

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management (Board) of Scoil Chaitríona Baggot Street has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. The policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013

2. The Board 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 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 whole 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, investigating and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

Key elements of a positive school culture and climate

- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

3. 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
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the travelling community and/or bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs

Further examples of bullying behaviour are listed in Appendix A. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

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 will be dealt with as in accordance with our 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.

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are the relevant class teacher, the Principal and the Deputy Principal.

In cases where the child who displays bullying behaviour is recognised as exhibiting a Behavioural, Emotional and Social Disorder, the Learning Support Teacher and/or Resource teacher may also be involved with the specific child and/or class.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that may be employed include the following:

Maintaining and developing our existing culture of “I’m being made feel unhappy”.

- Teachers should repeatedly reinforce the message that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour that they should not retaliate in any way but should tell an adult. In accordance with our commitment to home/school links, this adult can be any significant person in the child's life.
- Any adult, whether a member of school staff or not, should inform one of the teachers named above to inform them of possible bullying behaviour.
- All victims of bullying should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with.
- Yearly modules of age-appropriate class lessons for all children to be provided to enable pupils to distinguish between once-off incidents and bullying behaviour
- Bystanders can often be the key to resolving bullying. If a child, witnesses bullying behaviour, they should always inform an adult. The adult should then inform one of the named relevant teachers

- This is not telling tales but a means of protecting victims.
- A "worry box" to be put in each class, which, as well as allowing each child to address any worry or fears that they may have, will also allow the possible victim of bullying behaviour to communicate with an adult in a manner that may be more comfortable.

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

- The school rules (please see our Code of Behaviour) will be displayed in all classrooms as well as in all public areas throughout the school.
- Regular discussions about 'staying safe' at monthly Friday assemblies and during SPHE lessons, all of which will be age-appropriate.
- Have an annual Culture Day where differences are celebrated.
- Creating an annual awareness day for school community about bullying. (The date for this week to be decided at September Staff meeting). This will involve discussion, anti-bullying games, poster/slogan competitions, bullying surveys for 1st-6th class and their parents.

Other strategies

- The continued promotion of positive behaviour in accordance with our Code of Behaviour.
- Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising children's self-esteem and equipping children to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Walk Tall, RSE, Grow in Love, WebWise, Stay Safe. This list is not exhaustive.
- Positive reinforcement by teachers in classroom settings in an age-appropriate manner (examples include but are not limited to Class Dojo, Worker of the Day, Golden Time, stars, stickers etc.)
- Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by teachers and staff in accordance with our Code of Behaviour.
- Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour and showing acts of kindness at class-level and whole-school level at our monthly assemblies.
- Ensuring that one assembly is dedicated to anti-bullying (November of each school year as per the recommendations from *Dealing with Bullying in Schools* (Office of the Ombudsman for Children 2013).
- Encouraging students to look out for each other and to be responsible for their own behaviour.
- All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty
- Recognition of children who report incidents of bullying which they have witnessed.
- Circle-time sessions, role-play and other methodologies to discuss and explore issues of bullying.
- Timetabling of circle time within each class grouping's SPHE planning
- Each class to display a set of age-appropriate class rules which are based on our school's Code of Behaviour.
- Ensure that all parents have visibility of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Ensure supervision at all times when pupils can access the internet during the school day.
- All teachers to do at least one age-appropriate lesson on Internet safety.
- To focus on the topic of bullying on at least one school assembly.

6. The school's procedure for investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying are as follows:

Incidents of Bullying will be dealt with on a staged basis.

Stage 1

- All reports of bullying must be dealt with initially by the class teacher, whether from a child, the child's parent/
- The goal of any investigation into a report of bullying behaviour is to resolve matters and not to apportion blame.
- When a pupil tells a teacher s/he is being bullied, it is important to gather all of the facts from both sides.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgment to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation.
- The aim for the class teacher 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.
- Non-teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional, or judgmental language.
- All such instances are investigated outside the classroom to avoid public humiliations.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regards to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way (*See Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post -Primary Schools (pp. 30-31) for further suggestions*).
- Where possible, a witness is present.
- It is explained to the child who is allegedly bullying how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim of bullying.
- The child/ children involved in bullying behaviour will be asked to sign "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 1**".

Stage 2

- If this child breaks promise and re-offends then the Principal or Deputy Principal with the class teacher will interview the child/children again. It is explained to them that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise. Again, attempts will be made to resolve the situation.
- Once more, the student will sign the "Pupil Behaviour Promise 2". This time this has to be signed by their parents. They are now advised that if they break this promise again that they will have a meeting with the principal and their parents.
- Parents and pupils from both sides are required to co-operate with any investigations 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.

Stage 3

- If a child breaks their promise twice then the matter is referred to the Board of Management.
- The Principal and the Chairperson of the Board will meet with the child and the parent and the child may be suspended for up to 3 days.
- The Principal has the permission of the Board of Management to suspend for up to 3 days.

Recording of incidents

All incidents will be logged by class teacher and incidents which have not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days will be recorded by the class teacher on the recording template as in Appendix 3 (*Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post -Primary Schools*). This template will be completed in full and a copy given to the Principal. At least once every school term the Principal will provide a report to the BOM setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported by means of this template and confirmation that all cases are being dealt with in accordance with procedure.

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

Victims of alleged bullying

- The child is reassured from the outset that he or she is not to blame.
- Strategies for developing or restoring confidence are explored between the child's teacher and parents/guardians.
- Staged approach- class support, school support (as per Continuum -Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties- NEPS)

Children displaying bullying behaviour

- Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties*- NEPS)

In certain cases too it may be necessary to invite assistance from formal agencies such as Gardaí, (J.L.O) Health Board, Local Youth Groups etc. The school will constantly remind parents of the dangers of "cyber- bullying" as can happen with the use of social networking sites and mobile phones. We also direct their attention to the school's Code of Behaviour.

