St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe

Anti-Bullying Policy.

Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board, the Board of Management of St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe, Dublin 8 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 following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

Rationale

This policy is in place in order to ensure that pupils have the right to learn in a supportive caring and safe environment, without the fear of being bullied. This school has a clear policy on the promotion of respect for everyone. All staff and pupils are aware that bullying is not acceptable behaviour. This policy promotes this belief and provides clear strategies for teachers, pupils and parents to deal with bullying in a firm, fair, clear, prompt and positive manner.

Aims

This policy aims:

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, all staff, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-bullying behaviour.
- To increase cooperation between home and school regarding the issue of bullying.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self – discipline in pupils based on respect among all members of the school community.
- To share the task with parents/guardians of equipping pupils with the necessary skills to deal with others.

Key Principles

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:

1. *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
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community
2. *Effective leadership*
3. *A school-wide approach*
4. *A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact*
5. *Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that*
   - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
   - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
6. *Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils*
7. *Supports for staff*
8. *Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and*
9. *On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.*

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.

Bullying can take place anywhere:

➢ In school, in class, in the playground, corridors, toilets

➢ On the way to or from school

➢ At activities outside of school

➢ On the road/street/in the home etc.

 NOTE: factors having their origins in differences or conflicts between parties outside the school may contribute to increased incidents of bullying within the school.

Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

Physical aggression: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Intimidation: Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard.

Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".

Cyber-bullying: This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying.

Name calling: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

Damage to property: Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, school books and other learning material. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Teacher Bullying:

A teacher may, unwittingly or otherwise, engage in or reinforce bullying behaviour in a number of ways:

- o Using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language when addressing pupils, making negative comments about a pupil's appearance or background.
- o Humiliating, directly or indirectly, a pupil who is particularly academically weak or outstanding, or vulnerable in other ways.
- o Using threatening or intimidating gestures, or any form of degrading physical contact.

Effects of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of their self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Bullying may occasionally result in suicide. It is, therefore, important to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention is desirable.

Indications of Bullying Behaviour, Signs and Symptoms:

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school – requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches)
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays

- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, those signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour

The Victim:

Any pupil, through no fault of his or her own may be bullied. It is common in the course of normal play for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour. As pupils are particularly quick to notice differences in others, pupils who are perceived as different are those more prone to encounter such behaviour. However, the pupils who are most at risk of becoming victims are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour is directly related to the pupil's continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression. It is of note that some pupils can unwittingly behave in a very provocative manner that attracts bullying behaviour.

The Bully:

It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour. Pupils who bully tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self- discipline. They can lack any sense of remorse; often they convince themselves that the victim deserves the treatment meted out. Pupils who bully can also be attention seeking; often they set out to impress bystanders and enjoy the reaction their behaviour provokes. They tend to lack the ability to empathise. They are unaware or indifferent to the victim's feelings. Others seem to enjoy inflicting pain. It is of note that many bullies suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem. It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying are also bullied. They tend to be easily provoked and frequently provoke others.

The Bystander:

Most students in a classroom or school do not bully others regularly and are not victimised by bullies. Many 'bystanders remain neutral or try to support the victim when they see bullying occurring but unfortunately, some students who observe bullying are much more likely to encourage or assist the bully than to attempt to help the victim. With appropriate instruction and guidance, however, bystanders can be empowered to take an active role in preventing bullying from occurring and to report bullying to adults when it does take place.

Relevant Teachers

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal

- The Assistant Principals
- Class teachers

Any teacher may act as the relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it

Education and Prevention Strategies

St. Brigid's Primary School adopts 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 happiness, friendship, openness, mutual respect and tolerance. This will be evident throughout the school.

