



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*Caring, challenging and achieving together*



### **Preamble**

Every student has the right to pursue his/her education in a safe and secure environment, free from the fear of being bullied in any form. Students are strongly encouraged to report any incident which makes them feel threatened or unsafe. Proactive approaches will be adopted by Coláiste Bhríde to ensure a child's safety at all times. Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board in conjunction with Coláiste Bhríde will apply the school's *Code of Behaviour* in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity or programme if it is deemed to impinge on the well-being of an individual, the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Coláiste Bhríde continues to emphasise the importance of a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact. Effective practice includes prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage students in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies build empathy, respect and resilience in students. As self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour, Coláiste Bhríde, through its curricular and extra-curricular programmes, provides students with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

This document should be read in conjunction with Coláiste Bhríde's *Code of Behaviour, Information and Communications Technology – Acceptable Usage Policy, IPAD Acceptable Usage Policy* and *Whole School Inclusion Policy*.

### **Definition:**

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person(s) and which is repeated over time. This includes cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying (such as homophobic, transphobic and racist bullying).

Coláiste Bhríde's policy includes key principles of best practice for both preventing and tackling bullying (*See Appendix A*).

These include:

- A positive school culture and climate
- Effective leadership
- A whole school approach
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- Implementation of awareness raising and prevention strategies
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying policy

*Bullying can take many different forms which include:*

- Physical aggression – pushing, hitting etc.
- Damage to property – stealing pens, pencils etc., breaking rulers and tearing books
- Extortion – demands for money, food, sweets etc.
- Intimidation – verbal threats etc.
- Ridiculing a person's work or ideas
- Horseplay, offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact
- Name calling: hurtful or humiliating names
- Personal remarks about a person's clothing, hygiene, family
- Sexual/homophobic comments about another person
- Isolation of a student and encouraging others to do likewise
- Threats to deal with 'squealers'
- Making school life difficult and preventing student(s) from playing a full part in the life of the school
- Use of technological devices and social media sites to intimidate or isolate a student.

**It is also possible for adults to exhibit bullying behaviour:**

- All school personnel are asked to monitor their own behaviour on a regular basis
- Unfairness in dealing with students will not be accepted or supported by school management

- Derogatory comments made to any student or about any student will not be accepted or supported by school management.
- Consistency in fair treatment, positive reinforcement and empowering students to be responsible citizens is expected from staff members at all times.

### **Effects of bullying:**

Bullying can have an adverse effect on a young person and can cause him/her to feel frightened, unhappy, suffer from anxiety and mood swings. The victim's self-esteem and self-confidence can be lowered. In extreme cases a critical incident may result.

### ***Students may be vulnerable to bullying if they:***

- are different in any way
- are insecure or timid
- are clumsy or awkward
- have poor personal hygiene
- are motivated individuals who work hard at school
- are students who may or are perceived to have learning difficulties
- are individuals who have few friends
- are over-protected at home
- have different racial, sexual orientation or religious backgrounds

### ***Students who present with bullying behaviour may:***

- like the feeling of power
- feel insecure or inadequate
- have been bullied themselves
- see bullying in their own home
- feel angry and frustrated at some aspect of their own lives

## **Procedures for Parents**

### **Possible signs of bullying:**

If you are concerned or become aware of any of the following you may have reason to suspect that your child is being bullied.

### ***Children may:***

- Demonstrate anxiety about travelling to/from school, request parents to change their route to school, time of travelling
- Be unwilling to go to school, refuse to attend, play truant
- Have unexplained changes of mood – especially on Sunday night or Monday morning or after holiday time
- Experience re-occurrence of pre-existing medical conditions

- Come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed; possessions missing.
- Seek to phone home on a regular basis and/or ask to be collected from school during the day
- Come home hungry – lunch money or food has been taken
- Become withdrawn or distressed or stop eating, or start stammering
- Cry themselves to sleep or have nightmares, make spontaneous out of character comments
- Ask for money or begin stealing (to pay the person engaging in the bullying behaviour)
- Have unexplained cuts or bruises
- Have frequent minor illnesses on school mornings – headaches, stomach upsets etc.
- Lose interest in personal technological devices that connect to the internet including, but not limited to Xbox, Play Station, Wii, etc.
- Switch between web pages, passwords and show signs of secrecy
- Be reluctant and /or refuse to say what is troubling him/her

**If your child is being bullied:**

The most important thing to do is to make sure that the bullying is stopped. **YOU MUST SPEAK OUT. SILENCE NURTURES THE POWER OF THE PERSON ENGAGING IN THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR...**

- Get full details of what is happening from your child
- Keep written records – day, date, details etc. of incidents and witnesses
- Approach the child's class teacher, year head, and deputy principal or principal. **DO NOT** approach the person engaging in the bullying behaviour or his/her family
- Ensure that the child gets ongoing support at home. The school counsellor or relevant personnel is available to help both the person engaging in the bullying behaviour and the victim.

