



BRAY SCHOOL PROJECT NATIONAL SCHOOL
KILLARNEY ROAD, BRAY, CO. WICKLOW
Email: office@brayschoolproject.ie
PRINCIPAL – ALAN BEDFORD
PHONE: 01 2864242

Bray School Project NS

Anti-bullying Policy



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1. Compliance:

This policy is adopted by the Board of Management of Bray School Project NS in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013).

2. Key Principles of Best Practice:

The school is committed to preventing and addressing bullying by fostering:

- A positive, inclusive school culture that welcomes diversity and encourages respectful relationships.
- Effective leadership, supervision, and monitoring.
- Education and prevention strategies to build empathy, respect, and resilience.
- Clear procedures for the consistent reporting, recording, and investigation of bullying.
- Ongoing evaluation of the policy's effectiveness.

3. Definition of Bullying (including Cyber-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 this definition:

- Physical aggression, such as hitting, pushing, or shoving.
- Verbal aggression, such as name-calling, teasing, taunting, or threats.
- Damage to property, including clothing or belongings.
- Social exclusion or isolation from peers.
- Non-verbal gestures, body language, or signs intended to intimidate.
- Malicious gossip or relational bullying.
- Extortion, such as demanding money or belongings.
- Identity-based bullying, including homophobic, racist, or disability-related bullying, and bullying based on religion or minority community status.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with under the school's **Code of Behaviour**, except in cases of cyberbullying (see below).

Cyberbullying

While bullying typically involves repeated behaviours, cyberbullying refers to the following:

A single offensive or hurtful public message, image, or statement posted on social media or other public platforms that can be viewed and/or shared repeatedly by others. This behaviour will be regarded as bullying under this policy.



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Examples of Cyberbullying:

- **Mean or Hurtful Messages**
 - Sending unkind, rude, or threatening messages through texts, apps, or social media platforms.
 - Spreading rumours or false information online to harm someone's feelings or reputation.
- **Exclusion**
 - Deliberately leaving someone out of online groups, games, or chats to make them feel unwanted or excluded.
- **Impersonation**
 - Pretending to be someone else online to embarrass them, upset them, or cause trouble for them.
- **Sharing Embarrassing Content**
 - Posting or sharing embarrassing photos, videos, or personal information without consent to humiliate or upset someone.
- **Mean Comments**
 - Posting or sharing hurtful remarks on social media, in group chats, or other online platforms.
- **Coercion**
 - Using threats, manipulation, or scare tactics to pressure someone into doing something against their will.

Note: Isolated or once-off instances of offensive or hurtful private messages do not constitute bullying under this policy. However, they will be addressed appropriately under the school's **Code of Behaviour**.

The School's Role in Investigating Cyber Bullying

In Ireland, primary schools have a responsibility to address cyberbullying incidents even when harmful behaviour originates outside school hours, particularly if it involves students and affects their well-being or behaviour in school. This approach is guided by national policy and best practices, including **The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** issued by the Department of Education.

1. **Impact on the School Environment**

Schools are expected to intervene in cyberbullying incidents that take place outside of school hours if the harmful behaviour:

- **Spills over into the school environment**, affecting the victim or the broader school community.
- Causes **emotional distress** to a student, impacting their ability to learn or participate in school life.
- Leads to **disruptive behaviour** or tensions between students in the classroom, playground, or other school settings.

2. **Duty of Care**

Schools have a **duty of care** to protect students from bullying, whether it occurs during school hours or outside of them, if it is linked to the school community. This includes:

- Situations where students interact online but the issues result in conflicts during school.
-



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- Instances where students feel unsafe, intimidated, or unable to focus due to online bullying, regardless of when or where the bullying occurred.

3. Promoting Positive Behaviour Online

The Board of Management is cognisant that schools play a key role in teaching students about **responsible online behaviour** through digital citizenship and anti-bullying lessons. Through collaboration with the Parent Guardian Association, the board will support the principal and staff in:

- Organising workshops for parents on internet safety and the impacts of cyberbullying.
- Using whole-school approaches like **SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education)** to discuss the effects of cyberbullying and the importance of kindness online.

4. Collaboration with Parents and Guardians

When cyberbullying happens outside of school, but involves school students, schools are expected to **collaborate with parents** to resolve the issue. Parents are often the first point of contact when bullying happens outside school, but schools may support in addressing the behaviour to ensure it does not affect the child's school life.

