



Bush Post Primary Anti-Bullying Policy 2024/25

1. Rationale

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.

1. Ethos

ETB Schools' Ethos

As set out in the Admissions Policy, Bush Post Primary School is an ETB school which is a state funded, co-educational, multi-denominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- ☉ Excellence in Education
- ☉ Care
- ☉ Equality
- ☉ Community
- ☉ Respect



2. Vision and Student Wellbeing

Bearing the school mission statement and student wellbeing, the Anti-Bullying Policy in Bush Post Primary School aims to create an atmosphere that is underpinned by respect and kindness and enables staff and students to work together in harmony without the threat of bullying. Student Wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community. If bullying does occur, we endeavour to ensure that members of the school community are aware that it will be dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

3. Principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy

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. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
 - b. 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.
 - c. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

- d. Supports for staff;
- e. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- f. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

4. Definition of Bullying

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

Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

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 and or gender-based bullying, racist bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller or any ethnic 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.

5. Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

- **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. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.
- **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 10 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, 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, schoolbooks 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. What should a student do if they are being bullied?

- There exists a wide range of safe people that a student can contact in cases of a bullying incident. (Please see section 7)
- Let a friend know.
- Talk to a parent/guardian/sibling or a relation.
- Fill in the anonymous online anti-bullying survey available during anti-bullying week(s).
- To ensure a thorough investigation, a student will need to fill in a “Pupil Statement Form” (See Appendix 3)
- During the investigation and when the incident is resolved students and guardians are encouraged to check in with the relevant teachers and guidance counsellors for continued guidance and support.

7. Relevant Teachers

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):

Principal: Mr Kevin Joyce

Deputy Principals: Ms Rosanna Hart & Mrs Sinéad McDonnell

Co-ordinator for Anti-bullying actions under student Wellbeing: Mr Joseph Corcoran

Teachers with responsibility for dealing with bullying issues with the Deputy Principal:

Co-ordinator for Anti-bullying actions under student Wellbeing: Mr Paul Malone

All Year Heads 2024-2025 (See names below)

Mr Corcoran, Ms Sharon Boyle, Ms Jessica McCartney, Mr Shane Brennan,

Mr Paul Malone, Mrs Sheena Gartland and Ms Sheila McDonald

(At the start of each academic year, roles and responsibilities may change. This list will be updated at the beginning of the academic year 2024/25 if necessary.)

Guidance Team, Student Support Counsellors and Care Team

SEN Department

All teaching staff and SNAs. Any students are encouraged to speak to any member of staff if they have a bullying issue.

All ancillary staff, including the school secretaries, caretaker, cleaning and canteen staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to a relevant or appropriate staff member.

8. Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic, transphobic and gender identity bullying, racial or bullying due to religious beliefs) used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools):

- Primary school background information to accommodate early intervention for students with a history of bullying. All relevant information passed to First Year Year-Head in advance of the academic year.
- Core Values: Respect, Care, Equality, Community and Excellence in Education
- Year Head mentoring. Regular reminders of components of the Anti-Bullying Policy delivered at assemblies.
- Anti-bullying themed classes in SPHE classes that link to inter-related areas of belonging, inclusion, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- Prefect Buddy System.
- The school is broken up into separate social areas during the build. Senior students in new building while junior students socialise in old building. Toilet facilities in senior area

for senior students only. Toilet facilities in Junior school for junior students only.

Teachers supervising

- One way system on the corridors.
- Friendship Fortnight
 - Anti-Bullying survey reviewed by and distributed to all students annually. All issues recorded by the Anti-Bullying co-ordinator and forwarded to Year Heads who investigate with the aim of resolution. When each case is resolved, this information is returned to the Anti-Bullying co-ordinator. (Appendix 1)
 - Prefect led cyber bullying presentation to all Junior Cycle classes.
 - Student designed "Friendship" themed posters placed on all classroom doors and entrances.
 - Positive message and treat campaign run by SPHE teachers and prefects.
 - Anti-Bullying themed poetry competition for first years.
 - Lunchtime activities involving staff and students. (A shared experience)
 - Bush Post Primary School Anti-Bullying Charter designed by the Student Council is presented by the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator to the entire student body in assemblies. Each student is encouraged to sign up to the charter. See Appendix 3)
 - Friendship Fortnight video available produced by Transition Year and Prefect students is shown to entire student body in school assemblies and is available on the school website. (Appendix 5)
- Guidance and student support counselling.
- Safe Spaces and co-curricular lunchtime clubs aimed at providing students with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- The RSE programme provides opportunity to explore and discuss areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying.

