

## Appendix 1 Template anti-bullying policy

All sections of this template must be completed

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 St. Michael's N.S. Crimlin (Crimlin N.S) 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.

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

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

The class teacher will investigate and deal with any incidents of bullying and keep the Principal informed of progress.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

Crimlin N.S. will create a positive school culture and climate as follows:

We will clearly state what behaviour we expect from all members of the school community, that is pupils, staff and parents.

All pupils will have the code of behaviour in their diaries. This will be referred to often and used to guide pupils when their behaviour is less than what we expect.

The code will be on display in the classrooms and in prominent positions around the school.

All parents will receive a copy of the code upon enrolment and it will be published on the school website.

In addition it will be made clear to all parents that they and their children are required to co-operate with any investigation into bullying behaviour. They will be required to 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 behaviour we expect is that which shows:

RESPECT for self and others;

KINDNESS and WILLINGNESS TO HELP;

COURTESY and GOOD MANNERS;

FAIRNESS;

Readiness to use RESPECTFUL ways of resolving difficulties;

FORGIVENESS.

Crimlin N.S. recognises the dignity of all persons. All members of the school community are expected to engage with all others in a respectful manner. This ethos will be reinforced regularly throughout the entire school day. Pupils will be praised when they practice respectful behaviour.

The Stay Safe Programme will be taught in its entirety to all classes.

The Grow in Love programmes will be taught in their entirety, with special emphasis on the example of Jesus as a role model for the children.

Special attention will be given to the development of oral language and communication skills, see English School Plan. Any discriminatory or derogatory language will be firmly discouraged.

Special attention will be given to the development of social skills.

Care will be taken to encourage parents to make the school aware of any physical or health problems that can impact on a child's behaviour.

The staff will endeavour to build self esteem in all pupils. This will be done by:

Careful assessment of the child's ability and early identification of difficulties, together with early intervention to provide support;

Teachers will support the children in accepting themselves - their strengths and their weaknesses;

Teachers will encourage the children to enjoy and celebrate other peoples' success;

Teachers will work at getting to know individual children well - their likes, dislikes, their families, special interests, achievements, out of school activities, food and drink, etc.

All new members of staff are made aware of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy as part of their induction process.

All staff will actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.

6. 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*) :

It will 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.

All teaching and non-teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

The relevant teacher will investigate all reports of alleged bullying and will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

If the relevant teacher is of the opinion that bullying behaviour has occurred, his/her aim will be to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame.

Pupils and their parents will be 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.

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

The relevant teacher will ask *what, where, when, who and why*, in a calm manner, thus setting an example in dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.

In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher 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 to explain the actions being taken by the school. The school will give parents the opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school.

Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

If necessary follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged.

In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it will be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template, see Appendix 3.

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

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

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.

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

### **Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour**

While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be 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.

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will 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.

The relevant teacher will use the recording template at Appendix 3 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 school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at Appendix 3 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided

to the Principal. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

We are aware that bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate. All pupils are expected to follow the school's code of behaviour. In cases where a 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.

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 will, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or 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 must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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*):

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be in place.

If the school is of the opinion that these pupils need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience, advice and support will be sought from NEPS.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the school's intervention process.

Pupils involved in bullying behaviour may need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.

If the school is of the opinion that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others, advice and support will be sought from NEPS.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

### **Ongoing Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Anti- Bullying Policy**

The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. The school will periodically examine the prevention and intervention strategies in place.

Any formal report of bullying (recorded using the template at Appendix 3) received by the Principal, will be retained and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour in the school. Particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour will be noted. A record of this analysis will be retained and be made available to the Board of Management annually. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be discussed at staff meetings so as to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

### **Oversight**

At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- (i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 3) since the previous report to the Board and
- (ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the school's anti- bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

The standardised checklist included in Appendix 4, will be used in undertaking the review. 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 completed.

The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.

Written notification (as at Appendix 4) 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).

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

### **8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

### **9. Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

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

11. 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.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school 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 (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

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

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

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