



## CBS Roscommon – Mean Scoil Na Braíthre Anti-Bullying Procedures 2014

### THIS POLICY LINKS WITH:

- The Code of Behaviour which includes our Exclusion Policy & Procedures
- Dignity in the Workplace
- Safety Statement (Health & Safety Policy)
- Child Protection Procedures
- Supervision Scheme
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Attendance and Participation Policy
- School tour / extra-curricular policy

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| Date of Latest Update                | May 2014; September 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2014 |
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| Policy Agreed by Board of Management | 2014 to come into effect immediately     |
| Policy Available for Staff at:       | Office; Staff Handbook; School Website   |
| Policy Available for Parents at:     | School Website; Office                   |
| Principal                            | Ms. F. Gallagher                         |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy was developed by the school community and was last ratified in 2009. Department of Education & Skills Circular 045/2013 obliged all schools to update their Anti-Bullying Policy during the academic year 2014. A sub-committee of the school's Board of Management, teachers and parents' council along with the principal undertook the revision of the policy. As the changes needed in the policy were formal and legal requirements it was unnecessary to seek input from students, parents and teachers. The policy was given to parents, teachers and students before it was presented to the Board of Management for consideration.

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

**CBS Roscommon** is a voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST) for boys only. The policy is informed by the ERST Charter and this charter has five key elements:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community

- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership

Our policy is to enhance the educational growth of our students in their intellectual, spiritual, social, artistic, moral and sporting development. The policy is implemented within the context of our Mission Statement:

*The mission of CBS Roscommon is to prepare and nurture our students for life, career and as a valued members of society in a caring Christian environment. We seek to work with the local community and agencies to foster the development of the individual and collective talents of all students and staff.*

## **2. RATIONALE**

- 2.1. As a school we aim to provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff where effective teaching and learning can take place and where there are clear procedures for dealing with behaviour that compromises this environment. It has always been a priority for the school to provide this safe environment.
- 2.2. The Department of Education & Skills requires schools to have a written policy that deals with anti-bullying. Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 the management authority of a school is obliged to have a policy in place.
- 2.3. The Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST), our trustees, has a statutory obligation to ensure this and all policies reflect the principles and ethos of the trust.
- 2.4. The involvement of all the education partners in the development of the policy is, in itself, a means of promoting the policy and appropriate behaviour.
- 2.5. Schools also have obligations in relation to harassment and sexual harassment under the Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004.
- 2.6. The Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004 prohibit discrimination on nine specific grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. They also prohibit harassment on all of the discriminatory grounds. This includes harassment of students by principals, teachers or anyone in a position of responsibility in the school.
- 2.7. Chapter 6 of the [\*Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures for Post-Primary Schools\*](#), addresses the issue of peer abuse and bullying. This document, which boards of management have been advised (under [Circular M44/05](#)) to formally adopt as the school's official policy on Child Protection, stresses the importance of having a policy in place to deal with bullying. It specifies that where a bullying incident is serious and where the behaviour involved is regarded

as potentially abusive, the school should consult the Health Service Executive with a view to drawing up an appropriate response.

### 3. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to the whole school community in their relationships with students including students, teachers, management, board of management, parents, office and all ancillary staff of CBS Roscommon. As employers, school management must comply with the requirements of the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 and, in this regard, also has an anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy in place for staff (a statutory Code of Practice applies to harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace). The 'Dignity in the Workplace' policy covers interactions among staff only.

The proliferation of technology in schools and across all age-groups in society has resulted in possibilities for anti-social and bullying behaviour beyond the normal school day. Therefore, it is necessary for this policy to cover activities that happen during the regular school day, including breaks, on school tours or activities arranged by the school and at any other time where the behaviour impacts negatively on any other member of the school community.

### 4. **RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT/ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

This policy promotes the five key elements of the ERST Charter and the essence of our mission statement. Caring for each other and respect are at the core of what we do in the school.

### 5. **GOALS / OBJECTIVES**

- 5.1. To create a school ethos which encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- 5.2. To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour with school management, teachers, students, parents/guardians.
- 5.3. To create a school ethos that acknowledges, accommodates and respects a diversity of students across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.
- 5.4. To ensure that the school's Social, Personal and Health Education programme raises awareness of the factors associated with bullying behaviour and develops appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- 5.5. To take practical actions to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour e.g. to ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- 5.6. To develop procedures for reporting and recording incidents of bullying behaviour.
- 5.7. To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

- 5.8. To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and those involved in bullying behaviour.
- 5.9. To work with, and through, the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour. These agencies include the HSE, An Garda Síochána, Roscommon Youth Services, and NEPS.