Examples of School Involvement

- **Group Chats:** If students engage in harmful behaviour in a group chat outside of school and this causes conflict or distress among students in class, the school may intervene to address the issue with all students involved.
- **Social Media:** If a student is bullied through social media at home, but they come to school upset, withdrawn, or scared, the school can get involved to support the student and take steps to prevent further incidents.
- **Parent Complaints:** If a parent reports cyberbullying that occurred outside school, the school may investigate the issue to prevent its escalation and ensure a safe learning environment.

4. Procedures in regard to Bullying Behaviour:

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Pupils:** From a young age, all students are taught and encouraged to take responsibility for reporting incidents of bullying they experience or observe. Reports can be made directly to a staff member or communicated through their parents/guardians.
- **Staff:** All members of staff, including teaching and non-teaching personnel (e.g., Special Needs Assistants, caretakers, secretaries), are responsible for reporting any bullying behavior they witness to the relevant teacher or school leadership.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to promptly inform the school of any concerns or knowledge of bullying incidents involving their child or others. Procedures for Reporting and Recording:

Procedures for Reporting and Recording:

1. Pupils or parents/guardians can report bullying concerns to any staff member.



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2. Staff members will document incidents using the **Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour** (Appendix 1).
3. Completed templates will be submitted to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Procedures for Investigation and Follow-Up:

The class teacher leads investigations with the following objectives:

- Resolving the issue and restoring relationships rather than assigning blame.
- Investigating sensitively and privately to protect the dignity of all involved.

Steps include:

1. Interviewing pupils directly involved and, if necessary, those indirectly involved.
2. Engaging parents/guardians of all parties as early as possible.
3. Determining appropriate actions, such as restorative practices, behavior contracts, or support measures.
4. Documenting findings and actions taken.
5. Conducting follow-ups to ensure resolution and support for all parties.

The students will be asked to outline:

- o What happened?
- o What did you do?
- o Why?
- o What were you thinking?
- o What is the result of the action?
- o Who has been affected?
- o How?
- o What needs to be done to make the situation better?



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5. Education and prevention strategies:

To prevent bullying, the school implements the following:

- Curricular Supports: Learn Together Programme, SPHE, Walk Tall, and Stay Safe.
- Whole-School Activities: Anti-bullying awareness weeks, assemblies, and restorative practices.
- Parent Engagement: Internet safety talks, newsletters, and curriculum information sessions.
- Specific strategies to address cyberbullying and identity-based bullying include internet safety lessons and workshops on homophobic/transphobic bullying.

Programmes that help prevent Bullying by fostering empathy, respect, resilience, self-worth:

Anti-bullying training for staff/ CPD

Learn Together Programme,

Anti-Bullying Policy booklet for children

Circle time

Yoga

Stay Safe Programme

Walk Tall Programme

Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.),

Roots of Empathy

Buddy System

Webwise

Stand Up programme

SALT programme

Restorative Practices

Procedures /Activities that help prevent Bullying Behaviour:

Yard time rules and reminders

Children's voice central in agreeing classroom rules and procedures

Yard and Wet Day supervision rota

Staff meeting 'Alerts' staff to look out for certain issues/children

Restorative Practice used to help come to resolutions when issues arise amongst students



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Creation of classroom charters / Golden Rules / Positive classroom rules

Assemblies to encourage positive behaviour

Internet safety awareness lessons/ talks

Friendship/Anti-bullying awareness week

Student Council Meetings

Green School Committee Meetings

Communications with Parents and Guardians:

Aladdin

B.S.P. website

Newsletters/ podcasts

Information meetings/Curriculum meetings

Parent/ Teacher meetings

Parental involvement in class activities during the school day

Parent Guardian Association activities

Visits to school/ classrooms e.g. Grandparents Day, Winter Performances, Chinese New Year Parade, Intercultural Fortnight etc.

Relevant homework

Emails from school

Phone call from class teacher/Principal

In the case of serious incidents the Principal may deem it necessary to contact parents in a particular class/ classes.

Relevant School Polices:

Social Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) school plan

Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Code of Behaviour

Anti-racism Policy

Child Protection Policy

Child Safeguarding Statement

Safety statement



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Continuous Professional Development for staff:

Summer courses on dealing with Bullying/promoting positive behaviour

Training in Roots of Empathy

Nurture Ireland Training

Learn Together CPD courses

Training offered by “Oide” or other professional bodies

Dedicated Croke park hours focused on dealing with Bullying and Behavioural issues.

