

R.C.N. 20118990 - Roll No. 18046A

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**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Vision**

***Treat others as you would like them to treat you.***

**Introduction**

At Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents seriously. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff and will be dealt with appropriately and sympathetically.

Our school policy on bullying forms an integral part of the written Code of Behaviour (a copy of which is handed to all parents on entry to our school.) It is considered in the context of the school being a community in which mutual respect and co-operation between adults and children form an integral part of our ethos.

**Rationale**

This policy is formulated in consultation with all staff whether teaching or otherwise, under the leadership of the principal and in consultation with the Board of Management, PTA Committee, parents and pupils.

It is necessary for Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí to present this policy at this moment in time because:

* All children must be afforded the utmost protection in school with regard to the manner in which they are treated;
* All staff must be provided with a cohesive framework for dealing with alleged occurrences of bullying in the workplace;
* Our existing Anti-Bullying policy needs to be updated.

**Definition**

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, physical, social, cyber or psychological, conducted by an individual or group (adult or child) against others. When incidents of aggressive behaviour are systematic and ongoing this may be described as bullying.

We recognise that bullying occurs in different ways in our school. Outlined below are some of the most common forms of bullying, whether it is child-child, child-adult or adult-child\*.

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| --- |
| *Child – Child, Child – Adult* |
| Verbal:   * Name-calling * Teasing * Abuse * Putdowns * Sarcasm * Insults * Threats   Physical:   * Hitting * Punching * Kicking * Tripping * Spitting   Social:   * Ignoring * Excluding * Ostracising * Alienating * Making inappropriate gestures * ‘Ganging-up’ on one individual   Psychological:   * Spreading rumours * Dirty looks * Hiding or damaging possessions * Telling lies about another child to get them in trouble   Cyber:   * Malicious texts * Malicious emails * Malicious phone calls * Inappropriate use of cameras * Spreading comments or photos on social networking sites on the internet in a teasing way * Under age social media usage will be referred to outside agencies such as HSE Child Protection or the Gardaí. |
| *Adult – Child\** |
| As per above, plus:   * using sarcasm or repeated negative comments * humiliation of pupils * using gestures etc. which may be intimidating. |

**Aims**

* To provide a stable and secure learning environment for all of our pupils;
* To provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for reporting incidents of bullying;
* To ensure that allegations of bullying are dealt with in a fair manner;
* To provide staff with the procedures to recognise and deal with incidents of bullying;
* To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

**Indications of Bullying**

* Anxiety about attending school;
* Deterioration in educational performance;
* Pattern of physical illness;
* Unexplained changes in mood or behavior;
* Visible signs of anxiety or distress;
* Possessions missing;
* Increased requests for money;
* Unexplained bruising or marking;
* Reluctance to say what is troubling him.

*These are all signs of a variety of other difficulties as well as bullying.*

**Strategies for Prevention within the school**

*The best way for any school to assist children victimised by bullies is to adopt a whole-school approach to bully prevention.*

Teachers can prevent bullying occurring in the school by:

* Teaching about and raising awareness of bullying through the SPHE and Drama curriculum.
* The helpful role and responsibility of senior pupils in assisting in the countering of bullying behaviour is important. Peer groupings can help to counter bullying.
* Advising parents by providing leaflets or helpful websites as they come about, regarding bullying – recognising it and how to report it to the school.
* Informing children how/who to tell about a bullying incident.
* Providing clear consequences for bullying behaviour.
* Holding an anti-bullying awareness week each year where the following activities may be done: random bullying surveys for the children can be administered to assess the effect it is or isn’t having on them, and to assess the level of bullying in the school at a given time, as well as art and poetry competitions, rewards and praise given to those showing anti-bullying behaviour, etc.

**Procedures for Noting and Reporting Bullying**

* If parents have concerns about their child being bullied, they should inform the class teacher.
* If a child witnesses or is experiencing bullying, they should inform the class teacher or an adult that they trust.
* The teacher should investigate and inform the principal or deputy principal of the suspected incidents.
* Parents of those involved should be notified and given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the teacher.
* It should be made clear that children recording the incidents of bullying are acting responsibly, as our school is a TELLING school.
* It should also be made clear that children who are displaying bullying behavior are breaking the Code of Behaviour, and that there are consequences to such behaviour.
* Reports of bullying should be recorded. A **Bullying Report Book** will be kept in an easily accessible room for all teachers to make these reports as they happen, and to include how they were resolved.

**Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:**

Adopt a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach:

* 1. Class teacher must be told and s/he must listen to all sides.
  2. Incidents are best investigated outside of the classroom situation.
  3. Teachers should speak separately to the children involved.
  4. Members of a gang should be met separately and as a group.
  5. The principal should then be told when it has been determined that bullying has occurred.
  6. The bullying incident(s) should be recorded in the Bullying Report Book.
  7. Parents should then be informed.
  8. The bully should be assured that consequences [as outlined in the School’s ‘*Behaviour Checks’* *(see Code of Behaviour*)] will now take place, by reviewing these school rules with the teacher, principal and parents together.
  9. The bully is made to realise the consequences of behaviour and verbalise these. An apology should be given from bully to victim.
  10. Should the above action not resolve matters, and should there be reoccurrences, it will be brought to the attention of The Board of Management.
  11. Check with the child/parents of the bullied child later to see that no further difficulties have arisen and regular monitoring of both the bully and victim should occur thereafter by the class teacher and the principal.

**Success Criteria**

The success of this policy will be indicated by:

* An increased awareness by the children in the school of how to promote anti-bullying behaviour;
* Positive relations being fostered in all interactions between students and members of the staff;
* The well-being and happiness of the whole school community in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered.

**Monitoring and Implementation**

* All staff members have a role in the monitoring of this policy and should bring to the attention of management aspects of this policy that need highlighting;
* In the event of a complaint regarding bullying involving students of this school, the procedures contained within this policy will be followed.

**Ratification and Review**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on the date below and communicated to parents thereafter. It is applicable from the date below and subject to regular review by the Board of Management in consultation with the patron of the school, the Parent Association and teaching staff. Revised copies/updates of the policy are available on the school website and issued in hard copy to parent(s)/guardian(s) upon request.

Signed: 

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Declan Murray (Chairperson, Board of Management)

**Reference List:**

* + Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website [www.irlgov.ie/educ](http://www.irlgov.ie/educ)
  + Developing a Code of behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008
  + Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
  + Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
  + Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
  + Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994
  + Anti-Bullying Unit. Trinity College. Dr. Mona O Moore.
  + Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino
  + Working Together for Positive Behaviour, Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 2006
  + Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO, 2000
  + Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying. HSA, 2002
  + Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998
  + Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
  + Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)
  + Management Board Members’ Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA.
  + Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breathnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin Spring 1997. Ch. 4 p.56-61 Recommendations for Schools