## **6. CONTENT OF POLICY – KEY MEASURES**

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 CBS Roscommon 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:**

### **6.1. Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as *deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. This deliberate behaviour may cause the target of the abuse to suffer physical or emotional distress and can be carried out by an individual or a group.* The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks, ridicule, sarcasm)
- psychological or indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).

Encouraging other people to engage in any of these types of behaviour is also bullying, even if you do not directly do any of them yourself. In fact, in some ways it is even worse because it affects the people you persuade to do these things as well as the victim.

Similarly, sitting idly by while bullying of another student takes place is also unacceptable.

Inform someone who is in a position to intervene and stop this behaviour, e.g., a teacher or your parents etc.

**For the purposes of this policy, the term bullying also encompasses harassment and sexual harassment, defined as follows:**

- **Harassment:** any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any of the nine grounds named in the equality legislation that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.
- **Sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.

The nine grounds are gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

## 6.2. **Actions to Prevent Bullying Behaviour**

Everybody has a role to play in preventing and eliminating bullying from the school (Circular M42/93). Prevention of bullying can be achieved by raising awareness of the dangers and consequences of bullying among all members of the school community and by minimising the opportunities for bullying to take place.

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in SPHE, talks by the class tutors in class, at assemblies and by individual teachers in their own subject areas as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Pupils will receive the following guidelines from class tutors at the beginning of each school year and at intervals throughout the year:

- Care for each other and report any incidents of unkind behaviour or verbal abuse to any adult in the school.
- Support the pupil who is the recipient of hurtful behaviour.
- Think before you say unkind words and be aware of how your behaviour may be viewed by others.
- Never touch another pupil in an aggressive manner.
- Do not leave other pupils out of social activity.
- Make an effort to involve everyone whenever possible.

## 6.3. **The Role of the Staff**

### **The Class Tutor**

- Organise regular talks with class groups with bullying on the agenda
- Note changes in friendship groups.
- Observe closely the socialisation of new pupils.
- Check on patterns of attendance and lateness, and sickness in school.
- Liaise with parents if suspicious

### **The Subject Teacher**

- Note instances of withdrawn personality.
- Be suspicious of a sudden drop in achievement.
- Be careful of unintended outcomes when choosing groups or when partner work is involved.
- Take time out to discuss bullying if the issue arises in your class, directly or indirectly
- Talk to the class teacher if you suspect anything unusual
- Be aware of the importance of being punctual to lessons and never leaving the classroom unsupervised

### **Personnel on Supervision Duty**

- Patrol areas which are not directly observable.
- Note the occurrence of isolated pupils.
- Observe inappropriate behaviour of pupils in the playground.
- Bring any unusual occurrences to the attention of the principal or deputy principal

### **The Principal, Deputy Principal and Class Tutor**

- Act immediately on parents' suspicions and investigate all matters even if they appear to be trivial.
- Make a 'Report Book' available in a designated place and have one person in charge of monitoring the book.
- The Deputy Principal (or the Principal if the DP is unavailable) will keep a file on all incidences of reported bullying, including a report on the outcomes of investigations.
- Arrange support for both victims and bullies, in consultation with the school guidance counsellor and the parents.
- Discuss with staff suitable sanctions where necessary.
- Raise awareness through the curriculum, e.g. SPHE, Religious Education etc.
- Give opportunities for pupils to discuss the ideas by setting aside a class period for the class teacher and his/ her class.
- Improve links with parents and the community through meetings and other activities
- Peer Support and buddy schemes, e.g. Student Representative Council, class perfects.

#### **6.4. The Role of the Parents**

To safeguard your child and his friends you, the parents, are asked to report suspected instances of bullying if:

- Your son is a target.
- A friend of your son is a target
- Your son is involved in bullying

All information will, of course, be treated with the utmost discretion so that nobody will feel compromised by passing it on. For legal reasons confidentiality cannot be guaranteed - where the student is likely to harm, or be harmed by, another student.

CBS Roscommon is continually striving for the establishment of a cohesive supportive and inclusive environment with a zero tolerance of bullying. The implementation of anti-bullying programmes and procedures at all year levels provides students with strategies to develop positive relationships and contributes to the creation of a caring, pro-social school environment. The elimination of bullying at CBS Roscommon is everyone's responsibility. A person who is bullied does not have the problem alone because bullying adversely affects everyone in the community in one way or another.

**7. 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. A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in schools under equality legislation. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.



## 8. Types of Bullying

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

- **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault.
- **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 person; 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, school books and other learning material or interference with a student'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 student may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

**The above list is not an exhaustive list of bullying behaviours.**

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

**9. 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*):**

All members of the school community have an obligation to report incidents of bullying.

