



SCOIL BHRÍDE BUACHAILLÍ ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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1. Vision

Treat others as you would like them to treat you.

2. Introduction

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 Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí (roll number 18046A) 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 and has been formulated in consultation with all staff whether teaching or otherwise, under the leadership of the principal and in consultation with the Board of Management, Parent Association Committee, parents/guardians and pupils.

3. Characteristic Spirit & General Objectives of the School

Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí is a Catholic all-boys primary school situated in Blanchardstown Parish, Dublin 15 with a Catholic ethos under the Patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

In the context of a Catholic primary school, 'Catholic Ethos' refers to the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims to promote:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the student, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects
- a living relationship with God and with other people
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and
- the formation of the students in the Catholic faith

and provide religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S. 15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí shall uphold, and be accountable to the Patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

This policy reinforces the characteristic spirit and general objectives of Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí which supports and advocates providing a happy, safe, learning environment for each member of the school community.

4. Rationale

Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure setting. 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;
- 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.

5. Definition

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

Additional information on different types of bullying as set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* include:

- **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. Facial expressions which convey aggression and/or dislike can be particularly upsetting.
- **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 messaging, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), 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. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance, etc.
- **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, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. 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.

6. Relevant Teacher

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher of the pupil who has allegedly been bullied.

7. Strategies for Education and Prevention Strategies within the school

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school as identified in Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* must raise awareness across all aspects of bullying and must build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. Pupils should be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth and develop good self-esteem through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes. Strategies include:

- Using the lesson plans for 3rd to 6th Class available on the www.antibullyingcampaign.ie website.
- The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Stay Safe programme at primary level, is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.
- The Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme at primary level, which promotes positive relationships.
- Encouraging teachers to complete extension work within the curricular subjects, leading to and facilitating discussion on anti-bullying issues.
- Explicitly and regularly teaching the children about the appropriate use of social media.

- Actively involving parents/guardians and/or the Parent Association in awareness raising campaigns around appropriate social media use.
- Organising workshops/talks for parents to advise on the dangers of social media and the need for parental involvement and monitoring of children's social media.
- Positively encouraging children to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use (including social media use) with reference to the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Issues of cyber bullying will be addressed with children and their parents/guardians with reference to AUP and anti-bullying procedures for investigation.
- Explicitly teaching school rules in child friendly language.
- Modelling respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teaching children what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Catching the children being good – noticing and acknowledging desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention. Using systems of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines, e.g. 'Star of the Week' awards etc.
- Consistently tackling the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of children with a disability or SEN.
- Encouraging children to report bullying behaviour. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated. It will be made clear to all children that when they report any incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Giving constructive feedback to children when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent while at the same time reiterating the notion that bullying behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Actively watching out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensuring there is adequate indoor and outdoor supervision.
- Maintaining, developing and encouraging the work of the Student Council.

It is also important that pupils be informed regarding how/who to tell about an alleged bullying incident, with clear consequences for proven bullying behaviour, and that parents/guardians be advised by providing leaflets or links to helpful websites as they come about.

8. Procedures for Investigating, Follow-Up and Recording of Alleged Bullying Behaviour

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 has been compiled in line with Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*:

- While any pupil, parent or guardian may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school, the matter will be referred to the *relevant teacher*, i.e. the class teacher of the pupil who has allegedly been bullied. The *relevant teacher* will record the receipt of information using the Alleged Bullying Information Sheet found at Appendix 1 and ensure that it is uploaded to the pupil's Aladdin profile.

In investigating reported incidents of alleged bullying, the *relevant teacher* must:

- Ensure that his/her primary aim is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);
- Exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Investigate all reports, including anonymous reports, of bullying to ensure that pupils gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance;

- Take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach;
- Investigate incidents outside the classroom setting to ensure the privacy of all involved
- Conduct all interviews 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;
- Seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- Interview each member of a group individually at first and thereafter, 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;
- Support each member of a group regarding the possible pressures that they may face from other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
- Ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s) if deemed helpful by the *relevant teacher*.

