**Saint Brendan’s College, Belmullet, Co. Mayo**

Anti-Bullying Policy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date passed by BOM** | **9-10-13**  **Reviewed-Annualy** |
| **Review date.** | **Feb 2017** |
| **Signature Of Chairperson.** | **Teresa McGuire** |
| **Signature of Principal.** | **Michael Walshe** |

# St. Brendan’s College Anti-Bullying Policy

* + - 1. 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

St. Brendan’s College 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.

* + - 1. 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.
      1. 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.

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

|  |
| --- |
| The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):   * Students should discuss any incident of bullying with a teacher or another trusted adult within the school system; this is responsible behaviour rather than “telling tales”. * Parents/guardians should contact the Class Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parent. |

|  |
| --- |
| 5.  The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying, homophobic and trans-phobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):  It is School policy to provide education on bullying in the following manner:   * All Junior year groups are facilitated through the S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme which incorporates bullying information and learning. * Yearly talk for junior students and parents on cyber-bullying. * A Mentoring system is in place, where Leaving Cert student(s) are paired with 1st year student(s) at the start of the new academic year; * Training is provided for the Leaving Cert years on how to be a good mentor. * Information Days on bullying are provided for students eg. Drama Workshop. Positive reinforcement of behaviour is encouraged via school journals and end of year rewards. |

|  |
| --- |
| 6.  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) :   * If a student approaches a class teacher the incident will be reported by him/her to the Class Tutor of the student/students concerned. If the Class Tutor considers that bullying may have taken place, he/she will inform the Year Head and Principal/Deputy Principal. * The alleged victim and the alleged perpetrators of the incident will be spoken to by the Class Tutor and encouraged to solve the problem. * Written statements will be taken from all parties involved in the incident. * All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils involved. * Records will be kept of all incidents and of the procedures that were followed. * The Tutor(s) will be kept informed of all incidents and have access to relevant written records. * The Year Head will monitor progress of students involved in a bullying incident by liaising with tutor and students involved (separately) at follow-up meetings. * Where the incident is deemed to be minor, a verbal warning will be given to the bully to stop the inappropriate behaviour, pointing out how she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and trying to get him/ her to see the situation from the victim’s point of view. If deemed appropriate, parents may be contacted. The case will be reviewed after 20 school days. * If the behaviour persists a Bullying Report Form will be completed the Year Head and forwarded to the Deputy Principal/Principal of the school. The parents/guardians of the victims and bullies will be informed. Thus, they will be given the opportunity of discussing the matter and are in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs. Appropriate sanctions will be imposed if appropriate. * If there is serious incident, perhaps repeated verbal assault or coercion, the matter should be reported to the Deputy Principal or Principal, parents will be involved and appropriate sanctions applied. * Where the incident is deemed to be more serious (e.g. gross misbehaviour or physical assault), the Principal should be informed immediately and she will inform the Board of Management, if necessary. * Serious instances of bullying behaviour will, 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 Gardaí as appropriate. * Offenders and victims of bullying may be referred to counselling. * Sanctions will be imposed. The severity of the sanction will be determined by the degree and frequency of bullying engaged in, in accordance with our Code of Behaviour. * Sanctions may include; * A contract of good behaviour * Withdrawal of privileges * Other sanctions as may be deemed appropriate * Suspension * Expulsion * In the case of cyber bullying the above procedures will be complied with. We will work in consultation with the parents and where deemed necessary we will further collaborate with the Gardaí. * In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should be referred immediately to the Principal. * Where cases, relating to either student or teacher, remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management. * Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with an alleged bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent may have recourse to the school’s complaints procedures. * In the event that a parent has exhausted the school’s complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the parent will be advised of his/her right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children. |

|  |
| --- |
| 7.  The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)  The school will provide supports for both victim and offender by   * Providing counseling. * Arranging activities to raise self esteem and social skills in order to build resilience. * Encourage parents to support the school in the effort to combat bullying. |

1. **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.

1. **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.

1. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_14-10-14\_
2. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents’ Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
3. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management 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 be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents’ Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Teresa McGuire

Signed: Michael Walshe

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: 09-10-13

Date: 09-10-13

Reviewed-Annual Checklist

14-10-14

01-12-15

Date of next review: Feb 2017

# Appendix 2 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. * 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 them 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 ignored. * 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 student councils. |

# Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. **Name of pupil being bullied and class group**

Name Class

1. **Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behavior**
2. **Source** of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))\*
3. **Location** of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupil concerned |  |
| Other Pupil |  |
| Parent |  |
| Teacher |  |
| Other |  |

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Playground |  |
| Classroom |  |
| Corridor |  |
| Toilets |  |
| School Bus |  |
| Other |  |

1. **Type** of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical Aggression |  | Cyber-bullying |  |
| Damage to Property |  | Intimidation |  |
| Isolation/Exclusion |  | Malicious Gossip |  |
| Name Calling |  | Other (specify) |  |

1. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Homophobic | Disability/SEN related | Racist | Membership of Traveller community | Other (specify) |
|  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**
2. **Details of actions taken**

Signed (Relevant Teacher) Date

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal

**\* Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

# Appendix 4 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 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? | yes |
| Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents’ association? | yes |
| Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)? | yes |
| 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? | yes |
| Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils? | yes |
| Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies? | yes |
| Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented? | yes |
| Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined? | yes |
| Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? | yes |
| Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal? | yes |
| 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? | yes |
| Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school’s handling of bullying incidents? | no |
| Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school’s handling of a bullying situation? | no |
| Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school’s handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? | no |
| 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? | no |
| Has the Board identified any aspects of the school’s policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? | no |
| Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement? | no |

Signed Teresa McGuire Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Michael Walshe Principal

Date 01-12-15

Date 01-12-15

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

To: All Partners

The Board of Management of Saint Brendan’s College 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 01-12-15
* This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in [**Appendix 4**](http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Anti-Bullying-Procedures-for-Primary-and-Post-Primary-Schools-Appendix-4-Checklist-for-annual-review-of-the-anti-bullying-policy-and-its-implementation.pdf) of the Department’s

*Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

Signed Teresa McGuire Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Michael Walshe Principal