Note: Non-teaching staff e.g. Secretaries, Caretakers and Cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, to the appropriate member of staff.

**10. 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*):**

**10.1. School-wide approach**

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.

- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year).
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; annual or term or monthly student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, guidance counsellor etc. .
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol will be developed in consultation with parents.

- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The identification of guest speakers and other supports available to the school e.g. BeLonGTo [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org). And the 3 R's programme (SESS).
- A questionnaire to be handed out to all Junior Cycle Students (Appendix 3) two weeks before the end of each term in SPHE Class. A Bullying Monitor Report Form is to be filled out by each SPHE/Class Teacher and given to the Principal. (Appendix 2). The same will be completed for all Senior Cycle Students in Religion/Career Guidance Class. The Class tutor/SPHE teacher will have covered what constitutes bullying as outlined in this policy at the start of every academic school year.
- Displaying the CBS Roscommon Anti-Bullying Charter prominently throughout the school and the school journal and ensuring that every student signs their name to it.
- Frequent contact with individual students by class tutors to establish good personal relationships.
- Encouragement of the role of the Student Council and Class Representatives in promoting the general well-being of the students.
- Sustaining and developing the school culture of students, management, parents and staff working together for the benefit of all.
- End of Year - Leadership Award – celebrating positive leadership in the school.

## 10.2. **Parents Council**

Actively involving parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.

## 10.3. **Inclusion of Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum**

- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE programme.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, #UP2US, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Relational Aggression (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), Cyber Bullying (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme).

- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes in association with the Community Garda. These lessons, delivered by Community Garda, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- Curricular Initiatives – all teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular and sporting initiatives.
- An awareness day to highlight the benefits of positive behaviour and acting responsibly.

#### **10.4. Links to other policies**

- The Code of Behaviour which includes our Exclusion Policy & Suspension Procedures.
- Dignity in the Workplace.
- Safety Statement (Health & Safety Policy).
- Child Protection Procedures.
- Supervision Policy.
- Acceptable Use Policy.
- Attendance and Participation Policy.
- School tour /extra-curricular policy.

### **11. Dealing with a Bullying Incident**

A key defining feature of the implementation of schools' policies on bullying should be an emphasis on visibility and communication. It is only by ensuring continually that pupils, parents and staff are all aware of the policy that this issue can be kept alive. It is therefore considered imperative that the policy is listed in the Student Journal and discussed with the class during the course of the school year. The use of posters and high profile reminders will be investigated.

#### **11.1. A Practical Approach**

- Be alert to obvious threats to a students' safety or wellbeing in the corridors, classrooms, school yard etc.
- Intervene immediately if an individual is insecure as a result of the behaviour of others and process the culprits through the existing code of conduct.
- It may be necessary to contact the parents/guardians of the student who has reported the incident and arrange to meet them with a view to coming up with a solution which is workable for all concerned.

- The parents/guardians of the perpetrator will be asked to attend with their son so that they can be brought up to date with the situation by the principal, deputy principal and the class tutor.
- Depending on the severity and frequency of the incident(s), the principal and deputy principal would decide whether or not the bullying incident could be adequately dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. They may decide that it is necessary to bring the issue to the board of management in order to decide upon what the school could have to offer such a student, keeping in mind the good of the entire school community.

**11.2. The following disciplinary steps may be taken once a complaint has been substantiated:**

- An agreement of good behaviour.
- Withdrawal of privileges e.g. participation in school trips.
- Other sanctions as may be deemed appropriate.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

We recognise that many incidents of bullying take place in secret and that for whatever reason the victim may choose not to report it. We acknowledge therefore the need to tackle the issue in the classroom situation. This will be done as part of our SPHE Programme. This programme will be ongoing and will serve as a constant reminder to all of:

- a) The need to report even what they consider to be the most minor incident immediately.
- b) The absolute commitment of all staff to dealing with the bully/bullies immediately and in a decisive manner.