Creating a culture of telling:

➢ The staff of St. Brigid's Primary School repeatedly reinforces the message that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported. Reassurance is given that all incidents of bullying will be dealt with in a safe manner. Pupils will gain a confidence in telling, which is of vital importance.
➢ Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying. 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. - Ask a parent(s)/guardian(s) to tell on your behalf. - Ask a friend/peer to tell on your behalf. - Administer a confidential questionnaire. - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Supervision and monitoring:

➢ Effective supervision and monitoring systems facilitate early intervention.
➢ Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, hall, playgrounds, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities.
➢ Non-teaching staff encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
➢ Yard Communication Book available for both yards.
➢ Supervision and in-class wet day activities are in place in all classrooms to ensure children are occupied and that a positive atmosphere exists at break times.
➢ Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

Professional Development:

➢ 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.
➢ Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).

Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by:

➢ The development of dedicated display boards and posters in the school promoting friendship and bullying prevention.
➢ Holding a competition in which students create an anti-bullying slogan for our school. This will be displayed around the school.

➢ Displaying the school's Anti-Bullying charter in classrooms, common areas of the school see appendix 2.
➢ The anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and is also available on the school's website.
➢ Friendship week held in St. Brigid's Primary School.

Promoting a positive sense of self-worth and building empathy and resilience in pupils:

➢ Kindness Intentions read out at assembly each week. (over the intercom during Covid-19 restrictions)
➢ Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour at a whole school level through the presentation of student of the week certificates each Friday.
➢ Formal and informal interactions.
➢ Celebration of International Day.
➢ Celebration of Friendship Week.
➢ Development of the use of a Buddy Bench and Playground Pals on the yard.
➢ NEPS approved Friends for Life Programme targeted at a class level each year, typically 3rd/4th class.
➢ Implementation of the NEPs approved Get Up, Stand Up Programme for 6th class.

Cyber bullying:

➢ Promoting awareness of St. Brigid's Acceptable Use Policy and ensuring that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
➢ Communicating the message that unlike other forms of bullying, a once-off posting can constitute bullying.
➢ Advice will be communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying and to advise them on reporting any incidents. A telling atmosphere is created, so that pupils will report cyber bullying where they see it.
➢ Publicising ways of dealing with cyber bullying in the school. - Don't reply. - Keep the message. - Block the sender. - Tell someone you trust.
➢ Promoting 'Internet Safety Day' annually and activities to celebrate this awareness.
➢ Teaching of lessons to deal with the issues of cyber bullying and internet safety.
➢ Community Garda will visit the school to talk about cyber bullying to our 5th and 6th classes.
➢ Webwise Primary Programme is used as a resource in order to assist and support teachers when teaching about safe and responsible uses of the internet. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of children from 5th and 6th classes to receive 'A Parents' Guide to a Better Internet', published by Webwise.
➢ Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks.

Needs of SEN pupils:

Our school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes particular account of the needs of pupils with SEN, and joins up with other relevant school policies and supports and will ensure that all services and supports and will ensure that all the services that provide for such pupils work together. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

Role of Parents/Guardians:

It is important to be realistic, it will not be possible for a single child to assert his/her rights if attacked by a group. Children should be advised to get away and tell an adult in situations such as this.

➢ Teaching your child to say "No" in a good assertive tone of voice and to carry himself/herself in a confident way will help your child to deal with many situations. A child's self-image and body language may send out messages to potential bullies. Children should be encouraged to talk about bullying and given an opportunity to express their concerns.

➢ Approach your child's teacher if the bullying is school related. It is important for you to understand that bullying in school can be difficult for teachers to detect because of the large numbers of children involved. Teachers will appreciate being informed about bullying. School bullying requires that parents and teachers work together for a resolution.

➢ Very often parental advice to a child is to "hit back" at the bully, if the abuse is physical. This is not always realistic, as it requires a huge amount of courage and indeed sometimes makes the situation worse. Children should not be encouraged to engage in violent behaviour. Teaching children to be more assertive and to tell is far more positive and effective.

➢ Keep an account of incidents to help you assess how serious the problem is. Many children, with a little help, overcome this problem very quickly.