It should be noted that all non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners and school wardens must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the *relevant teacher*. Parents/Guardians 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. It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents/guardians) understand the above approach from the outset.

9. Procedures for Recording Behaviour that has been determined to be Bullying Behaviour

In cases where it has been determined by the *relevant teacher* that bullying behaviour has occurred, the following steps should be taken:

- The parents/guardians of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. Parents/Guardians will be given an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their children;
- It should be made clear to the pupil who has engaged in bullying behaviour how he has been in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents/guardians) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his parents/guardians and the school;
- 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;

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

- 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
- 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.

In each of these circumstances, the recording template at Appendix 2 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 2 does not

in any way preclude the *relevant teacher* from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

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; and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

The Board of Management must ensure the following:

- All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of alleged bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the *relevant teacher*, the *relevant teacher* will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same;
- If it is established by the *relevant teacher* that bullying has occurred, the *relevant teacher* must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved;
- The Principal must report to the Board of Management on all cases where bullying behaviour has been determined to have taken place.

Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents/guardians must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Parental Complaints Procedure;

In the event that a parent/guardian has exhausted the school's Parental Complaints Procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents/guardians of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

10. Bullying as part of a Continuum of Behaviour

It is also important to note that bullying behaviour can be part of a Continuum of Behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. To ensure that any such cases are dealt with appropriately, the school's Anti-Bullying Policy has been written in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour and provides for referrals to be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate. In cases where a *relevant teacher* or the Principal or Deputy Principal of Scoil Bhríde Buachailí has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

11. Referral of Serious Cases to the HSE

In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan".

Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardai as appropriate. The Principal (as Designated Liaison Person) or Deputy Principal (as Deputy Designated Liaison Person) will attend to this as the need arises.

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Principal (as Designated Liaison Person) or Deputy Principal (as Deputy Designated Liaison Person) must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

12. Supports for Pupils affected by Bullying

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will operate as follows:

- The class teacher will maintain contact with the pupil's parents/guardians and continue to monitor the situation on an ongoing basis to ensure that the bullying behaviour has stopped.
- Where necessary and appropriate, the pupil will access support from a Special Education Teacher for a short period of time on their own or as part of a holistic group with a view to enhancing their self-esteem and self-worth.
- The school will seek advice from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS) with a view to providing counselling services for the pupil if necessary.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will operate as follows:

- Positive behaviour within and outside of the classroom will be recorded. Efforts by pupils to improve behaviour will be recognised and rewarded.
- Where necessary and appropriate, pupils will access support from a Special Education Teacher for a short period of time as part of a holistic group with a view to enhancing their self-esteem and self-worth.
- Behaviour management programmes will be used by the class teachers to support pupils' efforts to behave appropriately.
- The school will seek advice from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

13. 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.

14. Prevention of Harassment

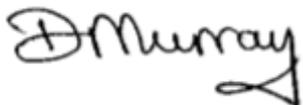
The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified, i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

15. Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 8th November 2021.

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

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year using Appendix 3. Written notification (Appendix 4) that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.



Signed: _____

Date: 8th November 2021

Declan Murray (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date of next review: 2022/2023 School Year

Appendix 1

Alleged Bullying Information Sheet

If you feel that your child is a victim of bullying, please complete the following details and return this report sheet to your child's class teacher as soon as possible.

Child's Name:

Teacher:

Please write down the name(s) of the alleged bully/bullies:

Please describe what the alleged bully/bullies did to your child:

When (times and dates) and where did the alleged bullying take place?

Please write down the name(s) of any witness(es) to the alleged bullying:

Signed: Date:

Appendix 2

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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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

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed: _____ (*Relevant Teacher*) Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 3

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.

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 and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
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?	

Signed: _____

Date _____

Declan Murray, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____

Date _____

Séamus Sullivan, Principal

Appendix 4

Notification Regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí's Anti-Bullying Policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of **Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí** 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 _____[date].

- ✓ This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 3 (also found at Appendix 4 of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*).

Signed: _____

Date _____

Declan Murray, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____

Date _____

Séamus Sullivan, Principal