The vast majority of students in our school community respect the rights of others to an education in a safe environment. We intend by working with that majority and encouraging them to work to ensure a safe environment for all. We also hope to help the minority to realise that they can empower themselves more effectively by respecting the rights of others. In addition we need to leave them in no doubt that there is no room in this community for someone who is not prepared to reform his ways. Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with the Class tutor, Deputy Principal, Principal or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil, using the support systems in the school (Class Teacher, Care Team, Guidance Counsellor) and offering continuous support in attempting to restore self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened;
- Discovering why the pupil became involved;
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change;
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

## **12. PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING AND DEALING WITH BULLYING**

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*):

### **12.1. The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).**

**The school's procedures are consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

### **12.2. Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

### **12.3. Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved; Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
- The relevant teacher should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how the student is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

#### **12.4. Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.



- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

#### 12.5. Recording of bullying behaviour

**It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.**

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

#### 12.6. Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

The Board of Management ensures that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these must be documented in the school's anti-bullying policy. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour must adhere to the following:

- (i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, 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;
- (ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- (iii) The relevant teacher must use the recording template (**Appendix 1**) 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 occurred; and
  - b) Where the relevant member of staff deems a particular incident or repetition of an incident(s) to be of such a serious nature that it merits the immediate completion of a recording template (**Appendix 1**) and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template **Appendix 1** must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at **Appendix 1** does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

**13. 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*) :**

13.1. All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Care Team (to be re-introduced in September 2014)
- Class tutor system (voluntary role)
- CBS Anti – bullying charter
- In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.
- Throughout the academic year, opportunities are provided in which students may develop self esteem, resilience and positive relationships in both the informal and formal curriculum.
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies e.g. Vita House to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

**13.2. Referral of serious cases to the HSE**

- In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.
- Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, 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.

- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services (Tusla)..

#### **14. Supports for Staff**

The Board of Management must ensure that members of the school have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. Supports for staff should be appropriate to the individual's role and should enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases.

#### **15. Outside the School Gates**

The school reserves the right to apply its bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related if in the opinion of the principal and/or Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school. (MHC, 2013).

#### **16. Inter School Cooperation**

Having regard to the summary of the main elements of the DES Anti-Bullying and Bullying Procedures, it appears that in an inter-school support situation, the responsibilities under the policy arise on the teacher, principal/deputy principal and board of management in the school where the alleged bullying has occurred. If it spans both schools then each school would have responsibilities there under.

#### **17. Bullying by Staff**

The focus of the DES Anti-Bullying and Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES c/1 45/2013) is on school-based bullying amongst students. The Dignity at Work policy which covers bullying occurring outside of the DES procedures. <http://www.jmb.ie/menu-policies-a-procedures/dignity-in-the-workplace>

#### **18. Appeals**

Where cases relating to bullying remain unresolved or where either party is unhappy with the actions taken by the school, the matter may be referred to the school's Board of Management.

## **19. 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.

**The following Prompt Questions may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:**

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils being consulted in the identification of these danger spots?
- How will the student support/care structures (including year heads, class tutors, SPHE, Guidance, RE, CSPE, Learning Support teachers, SNA's) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
- How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the student council and school clubs be involved?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
  - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
  - Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage?
  - Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
  - Have pupils been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

## **20. 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.

## **21. Monitoring implementation**

All members of the school community - parents/guardians, students and all members of staff will be asked for feedback. The topic of 'bullying' will be included on the agenda of teaching staff meetings at least once a year.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## **22. Review and Evaluation**

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed (as required by Circular 045/2013) by the Board of Management once in every school year (Appendix 4). The review will be done using random surveying of students, parents and staff as well as examining the reports on bullying made during the year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, 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.

**23. Legislation**

For additional information see Department of Education Circular M42/93

*“Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools”*

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 1

## Bullying Behaviour Report Form

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupils engaged in bullying behaviour**

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**3. Source of bullying concern/report**  
(tick relevant box(es))

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Pupil concerned        |  |
| Other Pupil            |  |
| Parent                 |  |
| Teacher                |  |
| Other (Please specify) |  |

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

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Playground             |  |
| Classroom              |  |
| Corridor               |  |
| Toilets                |  |
| School Bus             |  |
| Other (Please specify) |  |

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

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**6. TType of Bullying Behaviour** (tick relevant box(es))

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

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

| Homophobic | Disability/<br>SEN related | Racist | Membership of<br>Travelling Community | Other<br>(Please specify) |
|------------|----------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|            |                            |        |                                       |                           |

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed: (Reporting person) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix 2

## Bullying Alert Form

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Nature of Activity

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### Possible witnesses/friends of victim

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**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 3

## Anti bullying Questionnaire

You can use this questionnaire to get help for yourself or another student.  
Each student can write their name or remain anonymous

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

Are you being bullied?                      Yes                       No

If yes, describe the bullying

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Do you know of any student that is being bullied?                      Yes                       No

Describe how they are being bullied

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## 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 <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 have 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix 5**

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

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of CBS Roscommon 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 \_\_\_\_\_ [date]
- The review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 3 of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

**CBS Roscommon Anti Bullying Charter**

# Appendix 6

## Review Dates

Ratified May 2014 .....

Review (1).....

Review (2).....

Review (3).....