

St Martin's National School - Brittas



# **Anti-Bullying Policy (Revised September 2022)**

# **Brittas N.S. Anti-Bullying Policy**

## **(Revised September 2022)**

### **1. Background:**

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. Martin's, Brittas has adopted the following anti-bullying policy along with the school's code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were first published in September 2013.

The school originally published its policy in October 2014. This policy is being revised now following a series of staff training, pupil forums and consultations with the Board of Management and the Parent body.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is divided into the following sections:

- 1) Background.
- 2) Board of Management Oversight
- 3) Definition of Bullying
- 4) Roles of Pupils
- 5) Roles and Responsibilities of Parents.
- 6) Roles and Responsibilities of teachers.
- 7) Procedure for Dealing with Bullying
- 8) Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils
- 9) Adoption and Implementation

### **2. Board of Management:**

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;
- 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 all edged bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
- Receive reports from the Principal on a termly basis of bullying incidents in the school.

### 3. **Definition of Bullying:**

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.

#### 4. Roles of Pupils:

- If you feel you are being bullied, you should TELL a trusted adult.
- Know the proper definition of bullying (deliberate, hurtful and repeated).
- In instances of Cyberbullying, you should STOP, BLOCK and TELL.
- Participate in the "Meanness Survey" each year.
- Participate in your classes SPHE (Stay Safe) Programme.

"If you feel you are being bullied -  
TELL!"

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities of Parents:

If you feel your child is being bullied:

- **Assure** them that the problem is with the bully and not with them.
- **Ask** for the facts. Find out what is wrong. If possible, get specific details such as where, when, what. (E.g. If there is name-calling, what names are being used. If property is damaged/stolen, what exactly was damaged/stolen).
- **Listen** in a supportive way. Don't give the impression that the child is not being believed.
- **Contact** the school, the class teacher is the first contact or the Principal if the class teacher is unavailable, with a view to stopping the bullying.
- **Be** constantly aware of your child's access and use of the internet at home.
- **Don't encourage** Them to hit back. This will only worsen the situation. "An Eye for an Eye leave the whole world blind" – Gandhi!!
- **Don't Approach the bully yourself.**
- **Encourage** your child to tell.
  - In stories of cyberbullying, where children adopt the STOP, BLOCK, and TELL approach, they should be encouraged to continue to use their device.

***“If you feel your child is being bullied –  
Contact the school!”***

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers

- Each class teacher is responsible for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour with the support of the Principal and Deputy Principal.
- The Stay Safe Programme is an integral part of the schools SPHE Programme. Although it is on a 2 year cycle, teachers in St. Martin's will deliver it on an annual basis.
- Teachers should participate in all training provided by the school.
- Teachers will complete a Meanness Survey with their class on an annual basis. (*See Appendix 1 & 1A*).
- Should a teacher observe other staff engaging in bullying, they should report it to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

## 7. Procedures for Dealing with Bullying:

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviours and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

- i. Where an incident of bullying is alleged, a teacher will exercise her/his professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation.
- ii. The primary aim of the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to restore as far as possible, the relationship of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- iii. While investigating, the teacher should use the Bullying Incident Form (*See Appendix 2*). These are kept in the Bullying Report folder in the office.
- iv. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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;
- v. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs) and visiting teachers, must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;
- vi. Parents 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;
- vii. It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;
- viii. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
- ix. Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- x. 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;
- xi. 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;
- xii. If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- xiii. Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
- xiv. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s);
- xv. In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher 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 (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;
- xvi. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- xvii. It must 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;
- xviii. If deemed appropriate, the parties involved with the class teacher and/or principal or deputy principal should fill in and enforce the Schools Behaviour Contract (*See Appendix 3*).
- xix. 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;
- xx. 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; and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

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

**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. (See Schools Supervision Policy).

**9. Adoption and Implementation**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in September 2022.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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, the patron and the Department.

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

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

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

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





# Appendix 1

## Meanness Survey – Senior Infants



NAME	ARE YOU HAPPY IN SCHOOL?	IS ANYONE MEAN TO YOU?	WHO?	HOW OFTEN?	HOW ARE THEY MEAN?	DID YOU TELL ANYONE?	WHO?



# Appendix 1A CLASS SURVEY



**NAME:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CLASS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**1. What do you like doing in school?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Are you happy in school?**

**YES / NO**  
*(Circle One)*

**3. Has anyone been mean to you in school?**

**YES / NO**  
*(Circle One)*

**If so:**

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**When:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**How:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Did you tell anyone?**

**YES / NO**  
*(Circle One)*

**If yes, who?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Thank you for filling out this sheet .**



**APPENDIX 2**

**Harassment Bullying Incident Report Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Room/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

*Student(s) initiating Bullying/Harassment:*

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

*Student(s) affected:*

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

*Witnesses (if any)*

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

*Check all spaces below that apply. An adult stated or identified inappropriate behaviours as:*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Name Calling            | <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking             | <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demeaning Comments      | <input type="checkbox"/> Staring/Leering      | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing unfairly       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate gesturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Damaging Property    | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/Graffiti       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoving/Pushing         | <input type="checkbox"/> Threatening          | <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting/Kicking        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taunting/Ridiculing     | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashing a weapon    | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation/extortion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate Touching  | <input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion from Games | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber Bullying         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malicious Gossip        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                |   |

Describe the incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has this Happened before? YES/NO

Witnesses (if any):

\_\_\_\_\_

Physical Evidence: (Graffiti/Notes/damaged property): \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX 3**

**BEHAVIOUR CONTRACT**

1. On \_\_\_\_\_ (date(s)), I did

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. This upset \_\_\_\_\_ (name(s))

3. From now \_\_\_\_\_ (date) until \_\_\_\_\_ (date), I will do the following:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4. I will talk to \_\_\_\_\_ (Teacher) and \_\_\_\_\_ (Upset Child) about this on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) to see how I have improved.

5. Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_