➢ Maintaining links with school: knowledge of the SPHE curriculum areas, Parent Association events and guest speakers related to the areas of Wellbeing, Emotional and Social Skill development and bullying.

Implementation of the curricula

Teachers influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.

➢ SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the interrelated areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.

➢ The Stay Safe programme is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Each teacher signs off on a sheet when they have taught all thirteen Stay Safe lessons. This content is also shown in Cuntas Míosúil.

➢ RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

Other resources and programmes include: PDST Anti-Bullying Support Material, Prim-Ed Cyber Bullying Packs, Webwise Cyber Bullying Pack, Webwise My Selfie Lessons, Friends For Life, Walk Tall, Get Up Stand Up.

Links to other policies:

The school policies and curricular areas which support the Anti-Bullying policy are:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- RSE Policy
- SPHE Policy

- Mobile Phone Policy
- SEN Policy
- PE Curricular Plan
- School Self Evaluation focus on Wellbeing
- Data Protection and Record Keeping

Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying

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: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

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. The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may report 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, bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them by the relevant teacher.

Procedures for investigating, dealing with and recording incidents of Bullying are 3 staged:

Stage 1 (a) – Informal Investigation and Action

- ➢ In investigating and dealing with incidents of alleged bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- ➢ Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach (modelling appropriate behaviour of how we act when dealing with unpleasant situations) when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

Stage 1(b) – Informal Recording, 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. These records will be kept in the classroom filing cabinet.
- ➢ 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.

Stage 2 (a) – Formal Investigation and Action

- ➢ 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

➢ 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;

➢ It must also be made clear to all involved 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.

➢ Discipline sanctions used will be in line with the school code of behaviour, including the possibility of suspension/expulsion.

➢ 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;

➢ 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 nonaggressive manner;

➢ Group meetings and/or individual meetings may be held.

➢ 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).

Stage 2(b) – Formal Recording

➢ 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 and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

➢ These records will be kept in a locked filling cabinet in the principal's office and a unique identifier will be used to protect the children's identity for example '*6th Class Case 1, November 2021*'

➢ Asking children to stay away from each other is not great practice.

Stage 3(a) – Formal Investigation

• In cases, where the relevant teacher considers that bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at **appendix 3.**

• 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 is practicable; - Whether the relationships between the parties have been

restored as far is practicable; - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Stage 3 (b) – Formal Recording

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred; and
- 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 and a copy maintained by the Principal. The Appendix 3 folder is stored in the office.

These records will be kept until all the children involved reach the age of 21.

Follow up

- 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

In the case of **alleged bullying occurring outside school hours and outside the school premises** the school will support the children involved but cannot take responsibility for resolving these issues.

Reports to the Board of Management:

Bullying will be made a recurring item for the Board of Management meeting agenda. Whereby appendix 3 has been filled out, the principal will report the number of overall bullying incidents to the Board. The principal will also provide confirmation that all cases reported have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti bullying policy and the Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

Sanctions

Teachers will establish and clearly communicate expectations for behaviour and the unacceptable nature of bullying behaviour. This will ensure that the Anti-Bullying Policy is proactive rather than reactive. The degree of misdemeanour – will be determined by the findings recorded on incident record sheets and through teacher communication. Steps to be taken correspond with our Code of Behaviour.

Steps when confronting a child displaying bullying behaviour:

1. Staff will adopt the 'I-centered' rule for evaluating misbehavior. Staff will tell class that it offends or bothers them when they witness certain kinds of hurtful student behaviors (e.g., teasing, name-calling). Emphasise that when staff see such behaviour occurring, they will intervene, regardless of whether the offending student meant to be hurtful.

