



COURTESY FRIENDLINESS CO-OPERATION

Anti – Bullying Policy

Review Date	Ratified by BOM	Next Review Date
January 2019 (last review 2014)		

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **Presentation Secondary School, Tralee**, 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.

2. 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.

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 and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

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

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 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. 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 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.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

A student/parent/guardian/unnamed source may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. This teacher will record the complaint in the record book in the staffroom and will refer the matter to the Class Teacher. The Class Teacher will endeavour to mediate and resolve. If the situation is not resolved the Year Head will be informed. The Year Head is the relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with alleged bullying.

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:

- a) Raising awareness of bullying in each class as an unacceptable form of behaviour
 - The emphasis will always be on prevention

- Everyone in the school will be made aware of the reality of bullying and its detrimental effects on people.

This will be done in the following ways:

- All teachers will use every available opportunity to raise awareness of the unacceptability of bullying behaviour and will address this behaviour if and when it arises.
- At Junior Level, the SPHE teachers will use aspects of the SPHE programme to raise awareness of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour. This will be done in a structured way, with the teachers deciding on a series of classes for each group.
- At senior level, Class teachers, RE teachers and Guidance Counsellors will address the topic of bullying and mutual respect.
- The lessons will aim to address issues such as empathy, assertiveness, coping skills, rights and responsibilities
- The Principal and Deputy Principal will continually remind the students of their rights and responsibilities and their entitlement to an education in a safe environment.
- Students will be constantly encouraged by the Principal and Deputy Principal, and all their teachers, to contribute to a school atmosphere and ethos in which the students feel free to speak up if bullying takes place.
- SRC students may hold a poster competition to promote a non-bullying ethos in the school. These posters may be displayed on noticeboards around the school.
- Fifth Year student who have received training whilst in Transition Year will mentor First year students. It is hoped that this will help to alleviate some of the stresses associated with the transition from primary to secondary school.
- Subject and class teachers will be informed of any confirmed bullying behaviour so that they may monitor the situation.
- The Class teacher will discuss the anti-bullying policy with the students regularly.
- Visiting speakers will address the problems of bullying.

b) Promote a culture of respect among the students

- Students will be constantly reminded that certain standards apply in the school and they must comply with these standards. The “courtesy, friendliness and co-operation” guideline will be brought to their attention regularly by their teachers and at monthly assembly.
- “Please” and “Thank You” should be part of the natural vocabulary. Politeness, common courtesy and good manners will be constantly encouraged by all members of staff. Lessons on courtesy will be integrated into their other lessons.
- Class teachers will read and explain the school Code of Positive Behaviour with their classes once a term.
- The students should understand the Mission Statement of the School. Class teachers will draw their attention to the students’ responsibility to achieve “a spirit of co-operation, shared responsibility, respect and goodwill”.
- Students will be given time in class to think about behavioural standards they would like for themselves and how to communicate these to others.
- Promoting a culture of respect will be a whole school approach, not just a few teachers encouraging it.
- Student awareness of respect for their teachers will be highlighted at Assembly.
- Students will be allowed to achieve in all areas without a begrudging attitude.
- Students will abide by all the school rules and have a positive attitude in all that they do.
- Students will be constantly reminded by their teachers to speak in a polite and respectful tone, to each other and to the school staff.
- Students will have high expectations of themselves
- Teachers will have high expectations of all students.
- The school’s approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills particularly through SPHE class,

paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary through the provision of a mentoring programme and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

c) Documentation, record keeping and confidentiality

- If a student/parent/unnamed source brings a bullying concern to a member of staff, he/she will record that a complaint was made. The teacher will gather initial information regarding the incident in order to ascertain if the incident should be dealt with using the Anti-bullying procedures or using the school Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Where the teacher decides that the incident is a bullying matter s/he will report it to the Year Head and supply the year head with all relevant information.
- The Year Head is the relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with alleged bullying
- When a bullying incident is confirmed the Year Head will complete Appendix 3 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and submit it to the Principal.
- All details will be documented by the relevant teacher – from the initial disclosure to its conclusion.
- Students must be told that total confidentiality cannot be given
- Subject teachers to be informed of confirmed bullying incidents in their class

d) Supervision of key areas of the school, during supervision period.

- Teachers on supervision duty should supervise-
Corridor areas
Social areas
Classrooms
Assembly area
- The supervisors should walk around the corridors and enter the classrooms during supervision periods.
- The supervisors should be alert to students who are constantly alone.
- The supervisors should disperse students clustering around toilet areas and ensure that students use the toilet block assigned to them.

e) Circulation of policy

- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
- Teachers must know the procedure on how bullying is reported
- The class teacher should go through the policy with the students once a term, to ensure that all students are familiar with it.
- The class teacher must explain the standards of behaviour expected and the reasons for them.
- This must be followed up at Assembly, after it has been done in class.

f) Success Criteria

The success of the policy will be judged on the following:

- That an atmosphere and ethos is established throughout the school in which bullying is unacceptable and in which all feel free to speak up if bullying takes place.
- That there is a noticeable reduction in the number of bullying incidents
- That the school becomes a bullying-free zone
- That where incidents occur, that the policy is followed and implemented quickly.
- That the victim of a bullying incident can see clearly that the school anti-bullying policy was implemented and the perpetrator was dealt with appropriately.
- That there are consequences for the perpetrator of a bullying incident.

