Bishop McEgan College Anti Bullying Policy

Introduction

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 Bishop McEgan
College 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* and was ratified by the Board in May 2022.

1.   **Full Compliance**
      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 Bishop McEgan College 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.   **Key Principles of Best Practice**
      The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the
      negative impact that it can have on the lives of students 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:

      o   is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

      o   encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
            in a non-threatening environment;

      o   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:

- o build empathy, respect and resilience in students; and

- o Explicitly address the issues of cyber bullying and identity-based bullying including, in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students;

- Supports for staff;

- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)

- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

- The Principal will keep a register of all bullying allegations

- The principal will report to the Board of Management the number of bullying allegations each term

3. **The Definition of Bullying**
    In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

    Bullying is destructive behaviour. It is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical abuse, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be tolerated, and should not be described as bullying. Only appropriate or aggressive behaviour which is systematic and ongoing is regarded as bullying.

    The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

    - deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying, extortion, isolation, and persistent name calling,

    - cyber bullying

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

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

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

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

The list is not exhaustive.

4. **Procedure for Reporting**

1. Any teacher/student/parent/member of the school community can report bullying to any staff member who then should report it to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

2. Any report of bullying can be documented or emailed to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

3. The Principal or Deputy Principal will determine the severity of the alleged bullying as well as the route to investigation.

4. The Principal or Deputy Principal may appoint a staff member to investigate the alleged bullying incident. No staff member will investigate alleged bullying alone.

5. **Prevention Strategies**

1. Bullying is covered in SPHE, RE & Guidance classes and tutors go through the anti-bullying policy with students during Pastoral Care annually and as required as bullying incidents arise via the care team. Anti-bullying posters are created and displayed throughout school by students.

2. Mobile Phones are not permitted in McEgan College unless under teacher directions & supervison and to aid the T & L

3. Guest speakers/workshops where applicable (eg Graffiti and Anti-Bullying Workshops) are available to the school community. Restricted due to Covid

4. Information evenings held by Parents Association, HSCL & Career Guidance Departments, eg Cyber Bullying.

5. Bullying procedures are outlined in the schools Code of Behaviour.

6. Ongoing positive re-inforcement by school staff.

6. Procedure for Dealing with a Report of Bullying

1. Relevant staff will investigate the alleged bullying and require co-operation of all stakeholders including students, staff and parents.

2. Staff should remain calm, logical and adopt a consistent 'what', 'where', 'when', 'who' and 'why' questioning strategy.

3. When investigating incidents outside the classroom, every effort will be made to conduct interviews sensitively and consistently.

4. Students not directly involved may also be interviewed.

5. The students involved will be asked to make a written report of incident. If student cannot do the written report a staff member will write it for them.

6. To determine the severity and authenticity of the allegation the investigating team will streamline the investigation by discussing the investigation so far with the Principal and Deputy Principal.

7. The Principal or Deputy Principal will contact parents and inform them of their findings.

8. Management will report incidents of Bullying to the Board of Management.

9. Students involved will be referred to the Guidance Counsellor if necessary.

10. The investigating teacher/s will review situation within a few days to one week and record findings.

7. Schools programme of support for working with students affected by bullying

1. Care team

2. HSCL

3. Career Guidance Counsellor who may refer to an external counsellor if necessary

4. Pastoral Care

5. Discipline/Restorative Practice Co-Ordinator

6. SCP

8. **Supervision and Monitoring of students**

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. **Date This Policy Was Adopted**

This policy was updated by staff and the Board of Management between January and March 2022. It is due for ratification at the Board meeting in May 2022:

Date: _19/5/'22_

11. **Availability of This Policy**

This policy has been made 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.

12. **Review of This Policy**

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.

Signed: _Úna O Donnell_   Signed: _Patricia Lynam_
(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: _19/5/'22_   Date: _19.05.'22_

Appendix 2 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 when respectful behaviour and 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.

1. Name of student alleging bullying and class group

   Name: _____   Class: _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of person (s) alleged to be engaged in bullying behaviour

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

Student concerned	
Another student	
Parent	
Staff	
Other	

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

Outside school grounds	
Inside school grounds	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Bus	
Other (Specify)	

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

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box (es))

Physical Aggression		Cyber - bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation / Exclusion		Malicious gossip	
Name Calling		Other	

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

LGBT related	Disability / SEN related	Racist	Member of Traveller Community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of action taken by reporting staff member and when submitted to Principal/ Deputy Principal   Date:

Signed: _____ (relevant teacher)   Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/ Deputy Principal: _____

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 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	✓
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 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?	not needed
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?	N/A

Signed _Una O Donnell_   Date _19/5/22_
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _Patricia Ignem_   Date _19·05·22_
Principal

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

To: _STAKEholders_

The Board of Management of _M'Egan College_ wishes to inform you that:

o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _19·05·22_ [date].

o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

Signed _Una O Donnell_   Date _19/5/22_
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _Patricia Lyman_   Date _19·05·22_
Principal