



Anti-Bullying Policy

Templebreedy NS 12169j

Date: 8 June 2021

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

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 Templebreedy 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.

2a. RATIONALE

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 (Ref. Section 6 – Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour)
 - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

2b. RELATIONSHIP TO ETHOS OF SCHOOL

Templebreedy National School believes that its pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Although this behaviour is regrettable the school acknowledges that it has a responsibility to help the bully to deal with his/her inappropriate behaviour. The school has a clear policy of the promotion of good citizenship, (*see code of Pupil Behaviour/Discipline.*)

3. 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
- 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*, pages 8,9,10.

4. 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*) is the class teacher.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

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 will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.)

- Raising awareness through lessons in R.E, S.P.H.E. and Drama.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect. Actively promote the right of every member of school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Through positive measures, through praise, through encouragement endeavour to build pupil's self-esteem and to get them to develop a sense of responsibility to themselves and to others.

- Encourage pupils to discuss how to form positive attitudes towards other people and how to get on with them. This includes a review of what friendship really is, as covered in the R.S.E and R.E. programmes. Find opportunities in Poems, Literature etc.
- Enforce a firm but fair code of discipline. (*See Policy Document – Code of Pupil Behaviour/Discipline, Section F.*)
- Organise the school community in order to minimise the opportunities for anti-social or bullying behaviour e.g. class play groupings in the school yard, supervision and monitoring systems.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other e.g. Social and Personal Health Education programme – particularly the **Stay Safe Programme** and **Friends for Life**. Discuss cause and effect.
- Deal swiftly, firmly and fairly with any complaints of bullying and involve Parents/Guardians where appropriate. All incidents are noted in the Incident Books and appropriate sanctions are applied. All incidents are noted on Template for recording Bullying Behaviour and appropriate sanctions that are applied (*See G 2 Policy Document -Code of Behaviour and Discipline*)
- As part of lessons on the subject of Bullying, display Anti-Bullying charts at various locations around the school, and arrange a ‘Suggestion Box’ in senior classes.
- Inform parents of Information Sessions provided to raise awareness of dangers associated with social media and the internet
- Provide Anti-Bullying resources such as books and videos, posters, worksheets, (see attached.)
- Encourage children to report concerns and foster a climate of Recognise, Reject and Respond.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory derogatory language in school; this includes homophobic or racist language.
- Provide adequate instruction including workshops for pupils with regard to cyber and on-line bullying. Also foster a culture of reporting concerns in this area. Urge and encourage parents to stay informed in appropriate use of social media and online gaming platforms
- Ensure that all SEN (Special Education Needs) pupils are treated as equals. Ensure that they are included by focusing on development of social skills and inclusivity.

5B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Understanding of Bullying - (*Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools Section 2/3.*)

If a parent/guardian feels that their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, they should inform the school. Their complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

It is in the interest of pupils, parents and teachers that good relations exist between home and school. The teachers are willing to discuss any problems which may arise from time to time. With mutual respect and goodwill, most problems can be readily resolved.

In cases of suspected bullying, parents/guardians should act as follows:

- In the first instance, a parent/guardian wishing to make a complaint should make an appointment to meet with the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- If the matter is not resolved in an appropriate length of time, (20 school days) the parent/guardian should make an appointment to meet with the Principal.
- If the issue is still not resolved within a reasonable space of time, the parent/guardian should submit in writing their complaint and arrange for a meeting with the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal.

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 behaviour as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, page 30 – 33 inclusive):

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. It will be made clear to all pupils that when reporting incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales, but are behaving responsibly.
- Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.
- Incidents will be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved may also be interviewed to provide useful information.
- If a group is involved each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter all involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- The teacher will reassure and support each member of the group through the possible pressures they may face from the other members of the group, after interview by the teacher.

- It may be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s.)
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, why, where, when and who. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- **Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour**, it will be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the schools anti-bullying policy and every effort will be made to try and get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- In cases **where it is determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred**, the parents of the parties concerned will be contacted at an early stage, **once the Template has been completed** to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. **(See G 2 Code of Behaviour and Discipline.)**
The school will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school, and the supports for their children.
- It will also be made clear to all involved i.e. pupils and parents that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, **this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.**
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issued and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.
- Reports of any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by any member of staff or ancillary staff or mentioned to them should be reported to the relevant teacher.
- Follow up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged separately, with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considered that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the Template for recording bullying behaviour.
- In determining whether a bullying case had been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the School Principal or Deputy Principal.

Footnote

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate to the school's complaints procedures; **(See policy for Code of Behaviour and Discipline – Section I)**.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Procedures for recording Bullying Behaviour

- The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, he/she will keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issue and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The relevant teacher will use the Recording Template to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
 - a) In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days, after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred.
 - b) In certain circumstances bullying behaviour which is considered to affect the safety of others will be recorded as directed by the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour

- In a case where the school has a serious concern in relation to managing a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service will be sought.
- Where the behaviour is potentially abusive, the school will consult the HSE Children and Family Social Service with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a 'management plan.'
- Serious incidents 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 Gardai as appropriate.

- In the event of the school personnel having concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the DLP (Designated Liaison Person) will seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services. (See *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools Appendix A.*)

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.*)

- Pupils who have been bullied will be supported in various ways designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills, thereby building resilience whenever this is needed. (See back paragraph 5.)
- Pupils who have been involved in bullying behaviour will get similar assistance using the same methodology as above.
- Pupils who observe instances of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss cause and effect with their teacher.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on _____ (date).
11. This policy has been made available to school personnel. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills, and the Patron if requested.
12. 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 staff and parents. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department of Education and Skills.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
Chairperson of B.O.M. Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____