

Anti-Bullying Policy St.Brigid's N.S. Ticknevin

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 Brigid's NS school 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.

2. 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;

See Table A (6.1.5. Procedures): Key elements of a positive school culture and climate, and also Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a school culture and climate.

- 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.

3. 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.

Examples of bullying behaviours

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	 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 Behav	viours			
Including any of the nine of	discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including			
	family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and			
membership of the Trave				
•	•Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation			
Homophobic and	•Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation			
Transgender	•Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbianused in a derogatory manner			
	•Physical intimidation or attacks			
	•Threats			
	•Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour,			
Race, nationality, ethnic	nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or			
background and	traveller background			
membership of the	•Exclusion on the basis of any of the above			
Traveller community				
	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours			
	include:			
	Malicious gossip			
Relational	•Isolation & exclusion			
	•lgnoring			
	•Excluding from the group			
	•Taking someone's friends away			
	• "Bitching"			
	•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	Name calling			
Needs,	 Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs 			
Disability	 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 			

- 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.
- Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.
- 4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (See Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools);
 Refer to section 6.8.3. and 6.8.4 in the Procedures.
 The Relevant Teachers in this school are: Principal: Nóra Lynch
 Deputy Principal: Grace Conneally
 All class teachers

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobicbullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (ref. Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Education and Prevention Strategies

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- Through a programme of positive action the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance and the promotion of the value of diversity and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Whole staff professional development 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. Staff completed the PDST Anti-Bullying/Cyber-bullying module during Croke Park hours.

- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences and achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with pupils.
- Involvement of the Student Council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g Yard Monitors/Buddy.
- Development and promotion of Anti-Bullying posters/slogans for the school to be displayed in common areas in the school.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. dedicated notice board in the school; annual Anti-Bullying/Friendship Week; annual pupil Bullying Sociogram Suvery.
- The staff is particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying or being bullied.
- All parents receive a copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour upon enrolment and copies are made available upon request. The school website displays both.
- 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.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Confidential Questionnaire in senior classes as appropriate.
 - Worry Box.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- 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.

Implementation of Curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying form evidence based programmes, The Walk Tall Programme, Stay Safe (whole school year 2), The Friends for Life Programme (3rd& 4thclass year 1), RSE (whole school year 1).
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programme at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyberbullying.
- 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.
- Addressing cyber-bullying by teaching the Webwise/My Selfie Lessons in celebration of Safer Internet Day.

Links to Other Policies

Examples of school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying are:

- Code of Behaviour,
- Child Protection policy,
- Supervision of pupils,
- Acceptable Use policy,
- Attendance Policy,
- Extra Curricular Activities,
- School Tours,
- Parental Complaints Procedure etc.

6. 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:

Investigation:

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, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

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 restoring, 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 classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should 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 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 individually 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;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;

It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

• 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 to inform them of the matter and explain the

actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(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/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her 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 or her 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:
 - 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
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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.
- 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. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous 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.
- Records should be maintained carefully by the class teacher and a copy stored in the office.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

- The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** 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.
- When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Due consideration has been given to locations where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. (please refer to 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) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires

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

The following suggestions will be implemented at an age-appropriate level:

- Buddy system to support the pupil(s) involved in developing friendships.
- Classroom lessons dealing with raising self-esteem, for example Circle time.
- Providing a block of time with the learning support teacher for social and emotional development with parental permission.
- Revise school rules with all children.
- Encourage friendships and positive relationships through Friendship Weeks.
- Host an information workshop for parents and children on cyber safety and cyber bullying.
- Seek advice and support from outside agencies such as NEPS and CAMHS.
- Refer to Behaviour Support Guidelines published by NEPS.
- Encourage participation in outside clubs and sports etc to build confidence and friendship.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. 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.

9. 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

10. This policy was brought to the Board of Management for ratification on 24th April 2023.

- 11. This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
- 12. 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, 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.

This plan was reviewed by the Board of Management and ratified on 24th April 2023 will be reviewed in April 2024.

Signature: Des Hackett Chairperson of BOM Date: 24/04/23

Signature: Nóra Lynch Principal Date: 24/04/23

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

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 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.

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- 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.

Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____Class___

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

 Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))* 	 Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*
Pupil concerned	Playground
Other Pupil	Classroom
Parent	Corridor
Teacher	Toilets
Other	School Bus
	Other

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

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

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

9. Details of actions taken

Signed ______ (Relevant Teacher) Date ______

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal

* Note: The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's antibullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be 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 involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's antibullying policy will be required.

	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 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?	

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To:_____

The Board of Management of ______ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of ______.
- 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			
Principal			

Date	
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St Brigid's N.S. Anti Bullying Policy

Table A: Key elements of a positive school culture and climate (DES Anti-Bullying Procedures 2013)

Area of Focus	Yes/No Comment
The school acknowledges the right of each member of	
the school community to enjoy school in a secure	
environment.	
The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each	
individual and his/her worth as a human being.	
The school promote positive habits of self-respect,	
self-discipline and responsibility among all its	
members.	
The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or	
other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its	
members.	
The school has a clear commitment of promoting	
equity in general and gender equity in particular in all	
aspects of it's functioning.	
The school has the capacity to change in response to	
people's needs.	
The school identifies aspects of curriculum through	
which positive and lasting influences can be exerted	
towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.	
The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and	
uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early	
intervention where necessary and it responds to the	
needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a	
sensitive manner.	
The school recognises the need to work in partnership	
with and keep parents informed on procedures to	
improve relationships on a school-wide basis.	
The school recognises the role of parents in equipping	
the pupil with a range of life-skills.	
The school recognises the role of other community	
agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying	
The school promotes habits of mutual respect,	
courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of	
people in groups and communities.	
The school promotes qualities of social responsibility,	
tolerance and understanding among all its members	
both in school and out of school	
Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under	
the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing	
bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the	
school community.	

Bullying Sociogram

- Who are your friends?
- Is there anyone in class having a hard time or being picked on?
- Is anyone being left out, or ignored?
- Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages, or emails to make other friends feel bad about themselves?
- Is anyone being unfair to others?
- Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
- Can you give examples?
- Who do you think is causing the problem?