The school cannot be responsible for disagreements between pupils that happen outside the school grounds but will make reasonable efforts to cooperate with parents in assisting them to resolve the issues.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of pupils:

The BOM confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment:

The BOM confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practical 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 Travelling community.

10. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy:

The evaluation of the policy will happen on both an informal (through teacher observation) and formal basis (use of surveys and questionnaires).

Success Criteria:

- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Well-being and happiness of the whole school community in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered and fewer problems in the yard.
- Increase in numbers of children reporting

11. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on June 7th 2017.

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

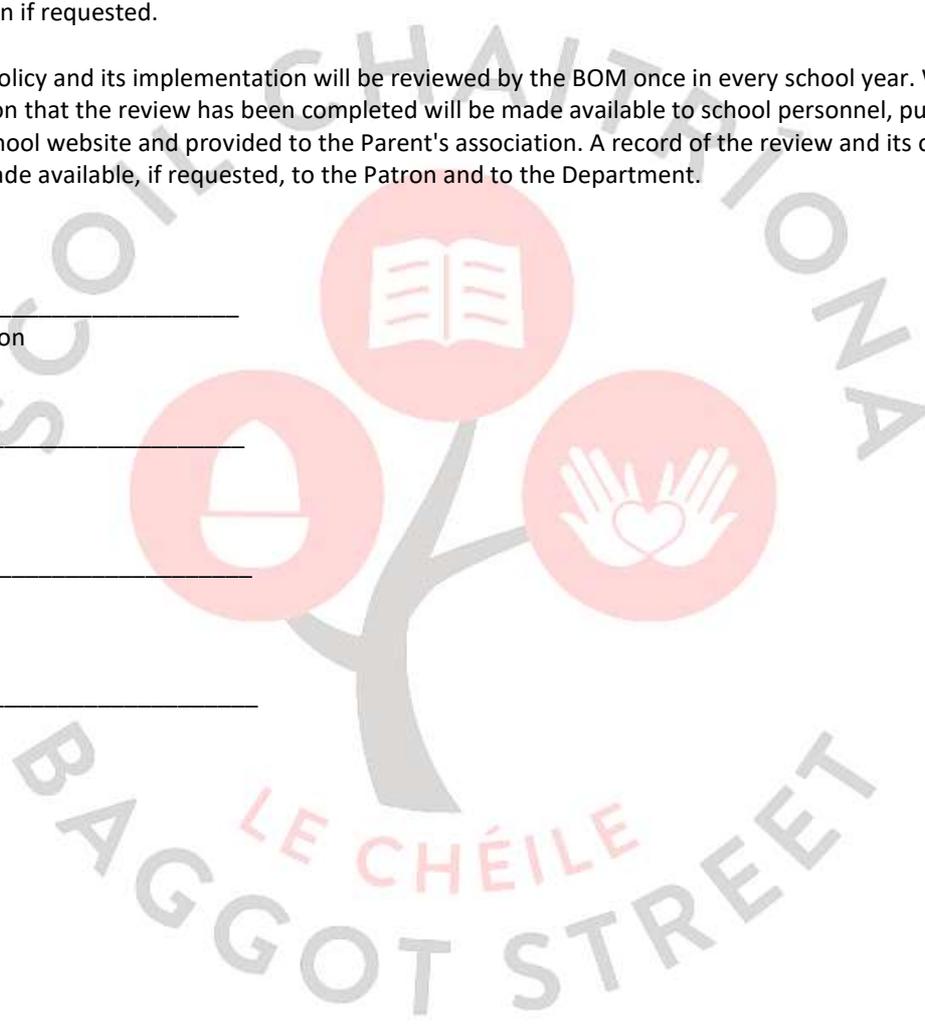
13. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the BOM once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and to the Department.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____



Appendix A

Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

Repeated and targeted aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:

- Shouting and uncontrolled anger
- Personal insults
- Verbal abuse
- Offensive language directed at an individual,
- Continually shouting or dismissing others
- Public verbal attacks/criticism
- Domineering behaviour
- Open aggression
- Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact

Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:

- Treating others in a dictatorial manner
- Ridicule
- Persistent 'slagging'
- Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort
- Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual
- Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. personal life/family
- Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork

Interference with property, for example:

- Stealing/damaging books or equipment
- Stealing/damaging clothing or other property
- Demanding money with menaces
- Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property
- Marking/defacing property

Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:

- Condescending tone
- Deliberately withholding significant information and resources
- Writing of anonymous notes
- Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments
- Malicious tricks/derogatory joke,
- Knowingly spreading rumours
- Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new idea,
- Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling)
- Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying,
- Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual in his/her absence
- Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person

Ostracising or isolating, for example:

- Deliberately marginalising an individual
- Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group
- Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational
- Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do

Appendix B

Combating Bullying and the Action towards Prevention

Role of staff

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of bullying. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour rather than control. Positive behaviour is always recognised, affirmed and sought.
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly following the procedures in this Anti-Bullying Policy
- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, at school assemblies, through the school policy on pastoral care and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises.
- Pupils are taught and encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

Advice for Pupils

- If someone is making you feel upset, ask them to stop.
- If they do not stop, you must tell any teacher or someone at home. Once we know tht you are being upset or worried about how someone is treating you, we can make it stop.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that once you tell a grown up, it will be handles.
- You will never get in trouble for
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Be assertive – shout NO. Walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse– So don't fight back. REPORT to a teacher or parent(s)/guardians instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- TAKE ACTION – Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Advice for Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.

9. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal: _____