5. 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:

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

(Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013:6)

Step I

- If a student/parent/unnamed source brings a bullying concern to a member of staff, he/she will record that a complaint was made. The teacher will gather initial information regarding the incident in order to ascertain if the incident should be dealt with using the Anti-bullying procedures or using the school Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Where the teacher decides that the incident is a bullying matter s/he will report it to the Year Head and supply the year head with all relevant information

Step II

- The Year Head will lead an information gathering process
- The student/s involved in the alleged bullying will be interviewed individually by the Year Head
- The allegations will be listened to and addressed seriously and sensitively.
- While confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, all allegations will be dealt with discreetly.
- Details of the reported allegation of bullying will be written down and read back to the student/students for confirmation.
- If they so wish, the student may write down their account of the situation.

Step III

- All students involved, the alleged victim and the alleged bully, will be interviewed together by the Year Head and Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
- Students will be requested not to discuss the nature or content of the meeting with other students.
- Each recorded account will be read out to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.
- At this stage whilst it may become clear that one or more students have engaged in bullying behaviour every effort will be made to come to an amicable conclusion.
- All students involved will be informed that additional support is available in the school from the Guidance Counsellors should they require it.
- Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken.
- The Year Head will meet with both parties within two weeks of the problem being resolved, to monitor progress.

Step IV

- If the same student or students are alleged to be involved in a further incident of bullying
- The student/s involved in the alleged bullying will be interviewed individually by the Year Head
- The allegations will be listened to and addressed seriously and sensitively.
- While confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, all allegations will be dealt with discreetly.
- Details of the reported allegation of bullying will be written down and read back to the student/students for confirmation.
- If they so wish, the student may write down their account of the situation.
- All students involved, the alleged victim and the alleged bully, will be interviewed together by the Year Head and Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
- Students will be requested not to discuss the nature or content of the meeting with other students.
- Each recorded account will be read out to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

- At this stage whilst it may become clear that one or more students have engaged in bullying behaviour every effort will be made to come to an amicable conclusion.
- All students involved will be informed that additional support is available in the school from the Guidance Counsellors should they require it.

- If it is concluded that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour she will be informed
 - a. that she is in breach of the school Code of Behaviour and that she must stop her unacceptable behaviour immediately;
 - b. that her parents/guardians will be informed to support her in changing her unacceptable behaviour
 - c. that her class teacher and subject teachers will be informed
 - d. that support is available in the school from the Guidance Counsellors to enable her to change her unacceptable behaviour
 - e. that if her bullying behaviour continues, sanctions will be put in place.
- The victim of bullying will be informed
 - a. that her parents/guardians will be contacted so that they are in a position to help and support her
 - b. that she has behaved in a most responsible way in bringing the incident to the attention of the school authorities
 - c. that if she wishes to see the guidance counsellor, an appointment will be made for her
 - d. that continuing support will be available as long as it is necessary
 - e. that her class teacher and subject teachers will be informed
- The Year Head will complete Appendix 3 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and submit it to the Principal.
- Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken.
- The Year Head will meet with both parties within two weeks of the problem being resolved, to monitor progress.

SANCTIONS IF THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR CONTINUES

If, after the follow-up meeting, it is established that the bullying activity has not stopped, sanctions will then apply:

- the student will be suspended for two days to reflect on her behaviour;
- on her return, she will be requested to sign an agreement of good behaviour in the presence of her parents and the school Principal/Deputy Principal;
- if she persists with bullying activity, she will be suspended for three days initially, then a further 4 days and then a further 5 days;
- if after that period she continues with the bullying activity, she will be recommended to the Board of Management for permanent exclusion from the school.

6. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

HELPING THE VICTIM

- Once an incident is reported, there will be immediate action and support.
- When the bullying incident is established, all subject teachers will be told of the incident, to enable vigilance within the classroom
- With the consent of the victim and her parents, the student will be referred to the Guidance Counsellor.

“Victims [of bullying] may need counselling and opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem.....”

(Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools September 1993)

HELPING THE PERPETRATOR(S)

- Once the bullying incident is established, there must be immediate action taken.
- It will be necessary to give the perpetrator the opportunity to explain why she is behaving in such a manner
- The perpetrator must be made aware of the distress being suffered by the victim as a result of her behaviour
- All subject teachers must be informed of the incident by the Year Head, to enable vigilance
- With the consent of her parents, she will be referred to the Guidance Counsellor, for help

“A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour should be an integral part of the school’s intervention process”

(Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools September 1993)

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 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.

11. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and 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.

12. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 19/03/2014 and be reviewed at regular intervals.