2. When a staff member confronts a student for bullying, do so in private whenever possible. A private discussion will remove the likelihood that the confronted student will 'play to the audience' of classmates and become defiant or non-compliant. If a staff member witnesses suspected bullying, they will immediately approach the child responsible and speak to them privately, describe the negative behaviour that they witnessed, explain why that behaviour is a violation of classroom expectations, and impose a consequence (e.g., warning, apology to victim, brief timeout, loss of privilege). Keep the conversation focused on facts of the bully's observed behaviour and the restorative practice script.

3. If the child with challenging behaviour does not respond to the above, find an adult in the school with whom the student who is showing signs of bullying behaviour has a close relationship. Enlist that adult to sit down with the child to follow the Restorative Practice script and further discussion if required. This conference is not intended to be punitive. However, the student should feel at the end of the talk that, while he or she is valued, the student's bullying behavior hurts and disappoints those who care about the student.

Steps to support the victims of bullying behaviours:

1. Develop positive connections with others

- ➤ Teaching social skills, encouraging free play sessions in class
- ➤ Scaffolding play sessions
- ➤ Buddy systems / mentors
- ➤ Circle time activities
- ➤ Friends Programme

2. Teach Assertiveness Skills:

- ➤ Respond to taunts, insults, or teasing with a bland response ("Oh". "That's your opinion." "Maybe." ' you called me ___ and I don't care') Don't let bullies see that they have upset you.
- ➤ Get away from the situation if you start to get very angry or upset.
- ➤ Say "No" firmly and loudly if you don't want to do something that someone tells you to do. Stand straight up and look that person in the eye when you say it.
- ➤ Refuse to let others talk you into doing something that you will be sorry for or feel uncomfortable doing.
- ➤ Report incidents of bullying to adults.

Steps to support Bystanders:

- ➤ Train Student to Play an Active Role in Intervening in Bullying: the 4 R's- Recognise, Report, Respond, Refuse.
- ➤ Draw a distinction for the students between 'tattling' and 'telling'. Tattling is when a student tells an adult what another student did simply to get him or her into trouble. Telling is when a student tells an adult what another student did because that student's actions were unsafe

or hurt another person. Say to students, "It is important that we tell adults whenever we see something that is unsafe or hurts other people."

➢ Hold Bystanders Accountable for Their Actions. Student onlookers need to understand that they are responsible for their actions when they witness a bullying incident. In particular, bystanders should know they will face negative consequences if they decide to join a bully in taunting or teasing a victim, cheer the bully on, laugh at the bullying incident, or otherwise take part in the bullying. (Help students to keep in mind that onlookers should side with the victim with a phrase such as 'Remember, bystanders should never become bullies.')

Procedures for investigation and bullying of adults:

Policies relevant to adult bullying claims:

- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- INTO Working Together Policy and Procedures Booklet

➢ In case of **intra-staff bullying**, St. Brigid's Primary School will adopt the procedures outlined in section C (c2) of the INTO booklet: Working Together: Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations'. A copy of this document is attached to this policy and is also available for free download on the INTO website.

➢ In the case of **Teacher – Child** bullying, a complaint should in the first instance be raised with the teacher in question by parent/ guardian of the child if possible and then if necessary referred to the Principal. Where it has not been possible to agree a framework for resolution, the parent/guardian is advised to follow procedure as outlined in our complaints policy and the matter should be referred in writing by both parties to the Chairperson of the Board of Management for investigation.

➢ In the case of **Parent – Teacher** bullying, the Principal should be informed in the first instance, and if deemed necessary the Chairperson of the Board of Management should subsequently be informed in writing where the school will follow the procedure as outlined in our complaints policy.

➢ In the case of **Parent/ Visitor to the school – Child bullying**, the complaint should be referred in the first instance, to the child's class teacher and subsequently to the Principal if unresolved.

➢ In the case of **Principal – Parent/ Child bullying**, the matter should be raised with the Principal if possible. Where it has not been possible to agree a framework for resolution, the parent/guardian is advised to follow procedure as outlined in our complaints policy and the matter should be referred in writing by both parties to the Chairperson of the Board of Management for investigation.