Community Links:

North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School

St. Fergal’s NS

Marino Community Special School

Ballywaltrim Community Centre

Ballywaltrim Library

Shoreline Leisure Centre

Community Gardaí

Educate Together conferences and training

Lucena Clinic

HSE Primary Care Unit Bray

Local Principals Network Support

7. The school’s programme of support:

Possible supports for victim (with help from Support Staff):

- Participation in social skills groups or restorative practices.
- Confidence-building activities like art, nature walks, or games.
- Access to counselling, if necessary, with parental support.*

Possible actions taken and supports for child engaged in bullying behaviour (with help from Support Staff):

- Reflection through restorative questions and social stories with a view to repairing harm and restoring relationships.
- Structured support to identify underlying issues and improve self-esteem where necessary.
- Behaviour contracts or referrals to external agencies, as appropriate.*



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**With the support of parents/ guardians, counselling/ support from an outside agency may be recommended.*

Restorative Practice

Aligned with our whole-child approach, we implement Restorative Practice (RP) principles to manage behavioural issues. RP helps students understand the impact of their actions and provides tools for repairing harm through mediation and dialogue, fostering full reintegration into the school community. The process emphasises:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Repair
- Reintegration

Students are guided through restorative questions to understand and rectify their behaviour. Examples of general questions for restorative practice:

When challenging behavior:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

To help those affected:

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Advice for Parents:

Effects of Bullying:

Bullying can affect students in many different ways. When students are bullied their lives may be made miserable. They may suffer physical injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. They may lose self-confidence and self-esteem and blame themselves for the bullying behaviour towards them. Some children may exhibit stressful symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches, nightmares or panic attacks. (This form of unhappiness is likely to affect their concentration and learning).

If bullying behaviour is unchallenged other students can learn that it is an effective way of controlling others and getting what they want.

Indications of Bullying Behaviour – Signs and Symptoms:

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a student is being bullied:



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- Anxiety about travelling to and from school – requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school.
- School avoidance/ reluctance.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches).
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour. It may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after long school holidays.
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
- Spontaneous out of character comments about either students or teachers. · Possessions missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained bruising, cuts or damaged clothing.
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling them.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a student is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, these signs warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the child.

What to do if you suspect your child is being bullied:

- Discuss the experience with your child to find out the precise details of what has happened.
- Reassure them that you and the school will help them,
- Discuss with them what to do next - they may be able to suggest strategies for dealing with it.
- Encourage them to tell their teacher(s)/ a trusted adult.
- Contact the school as soon as possible.
- Follow-up to ensure that the matter is dealt with and resolved.

What to tell your child to do if he/she is being bullied:

- Tell the person doing the bullying behaviour to stop – teach your child the appropriate way to do this, e.g.: “Stop saying that to me.” “I don’t like when you X.”
- Inform a relevant staff member when the bullying behaviour persists.
- Tell your parent/ guardian when you get home.
- Tell a friend about what is happening.

What to tell your child to do if someone they know is being bullied:

- Inform a relevant staff member
- Tell their own parent/ guardian – they will contact the school.
- Talk to the person who is being bullied – you may be able to help them.
- Reject bullying behaviour among your friends – don’t be a bystander.
- Help the bullied person to get away from the situation.



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8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils


The school ensures robust supervision and monitoring practices to identify and address bullying at the earliest stage.


9. Prevention of Harassment:

The school is committed to fulfilling its legal obligations to prevent harassment on any of the nine grounds outlined in equality legislation: gender (including transgender), civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and membership in a minority community.

10. Policy Implementation and Review

This policy was adopted in November 2024 and will be reviewed annually. The next review will take place in November 2025, with input from staff, parents, and pupils.

Signed:  (Shane Faherty, Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed:  (Alan Bedford, Principal)

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent Guardian Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested. A hard copy may be requested from the school office (office@brayschoolproject.ie)



APPENDIX 1:

Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name and class of pupil who is the victim of bullying behaviour.

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour towards above child.

Name _____ Class _____

3. Source of bullying concern/report

(tick relevant box(es))*

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

If Other, please describe _____

4. Location of incident(s)

(tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

If Other, please describe _____

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Extortion	
Gesture		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Minority community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

9. Details of actions taken:

Signed (Relevant Teacher): _____

Date _____

Submitted to: Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Date _____