9. Procedures for investigation, recording of bullying behaviour and follow up.

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 (in line with Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Investigation

Step by Step

- **Step 1:** Incident witnessed by or reported to teacher/Year Head.
- **Step 2:** Teacher/Year Head investigate.
- **Step 3:** Statements taken from all involved, and if necessary, from those not directly involved.
- **Step 4:** Sanctions applied if appropriate. Student support session offered.
- **Step 5:** Bush Post Primary Anti-Bullying Recording Template completed by Teacher/Year Head.
- **Step 6:** Restorative Practices used to restore relationship. (See Appendix 4)
- **Step 7:** Serious cases may be reported to TUSLA or An Garda Síochána as appropriate.

Routines

- A consistent and clear approach to dealing with bullying is essential to effective practice.
- The primary aim of the teacher/Year Head investigating is to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of all parties involved. (See the Bush Post Primary Restorative Practices Guidelines in Appendix 4)
- All incidents of bullying reported, including findings from the Anti-Bullying Survey, are investigated by the relevant Year Head. Students will gain confidence in “telling.” They will feel they have a voice and are acting responsibly.
- The Teacher/Year Head should take a calm, sensitive and problem-solving approach when investigating.
- Incidents should be investigated outside the classroom to ensure privacy. Students not directly involved can provide useful information.

- When investigating the teacher/Year Head should seek answers to questions of what, who, where, when and why.
- All those involved should be asked to write a written account of the incident. (Date, time and signature included.) The Anti-Bullying Recording Template in Appendix 2 of the Anti-Bullying Guidelines has been developed by Bush Post Primary as a recording mechanism to assist in accurately investigating incidents of bullying.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, parents of those involved should be informed of the investigation. Parents and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as possible, the relationship of the parties involved as quickly as possible. It is imperative that all involved (Including parents and students) understand the school's approach from the outset.
- In cases where it has been determined that a student(s) is engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear how that student is in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts should be made to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied. (See the Bush Post Primary Restorative Practices Guidelines in Appendix 4)
- Possible sanctions issued will always be in line with the school's Code of Behaviour. (See Appendix 5)
- Follow up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged with a view to bringing all parties together.
- If the Teacher/Year Head is unable to find a resolution to the bullying incident within a reasonable timeframe; or that the bullying is widespread/ persistent and has had serious consequences, they must communicate their finding to the Deputy Principal or Principal. Appropriate sanctions may be issued by the Senior Management and the Board of Management.

Recording of Bullying

- The Teacher/ Year Head must keep an appropriate written record that will assist in their efforts to resolve the issue and restore, as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved
- The Teacher/Year Head **MUST** use the recording template at Appendix ... The recording template must be completed in full and retained by the Teacher/Year Head and a copy given to the Deputy Principal where applicable.

10. School Support for students affected by Bullying.

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):

- One to one check in with the Teacher/Year Head dealing with situation.
- Student Support offered to **ALL** students involved in the bullying incident.
- Teacher/Year Head would check in with parents and review the progress where necessary.
- Parents are requested to contact school immediately if the bullying re-occurs.
- Relevant teachers informed of risk when appropriate.

11. 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.

- Year Head supervision of Year Groups before school begins.
- Teacher supervision in classrooms.
- Breaktime and lunchtime supervision of specified areas, both inside and outside.

- New building houses the senior students for before school, breaktime and lunchtime supervision. Old building houses the junior school pupils before school and at both breaktime and lunchtime supervision.
- After school supervision as students wait on and board the school buses.

12. 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. This includes an RSE Policy and Programme in SPHE classes to educate students and foster inclusivity and respect for all.

13. Publication of the Policy in the school Community

- This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on May 28th 2024.
- The policy is available to the Bush Post Primary Student's Council, Teaching Staff and Parent's Association for review before being presented to the Board Management
- 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

Signed: _____ **Chairperson**

Date: _____

Signed: _____ **Principal**

Date: _____

Date of next review May 2026

Appendix 1: Anti-Bullying Survey

Anti-Bullying survey 2023/24

Bush Post Primary defines bullying as "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." Our policy, (available in the Home School journal), fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in 2013.

