



Anti-Bullying Policy

Adopted by Board of Management: 23rd November 2015

Review date: 19th November 2018

Signed: _____

Chairperson Board of Management

1. Introduction/Purpose

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board, the Board of Management of St. Brigid's Girls National School, Glasnevin, Dublin 11 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. Key Principles of Best Practice

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;
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of alleged bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. Bullying Defined

The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools define bullying as:

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.

Whilst this policy is primarily directed towards pupil behaviour, the Board recognises that bullying may also involve other members of the wider school community and will deal with any such incidents, as appropriate.

Examples of Common bullying behaviours (This is not an exhaustive list)

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, 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
<p>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).</p>	
<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Bad-mouthing • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

4. Responsibilities – the “Relevant Teacher”

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are:

1. The Class Teacher
2. The Principal/Deputy Principal

Any class teacher, may, as appropriately and necessarily, act as the relevant Teacher.

Specialist teachers (e.g. Irish Dancing Teacher, Hip-Hop Teacher), coaches, Special Needs Assistants etc. report to the class teacher. Short-term Substitute teachers refer any alleged bullying incidents/concerns to the Principal or Deputy Principal who will investigate same. Long-term substitutes follow procedures for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour (as per Section 6)

5. The education and prevention strategies

The education and prevention strategies employed at St Brigid's, rest on the Key Principles of best practice already outlined in Section 2 and is underpinned by the ethos and motto of the school *Le Chéile faoi Bhrat Bhríde*.

- A weekly school-wide focus on the teaching of human values based on the Education in Human Values (EHV) model
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- Raising awareness of and providing for a shared understanding of what bullying is, through the development and widespread publication of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- The main messages of school's anti-bullying policy are discussed with pupils. All parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy on enrolment and it is also available on the school website. Policy is discussed with parents at September Welcome Meetings.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- 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.
- School wide awareness raising on aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Hot-spot areas have been identified where extra vigilance is recommended
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours/trips 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.
- Whole school awareness measures e.g. Anti-Bullying Week, intercultural celebrations and Internet Awareness Week
- 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.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school.
 - 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
- All parents are encouraged to discuss freely (at an appropriately arranged time) any difficulties they feel their child is having in relation to bullying
- Play, sport and social inclusion are encouraged through celebration of not only pupil's achievement but their best participation in all such activities
- An Acceptable Usage Policy is in operation in the school that ensures that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones. Filtering systems and/or equivalent systems are used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. Social networking sites are not accessible on school computers
- Full implementation of the SPHE curriculum including Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships & Sexuality Education
- Specific school wide delivery of lessons on cyber bullying will be taken from the Stay Safe Programme, Be Safe, Web Wise and Get With It!

- Delivery of workshop by Community Gardaí focusing on safe internet use
- The school will implement the advice in “Sexual Orientation advice for schools”
- A school wide approach to the teaching of values education

Links to other policies

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- SPHE Policy

6. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve promptly and fairly any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved rather than to apportion blame. The school's procedure for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour are as follows:

6.1 Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying concern/allegation to any teacher in the school. When pupils bring concerns they are acknowledged as behaving responsibly and not telling lies
- 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;
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

6.2 Investigating and dealing with incidents:

- Informal/Preliminary Investigation

In investigating and dealing with a bullying concern/allegation, the relevant teacher exercises care and professional judgement to:

- Determine whether bullying has, in fact, occurred and, if so,
- How best it can be readily resolved

All investigations are conducted in a calm and objective manner, seeking factual detail through answers to open questions using who, what, where, when, why and how, and with due regard for fair procedures and rights of all those involved.

The relevant teacher will use The Primary Planner to record incidents using the headings who, what, where, when and how. This will aid the identification of patterns of behaviour. The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and discussions involved.

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.
- 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 will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the disciplinary actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will 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;

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing both parties together at a later date, if the victim is amenable to same
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to her how 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.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep all records. These records must include all reports, actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. The purpose of these records is to enable the Relevant Teacher to complete the formal *Bullying Report Form* (See Appendix 1 attached). Teacher will tick Stage 1 on the Bullying Record Form in this case).
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated

Formal Stage 2 – determination that bullying is still happening Formal Stage 1 has been actioned

The relevant teacher must complete the Bullying Record Form (See Appendix 1 attached) 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/resolved within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred (teacher will tick Stage 2 on the Bullying Report Form);

and

- b) Where the school has decided that in certain circumstances (e.g. cyber bullying) bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

Established intervention strategies:

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews

7. Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

The following disciplinary approaches may be taken.

The particular approach employed will at all times be of graduated nature and proportionate to the misbehaviour. The aim of any sanction applied is not only to prevent the behaviour from reoccurring, but to support the pupil manage her own behaviour.

The list below provides some examples of the different approaches adopted but is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put alternative appropriate measures in place, bearing in mind the circumstances involved:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others within the class within the class.
- Referral to Principal - A pupil will be referred to the principal for serious breaches of discipline or for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.
- Loss of privileges – e.g. school trip
- Reflection sheet to consider consequences of actions
- Placed ‘On Report’ (see Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy)
- Suspension
- Expulsion

7. The school’s programme of support for working with those affected by bullying

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

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.

The following ‘hot-spots’ have been identified where extra vigilance may be required:

- Line-up in the hall before school begins/Assembly
- Yard times – 10.35 am/12.30 am (indoor and outdoor)
- P.E instruction
- School trips/tours
- Extra-curricular activities
- Dismissal time

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.

10. Availability of Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is 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 on request).

12. Review

At least once in every school term the Principal will provide a report to the Board setting out:

- The overall number of bullying cases reported (The Bullying Record Form) to the Principal or Deputy Principal and
- Confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying policy and associated procedures.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management following the occurrence of a reported bullying incident, based on an analysis of completed bullying forms and termly reports by the Principal. The policy will also be reviewed every two years. 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 (using the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure Review Notification Form). A record of the review and its outcome will be available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Anti-Bullying Policy Checklist

Yes /No

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website/furnished policy to PA?	
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 /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 _____ (Chairperson)

Date _____

Signed _____ (Principal)

Date _____

Anti-Bullying Policy Review Notification Form

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's GNS 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 19th November 2018.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy Checklist of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: Fr Richard Sheehy

Date: 19th November 2018

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Darina Burke

Date: 19th November 2018

Principal

Appendix 1

Bullying Record Form

Stage 1 ___ **Stage 2** ___ (please tick)

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	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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 _____