Please note that all information given to the school is treated in a confidential and sensitive manner which does not further endanger the victim.

**REMEMBER:** If we do not know it is happening we can do nothing about it.

**If you discover your child is engaging in bullying behaviour:**

- Remain calm – do not bully or hit the child
- Take time to talk with your child
- Try to find out why your child is bullying
- Make it clear that the behaviour must stop and apologise to the victim
- Seek professional help if necessary
- Ask your child to put himself/herself in the victim's place
- Provide relevant literature for your child on bullying, its effects and other important information on bullying

## Procedures for Staff

All members of staff should be vigilant with regard to bullying. Many of the signs parents have to watch out for at home can also manifest themselves in school. Coláiste Bhríde will endeavour annually to raise the awareness of bullying among staff, build an understanding on what bullying is and provide guidance on how it can be best combated –prevention, detection, investigation, documentation and resolution.

### Possible signs of bullying:

- Increased instances of absenteeism
- Unexplained changes in mood, behaviour or attitude
- Disimprovement in class work, homework and /or class participation
- Possessions going missing
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Comments from other students
- Hesitant to use technological devices or to research school related work on the internet, either in school or at home

Staff should record incidents of bullying and report them accordingly to the year head, deputy principal or principal.

### Staff should take the following into consideration:

1. Coláiste Bhríde's *Code of Behaviour* will be discussed at the beginning of each academic year. The *Code of Behaviour* underlines the school's aim of promoting the development of the school community and highlights the need for individuals to treat others with respect.
2. Staff should adopt a calm, unemotional problem-solving, confidential approach when dealing with incidences of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents.
3. Staff should take opportunities to emphasise to the students our collective responsibility for ensuring that no student or group of students is bullied.
4. Action should be designed to ensure that the behaviour which led to the incident ends as soon as possible and that the 'victim' no longer feels insecure. It should be noted that in many instances the behaviour which is causing the difficulty is not intended to offend/hurt to the extent that it does.
5. Senior students, especially the Meitheal Leaders, senior prefects and mentors should be asked to be alert for instances of bullying. Students are often better placed than staff to identify bullying.
6. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned.
7. Follow-up meeting with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

**On receipt of a report of bullying the following steps should be taken:**

1. The incident should be reported to the year head (YH) or relevant deputy principal (DP)
2. A decision is taken initially about the level of seriousness of the incident.
3. Both the student engaging in the bullying behaviour and the victim will be addressed by the YH or relevant personnel.
4. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, YH or relevant DP should seek answers to questions of *what, where, when, who and why*.
5. It may be appropriate to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
6. The relevant member of staff must keep appropriate written records which will assist their efforts to resolve the issue.
7. All reports of bullying received by a member of staff should be treated seriously and confidentially. The class tutor and /or YH should always be informed without delay.
8. A **Bullying Incident Report Form** (*See Appendix B, page 11*) is to be completed, by the YH or DP. This is to be forwarded to the principal. A copy of the bullying incident will be filed (depending on the sensitivity of the incident) in student's personal files.  
**A written record of all reports must be kept.**
9. If deemed necessary, parents/relevant staff members will be informed.
10. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant YH/DP will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
  - Whether the 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
11. In cases where a resolution to the bullying behaviour has not been found within 20 days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; an additional **Report Form** (*Appendix C, page 13*) will be completed.
12. Where a parent is dissatisfied with how the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be informed of the school's complaints procedures.
13. 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 Students

If you are being bullied or suspect another student is being bullied report the incident immediately to somebody you trust e.g. Meitheal Leader, senior prefect, teacher, class teacher, year head, guidance counsellor, deputy principal, principal, relevant personnel, parent etc.

### Resolution of bullying incidents

It is the policy of Coláiste Bhríde to rehabilitate the persons engaging in the bullying behaviour. A restorative “no blame” approach will be prioritised in order to resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships in the parties involved.

- A simple warning may be sufficient to deal with minor incidents.
- The completion of “*Thinking about my Behaviour*” reflection sheet (Appendix F)
- If the matter is more serious parents will be informed or asked to come to the school.
- Sometimes parents may be advised to seek counselling for the person engaged in the bullying behaviour.
- When all other strategies have failed the person engaging in the bullying behaviour may be suspended.
- If serious/persistent incidents of bullying continue, the school may have to report to the Board of Management to consider indefinite suspension or expulsion of the person engaging in the bullying behaviour.