Please take the time to fill in the form honestly and accurately.

All questions must be filled in fully in order to complete the survey.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

1. What is your full name? *

2. Please enter your full school email address *

3. What class group are you currently in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- TY
- 5th
- 6th
- LCA5
- LCA6

4. Do you generally feel happy when you're at school? *

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Never

5. Do you think our school environment is safe? *

- Yes
- No

6. Do you feel a sense of belonging to your school? *

- Yes
- No

7. Are you currently being bullied at school by an individual or a group of students? *

- Yes
- No

8. Cyberbullying is bullying - unwanted, repeated, aggressive, negative behavior - that takes place over digital devices like mobile phones, tablets, and computers. **Now you know the definition, do you feel you are currently being cyberbullied?** *

- Yes
- No

9. Are you aware of any other student who is being bullied and/or cyberbullied at school? *

- Yes
- No

10. Who would you talk to if you were having problems or difficulties at school? *

- Parent/Guardian
- Family member
- Year head/Class tutor
- Staff member
- Guidance counsellor
- Prefect
- Friend
- None of the above

11. Would you like more information on how to protect yourself from being cyberbullied? *

- Yes
- No

Appendix 2: Bush Post Primary Anti-Bullying Recording Template

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 (tick relevant box(es))*

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned
Other Pupil
Parent
Teacher
Other

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

--

Appendix 3

Pupil Statement Form



PUPIL STATEMENT FORM

Name of pupil (your name)

.....

Form:..... Date:

Fill in each heading area in as much detail as you can. You should not write anything that is false or do not believe to be true. Continue on a separate sheet if you need to

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN? (Time and date)

WHERE DID IT HAPPEN? (Exact location/place)

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT?

WHO ELSE MAY HAVE SEEN/HEARD ANYTHING?

IN YOUR OPONION WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT? IE WHO WAS AT FAULT AND WHY?

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO AVOID THE INCIDENT HAPPENING?

WHAT COULD YOU DO TO AVOID A SIMILAR INCIDENT IN THE FUTURE?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

Signed (Pupil)_____ Date.....

Appendix 4 - Bush Post Primary Student Charter

Bush Post Primary Student Charter



- We pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women or gender- based violence
- We pledge to ensure that every person feels safe, respected and listened to in BPP
- We will empower everyone to be themselves by celebrating and valuing our differences
- We remember that you never look good making someone else feel bad
- We are kind to one another because kindness can go a long way
- We will encourage anyone who is experiencing bullying to speak out
- We will stand up and stand strong together
- We are upstanders-we challenge all forms of bullying by reporting it straight away

Appendix 5 - Restorative Practice

Restorative Questions 1

RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen next?



Bush Post Primary School, Riverstown, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
Tel: 0421 937 6246 / 937 6174 Fax: 0421 937 6937 Email: bushpp@leicdub.ie

Restorative Questions 2

RESPONDING TO THOSE HARMED

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen next?



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Appendix 6 - Friendship Fortnight Video

https://lmetbmy.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/19ndonnelly_bpp_lmetb_ie/ETY593_KN5GirBp9RQaPIkBy4uTi2_5c4qMtwQpDiQpFA

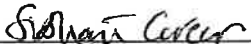
Appendix 7 - Checklist

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 28/5/24

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed 
Principal

Date 28/05/2024

Appendix 8

The Anti-bullying Policy is in conjunction with school policies including:

- Bush Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Bush Wellbeing Policy
- Bush SPHE Policy
- Bush RSE Policy

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-bullying policy

The Board of Management of Bush Post Primary School 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 **Tuesday 28th May 2024**.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the Department of Education's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*.

Signed *Siobhán Cullen*

Date 28/5/24

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *[Signature]*
Principal

Date 28/5/2024



Board of Management Policy Consultation

Please present this form to your BOM when considering the policy at BOM level for ratification

School:	Bush Post Primary School
Policy:	Anti-Bullying Policy 2024-2025

Staff Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	26/3/2024
Proposed By:	Sheila McDonald (Staff Member)
Seconded By:	Sheena Gartland (Staff Member)

Student Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	13/3/2024
Proposed By:	Elizabeth Gillen (Student)
Seconded By:	Eoghan Hughes (Student)

Parents Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	9/05/2024
Proposed By:	David Gillen (Parents Association Member)
Seconded By:	Melissa McCoy (Parents Association Member)