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.

Success Criteria

- A happy safe atmosphere, with a culture of openness where good relationships exist between all members within the school community.
- When you hear mantras back from children ' In this school, we do not tolerate bullying ......",'Be an Upstander not a Bystander', Staff members use the mantra "In this school we tell."
- When children 'tell' if they are bullied and trust that their concerns will be responded to promptly.
- Children are aware of and obey the rules and are confident about reporting incidents to the school authorities.
- Staff apply the rules of listening, reporting, investigating and reporting to principal
- Comments or compliments on positive relationships within the school
- When parents and staff feel confident that incidents are being dealt with positively and fairly
- When members of staff are supportive and cooperative in managing incidents.

Review and Monitoring

This Anti Bullying Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and as the need arises. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff, as necessary. The BoM will ensure that the attention of all new staff is drawn to the school's Anti Bullying Policy and that it is fully understood. All Staff are required to tick a checklist to indicate that they have read, accept and understand the procedures outlined in this policy.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe and subsequently communicated to the school community via email and the school's website.

Signed by Principal: *Niamh Hanna*

Signed by Chairperson: Amanda McGarry

Date: 20/01/2022

Appendix 1: 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.
- Use of Restorative Practice
- 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 children 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.
- 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 the student council.

Appendix 2: School Anti Bullying Charter

At St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe we believe that we all have the right to work, learn and play happily at school. We are entitled to be listened to and are confident to speak up about what we feel is unfair. We have the right not to be ignored or bullied because of our differences or beliefs and we respect the right of everybody to be accepted as an individual. We believe that we all have the right to feel happy and calm when learning so that we can be the best that we can be.

I will be proud of myself and encourage others to make good choices in school

I will be honest and tell the truth

I will celebrate that we are all different

I will think about my actions and words and how they affect others

I will speak up when I or others need help

I will bring a positive attitude to school and to my learning

I will follow our school rules

I will not blame others for choices I make

I will not judge people because they are different to me

I will not bully or make others feel bad with my words or actions

I will not keep quiet if I am being bullied or know someone who is being bullied

I will not disrupt the learning of others

We agree to try our very best to uphold St. Brigid's Primary School Anti Bullying Charter to make our school a happy and safe place where we can reach our full potential.

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

_____
_____
_____

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant boxes)

Pupil Concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant boxes)

Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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	SEN Related /Disability	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed by relevant teacher: _____   Date:_____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4: Restorative Practice – Questions

To the harmed person:

1. What happened?

2. What were you thinking at the time?

3. What have your thoughts been since?

4. How has this affected you and others?

5. What has been the hardest thing for you?

6. What do you think needs to happen next?

To the person showing challenging behaviour:

1. What happened?

2. What were you thinking at the time?

3. What have your thoughts been since?

4. Who has been affected by what you did?

5. In what way have they been affected?

6. What do you think needs to happen next?

Appendix 5: 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 anti-bullying 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 anti-bullying policy will be required.

- o 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?
- o Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?
- o 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?
- o Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?
- o Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?
- o Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?
- o Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?
- o Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?
- o Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?
- o 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?
- o Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?
- o Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?
- o Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?
- o 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?
- o Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?
- o Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?

Appendix 6: Surveys to be distributed from 1ˢᵗ-6ᵗʰ class:

1. **Is there bullying happening in your class/ in the school?**

2. **Who is being mean/treating people badly?**

3. **What is happening/what are people doing/saying?**

4. **Has anyone been mean to you?**

5. **Have you been mean to anyone?**

6. **Who is the ringleader?**

7. **Who else is involved?**

Any other comments:

Appendix 7:

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

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's P.S, The Coombe, Dublin 8 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 on January 20th 2022.

- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Signed: Amanda McGarry **(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

Signed: *Niamh Hanna* **(Acting Principal)**

Date: 20.01.2022