



## BUSH POST PRIMARY ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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 Bush Post Primary school 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 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.

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

***Bullying is unwanted and 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 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 may include teasing, taunting, name calling, threatening, hitting, making harmful comments, talking about the person behind their back, spreading rumours about the person, text messaging, making threatening phone calls, internet bullying in all its forms, interfering with another person's belongings and many other actions which are designed to undermine or frighten another person in any way.

### **Procedures for Dealing with Cases of Alleged Bullying Reporting.**

- Students are strongly encouraged to report any incident of alleged bullying to their parents/guardians at home. Parents are encouraged to contact the school to discuss the allegations so that they may be addressed.
- Students are strongly encouraged to report alleged bullying to one or more of the following: Senior Student or Prefect; Teacher; Year Head; Deputy Principal; Principal or any other person with whom a student feels comfortable.
- If a student reports an incident to a person who is not the Year Head then a formal report will be made to the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal by that person who was told about the incident.
- Any student involved in a bullying incident with another student will be offered access to Student Support from a member of our Pastoral Care Team.
- Students will be made aware of the dangers of bullying as part of subjects such as CSPE, SPHE and R.E. or through our 'Bullying Awareness Week' which is part of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **What can parents do to help their children deal with bullying?**

1. It is not advisable to advocate hitting back.
2. Teach them some coping strategies:  
Walk Tall; Walk Away; Teach your child to appear confident; encourage them to tell; Stay with friends and avoid bullies; Avoid provoking a bully; Take responsible care of your belongings; save any abusive mobile phone messages or texts and report it to the Gardaí

### **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 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 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.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in June 2014**