.
- Telling your child to ignore the bullying (seek support from school and your son's Head of House, we can help).
- Blaming your child for being bullied. Even if he or she provoked the bully, no one deserves to be bullied.
- Telling your child to physically fight back against the pupil who is bullying. It could get your child hurt, suspended, or removed from school.
- Contacting the other parents involved. It may make matters worse. School or other officials can act as mediators between parents.

If your son tells us they are being bullied, or we discover that this is the case, we will contact you, and will discuss together how best this situation can be resolved.

## Guidelines for all Staff

If you think that bullying is happening, follow the Primary or Secondary protocols for dealing with incidents, informing the relevant staff. We need to be vigilant in the classroom when observing the interaction of boys amongst themselves and with classroom management strategies.

We need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and travelling times, around corridors between lessons and in the areas of the playground, hall and toilets. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable, and bullying is not easily seen.

If you are informed, or suspect, that bullying is taking place the details of who to contact and the correct procedures to follow can be found in the relevant school staff handbook.

Curriculum work can enhance this policy in two ways:

1. By dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way that explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties.
2. By using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings, so that boys extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.

Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support both the bullied child and the child doing the bullying.

Follow-up. Show a commitment to making bullying stop. Because bullying is a behaviour pattern that is often repeated, it takes consistent effort to ensure that it stops.

### How staff can support the Counter-Bullying policy

Classroom teachers can limit the opportunity of bullying occurring by following some simple suggestions;

1. Be visible in the corridors and congested areas at lesson change over time.
2. Be on time to meet at the classroom door, using Positive Behaviour Management.
3. Positioning and movement around the classroom, listening out for inappropriate comments.
4. Intervene immediately at the first sign of conflict and report anything of concern to Heads of House and House Tutors.
5. Where possible issues have occurred, informing the next class teacher as well as the pastoral team may help to alleviate any further issues.

Teachers on duty can limit the opportunity of bullying occurring by following some simple suggestions;

1. While on duty, be aware of the areas where bullying is more likely to occur and patrol these areas.
2. Be extra vigilant against the use of mobile phones in school.
3. Intervene as early as possible if you witness behaviour causing concern.
4. Report anything of concern to Heads of House and House Tutors.

### Heads of House have responsibility for:

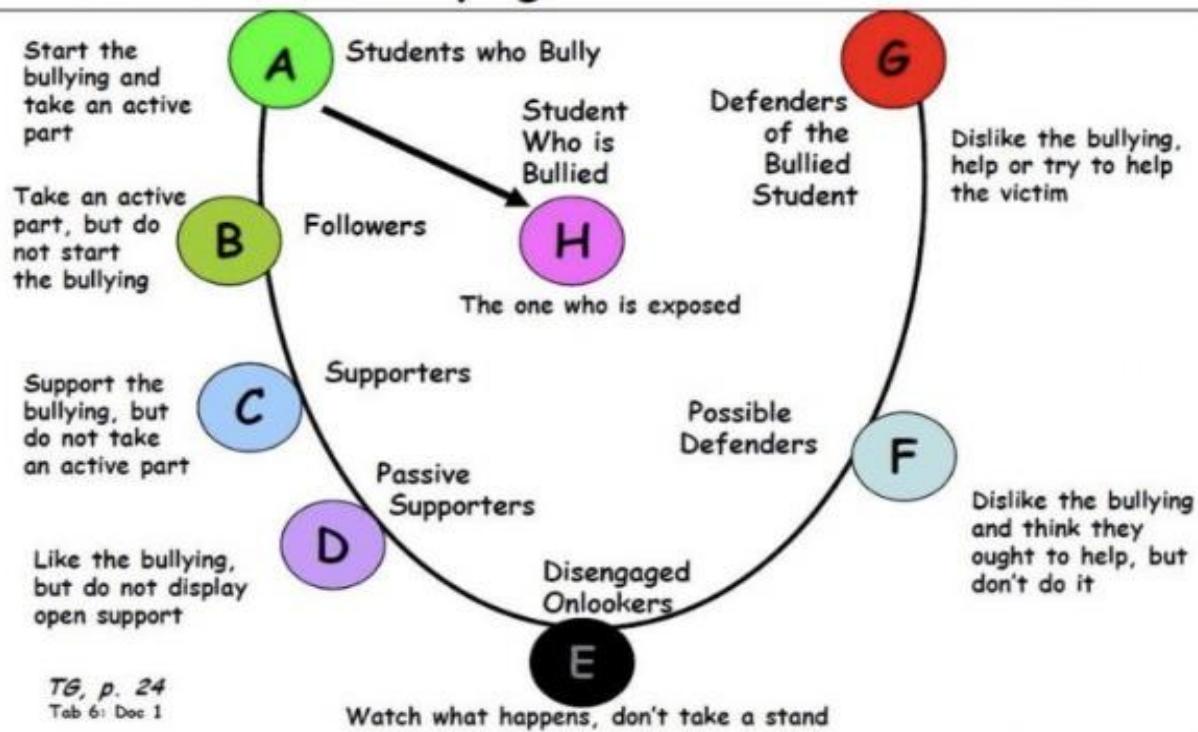
- In collaboration with the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral), investigating any alleged incidents of bullying to determine whether the behaviours should be recorded as bullying (all other behaviours to be addressed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy)
- Where bullying has taken place, engaging with the parents of both students who have been bullied and students who have bullied to enlist their support and provide them with/signpost them to support
- Co-ordinating, monitoring and reviewing support for students who have been bullied and students who have bullied
- Co-ordinating support for other students involved in incidents of bullying, including reminding all students of the College's ethos and values
- Leading the provision of the pastoral curriculum (including counter bullying) within their School

## Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral/DSL) has responsibility for:

- Serving as the College's designated counter-bullying lead (and, in line with the recommendations of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, working in collaboration with the teacher in charge of well-being)
- Ensuring the Counter Bullying policy is implemented and that all staff are aware of the policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying
- Maintaining an ethos and agenda of counter bullying across the College throughout the academic year
- Helping all staff to develop and maintain the knowledge and understanding needed to fulfil their responsibilities as outlined in this policy
- Supporting the Heads of House to respond to any incidents of bullying, and ensuring the College Director and Deputy College Director (Safeguarding) are kept informed of serious incidents of bullying
- Ensuring all confirmed instances of bullying are recorded as such on the College system and that parents are aware when their child's behaviour is designated as bullying
- Co-ordinating the involvement of external agencies in the College's counter bullying work, for example onward referral to CAMHS or other mental health organisations where appropriate
- Reviewing this policy
- Reporting to the Governing body about the effectiveness of the counter bullying policy on request.

## Appendix - 1 – The role students can play in a bullying situation.

### What Roles Do Students Play In Bullying Situations?



## Appendix 2 - Support for Students (who are Bullied and who Bully Others)

Adapted from Countering bullying: Guidelines for Jersey Settings (2019) pp. 20-22

All students involved in a bullying situation should be supported. This includes both the student who has been bullied and any student who is doing the bullying. In order to help them stop bullying others, the student is likely to need help and support in addressing some underlying issues that create the need to bully in the first place. They will also need to explore alternative ways of managing their emotional and social difficulties.

Research shows that in order to effectively address bullying, it is necessary to plan for both the child who is bullied and the child who bullied to receive support.

### Supporting the child who is bullied

There are different ways of supporting the child who is a victim of bullying and consideration about which school resources will need to be explored with the child if they are able. However, there are some general guidelines that should be adhered to outlined below:

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help.
- b. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- c. Know that children who are bullied may struggle with talking about it. Consider referring them to a school counsellor or well-being service.
- d. Give advice about what to do. This may involve role-playing and thinking through how the child might react if the bullying occurs again. Advice is usually around avoiding places where the bullying occurs, if they can, and trying not to be alone in these situations if they need to be in those places. If neither is possible, then to ensure, if they can, that someone is aware of this and can check on the person later to see if things were okay.
- e. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and school or organization may all have valuable input. It may help to:
  - a. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make them feel safe. Remember that changes to routines need to be minimized. They are not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging classroom or bus seating plans for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching classrooms or bus routes, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
  - b. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between pupils, staff, and parents. Discuss the steps that are taken and the limitations around what can be done based on the school policies. Remember, that you should avoid discussing how the bully will be disciplined. This is not helpful as it fosters a culture of retribution. Assure the child that the child who is bullying will be supported to stop.
- f. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support both the bullied child and the child doing the bullying. Avoid these mistakes:
  - a. Never tell the child to ignore the bullying.

- b. Do not blame the child for being bullied. Even if he or she provoked the bully, no one deserves to be bullied.
- c. Do not tell the child to physically fight back against the pupil who is bullying. It could get the child hurt or suspended from school.
- d. Parents should be encouraged to resist the urge to contact the other parents involved. It may make matters worse. School or other officials can act as mediators between parents.
- g. Follow-up. Show a commitment to making bullying stop. Because bullying is a behaviour pattern that is often repeated, it takes consistent effort to ensure that it stops.