### **Support and Prevention Strategies:**

Coláiste Bhríde will put in place a programme of support for students who have been involved in a bullying incident. This programme will involve the following elements:

- Students who have been bullied will be:
  - Offered appropriate counselling
  - Provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience
- Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be:
  - Provided with support to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others
  - Provided with opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth
- Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and parents and to avail of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.
- Where necessary Coláiste Bhríde will seek the assistance of and work with NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), the HSE (Health Service Executive) and/ or the Gardaí, to combat bullying, identify the perpetrators and support the victims.

### **Education Programmes to combat bullying behaviour:**

Coláiste Bhríde will endeavour at all times to ensure the safety of students in their care. Nevertheless, Coláiste Bhríde is conscious of parental responsibility. As a whole school cross curricular initiative, all students in Coláiste Bhríde will engage in an awareness of the effects of bullying through the following programmes:

- SPHE – Social, Personal and Health Education
- RSE – Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Anti-bullying workshops (including Safety Internet Day)
- Guest speakers for parents and students
- Participate in Anti-bullying week
- ISPCC (Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)- Blue Shield

\*This list is not exhaustive

### **Procedures of the Board of Management:**

- The principal will provide a report to the Board of Management at least once in every school term setting out:
  - The number of bullying cases reported (by means of the **Bullying Incident Form, Appendix B, page 11**).
  - Confirmation that all of these cases have been or are being dealt with in accordance with Coláiste Bhríde's *Anti-Bullying Policy* and the "*Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*", September 2013
- The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the students involved.
- The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's *Anti-Bullying Policy* and its implementation by completing the "*Checklist for annual review*" (Appendix C).
- Coláiste Bhríde will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.
- Written notification of the above will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Council (See Appendix D).
- A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board and the Department of Education and Skills (if requested).



## Appendix A:

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school - this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
- Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

## Appendix B: (photocopied on orange paper)



**COLÁISTE  
BHRÍDE**

### 1. Name of student reporting bullying behaviour and class group

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

<b>2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) reportedly engaged in bullying behaviour</b>

### 3. Source of bullying concern/report

(Tick relevant box(es))

Students concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other student	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Location of incidents

(tick relevant box(es))

Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Journey to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern</b>

<b>6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))</b>			
Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:</b>				
Homophobic	Disability/SEN-related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

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**9. Details of actions taken**

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**Signed:**

**Date:**

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<b>Date submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal:</b>	

<b>10.Details of follow-up</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## Appendix C: (photocopied on green paper)



In cases where a resolution to the bullying behaviour has not been found within 20 days after the bullying behaviour has occurred;

this Report Form should be completed.

### 1. Name of student being bullied and class group

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

### 2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

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### 3. Source of bullying concern/report

(tick relevant box(es))\*

Student concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### 4. Location of incidents

(tick relevant box(es))\*

Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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Other student	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

Social Area	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Journey to/from school	
Other	

<b>6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *</b>				
Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying		
Damage to Property		Intimidation		
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip		
Name Calling		Other		
<b>7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:</b>				
Homophobic	Disability/SEN-related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

<b>8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact</b>

**9.Details of actions taken**

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<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Date submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal:</b>	

## Appendix D:



### 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 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?	YES
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the Parents' Council?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	YES
Is the Board satisfied that school staff is 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?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	YES
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	YES
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	YES



Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	YES <del>N/A</del>
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	YES
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	YES
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?	YES
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents.	NO
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	NO
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	NO
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?	NO
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	NO
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	NO

Signed  Date 30/06/2020  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Date 30/06/2020  
Principal/Secretary to Board of Management

## Appendix E:



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

To: The C.E. of KWETB,

The Board of Management of Coláiste Bhríde 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 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix D of Coláiste Bhríde's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date 30/06/2020

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date 30/06/2020

Principal/ Secretary to Board of Management



**APPENDIX F**

**Thinking About My Behaviour Exercise**

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Teacher's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT SELF REFLECTION RECORD**

**What did I do?**

**I behaved in this way because**

**Consider the impact of this behaviour on others. How could it have affected them?**

**What can I do to make things better between myself and the other person/people affected?**

**Signed:**

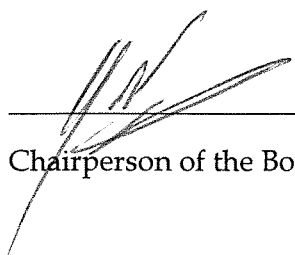
**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year Head/ DP:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE:

Version number	7
Policy reviewed by	Staff Students Parents
Approved by Board of Management	30/06/2020
Sent to KWETB for verification	01/07/2020
Next review date	May/June 2021



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Chairperson of the Board of Management