St. Brendans PS

Anti-Bullying Policy Template

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. Brendans PS 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.

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) 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

   (Appendix 1 : Key elements of a positive school culture and climate)

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

 (d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that–

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and

- address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying – see paragraph appendix 1 (a)

 (f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy (Staff meetings etc)

Definition of Bullying

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

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.

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

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,

- cyber-bullying and

- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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 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.

The list of examples below is non exhaustive, and schools may wish to add behaviours which reflect their own circumstances.

Some examples of bullying behaviours (This list is not exhaustive)

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	- 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 - The "look" - Invasion of personal space - A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber **(See Appendix note on Parental responsibilities)**	• **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, 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 • **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • 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
Identity Based Behaviours **Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• 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	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group

	• Taking someone's friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look" • Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

The Relevant Teacher

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying will normally be the class teacher, however any teacher may act as the relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows :
(This list is not exhaustive)

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. This may be done through school FRIENDSHIP WEEK where organised.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development where available on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
  (Use of Summer CPD opportunities)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bully-ing, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

- Involvement of the student council where available in contributing to a safe school environment which can encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all new parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars organised through HSCL; regular school assemblies by principal / deputy principal.
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- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  o Hand note up with homework.
  o Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  o Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Use of protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- Referral to the schools Internet Usage Policy in the school to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- The development of a Parental responsibility document to reinforce the Role of Parents as Primary Educators of their children and outlining responsibilities in relation to internet and social media access at home. See Appendix 1(b)
- A zero tolerance approach will be in place regarding discussion in school of social media networks. Eg: Facebook.

Implementation of curricula
- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes as outlined in school plans.
- Continuous Professional Development where available for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme.
- School wide delivery of lessons where appropriate and available , Eg: **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe-Be Web wise, , Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Diversity and Inter-culturalism**, Yellow Flag Programme.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes where available at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Links to other policies

- Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of pupils, Internet usage policy, Attendance strategies, School ethos and Sporting activities.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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 to apportion blame);

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher; Principal; Deputy Principal.

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and re-storing, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the class-room situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due re-gard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not di-rectly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of **what, where, when, who and why**. This should 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 should be interviewed individu-ally at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements. This may be done in oral or written format depending on the situation .
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group af-ter the interview by the teacher;
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage by the school to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give par-ent(s)/guardian(s) 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 relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

- **It must also 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.**

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account in monitoring the situation
  - 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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- 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) must 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 school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

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

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made in *Class Recording Book incl Appendix 3 : Template for recording bullying behaviour*
  All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher 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 school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 2 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 2** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

 a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. This will be in accordance with the schools Code of Behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Records will be maintained according to procedures outlined in School Data Protection Policy.

Established intervention strategies
- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- Circle Time
- Referral to School Completion Programme for support
- Restorative interviews

Programme of support

School can support pupils through advice:
What Can You Do If You Are Being Bullied?
        Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
f) Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

School can support pupils through whole school approach:
Promote a culture of RESPECT
Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e. g. the SPHE programme.
Communicate to pupils that there are no innocent bystanders in bullying incidents and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.
Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, according to Policy Procedures.
Review the School Policy and its degree of success.
The School Staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules should be few, simple and easy to understand and be supported by clear disciplinary steps according to the schools Code of Behaviour.
Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a re-view of what friendship really is.

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:
We support **Bullied Pupils** in the following ways:
- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- By assuring them that it is not their fault.
- Through the steps outlined in policy, ensuring that the bullying behaviour ceases immediately.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- To develop their self-esteem and sense of self-worth and encourage development of social skills which lead to concrete friendships.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described in Code of Behaviour to prevent more bullying.

We also support **Bullying pupils** in the following ways:
- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Make it clear that pupils who bully and reform are not blamed and if continue on reformed path are congratulated for doing the right thing.
- Help to develop self-esteem through class lessons and SCP support programmes.

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.

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.

Ratification and communication

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

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

Review

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/ newsletter and provided to the Parents' Association . A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Niall Crofton   Signed: Colin Roddy
            (Principal)   (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 22nd September 2014   Date: 22nd September 2014

Appendix 1: Parental responsibility note with regard to cyber-bullying

Appendix 2 :   Key elements of a Positive School Culture and Climate.

Other relevant documents stored in office file: Standard reporting form / BOM annual review

Appendix: __1__   Parental responsibility with regard to cyber-bullying

Dear Parents / Guardians,

This is a note which will be attached to our new Anti-Bullying policy which was drawn up according to DES guidelines and Circular 0045/2013. The purpose of this letter is to ensure a united approach to reinforcing good practice in relation to ICT use and to ensure pupils safety with regard to cyber-

bullying. The policy wishes parents to note the following points:

- The role of the parents/ Guardian as the Primary Educator in the life of each pupil at our school.
- To bring to attention of parents/ guardians that pupils must be aged 13 or over to use FACEBOOK / TWITTER / Set up personal Google accounts.
- To bring to attention of Parents/ Guardians that ALL use of Social Media is prohibited in school under Internet Usage Policy.
- Use of YOU TUBE by pupils is blocked in school by NCTE providers and parents/guardians are aware of the possible dangers of unsupervised access to YOU TUBE.
- School will endeavour to provide parents/guardians with guest speakers on internet safety and cyber-bullying through PA /HSCL where available and appropriate and the responsibility for attending and making themselves aware of these issues lies with parents/ guardians.
- The school will always try to fulfil its role in protecting its pupils from bullying through ICT but can only attempt to do so under the proviso that the Home-School roles are followed through.
- The world of Technology is constantly changing and reinventing itself (Eg:Bebo-Facebook-Viber etc) and parents are asked to constantly stay vigilant to age guidelines / supervision and promote / model appropriate use of internet/web as we must all acknowledge that technology has a valuable role in education.

    The points outlined in the above letter will ensure to safeguard pupils from any possible exposure / damage from cyber-bullying during their time as a pupil at St.Brendan's PS. We thank you for your co-operation and support with this matter.

Appendix 2 : Key elements of a positive school culture

    The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- 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 ignored.
- 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.
- School 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.