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## Redeemer Boys' N.S. Anti-Bullying Policy

### 1. Rationale:

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 Redeemer Boys' National 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. 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 pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) 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
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) 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;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

- (h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including the use of established intervention strategies)
- (i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

### **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
- 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 another 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*.

Redeemer Boys' National School's anti-bullying policy applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes and events, swimming lessons, fund-raising and social events held by the school and on the school grounds.

### **What bullying is and isn't**

Bullying is when the same student is repeatedly and deliberately harmed. The victim finds it difficult to defend himself against the perpetrator/s. The victim is the same student who is subjected over and over again to mean and hurtful actions by others. The purpose of bullying is to hurt, harm and cause distress. A victim may be physically weak, timid or might be new to a class with no circle of friends to support him or her. Children who do not share similar characteristics with their peers, for example their race and culture, their sexuality or their educational ability, can also be victimised through bullying.

Sometimes children hurt each other by accident. A fight or falling out between two children of equal strength and status is not bullying. When such incidents arise the school will deal with these in line with our code of behaviour.

To make things clear to the pupils we use the acronym STOP to identify bullying:

**STOP**= Several Times on Purpose

We use it again to advise pupils on what they should do:

**STOP**= Start Telling Other People

### **What do we know about bullying?**

Bullying harms children and is not 'a rite of passage' to adulthood. Research shows that bullying in childhood diminishes the victims' ability to cope in difficult situations. This is why at Redeemer Boys' N.S., we take extensive measures to both prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

Bullying can be either:

**Direct – physical, name calling, teasing, mocking**

**Indirect – spreading rumours, negatively influencing the way others think about a victim, cyberbullying**

A bullying situation doesn't just involve a bully and a victim. 'Bystanders' to bullying can either join in with the bullying (assistants and reinforcers) or stand on the side-line and do nothing (silent approvers).

#### **4. Person(s) responsible for dealing with bullying:**

- Class teachers/SET
- KiVa Team – Ms C. Bolger, Mrs G.Rooney and Mr N.McArdle (Standby Member: Allan Mathews)
- Deputy Principal - Mrs A.McDermott
- Principal – Mrs M. Murray

At Redeemer Boys' N.S. we use the KiVa Bullying Prevention Programme to help prevent all forms of bullying. The programme was developed in Finland and has been shown in large scale studies to be highly effective in reducing bullying in schools.

#### **The aims of the KiVa programme are:**

- **To reduce bullying**
- **To prevent new bullying incidents from occurring**
- **To minimise the negative effects caused by bullying**

The KiVa 'curriculum' is taught to all pupils from First to Sixth Class. Across a year the pupils will take part in 10 lessons each consisting of two 45 minute sessions. The lessons include discussions, group work, short films about bullying and role play. The children typically learn about respecting others, including everyone, how to function in a group and how to help someone who is being bullied. Many lessons concentrate on the role a group can have in maintaining or stopping bullying; the students think about and practice different ways to resist bullying. The lessons are complimented by the KiVa computer

game where students go into a virtual school and practice anti-bullying actions. The goal of the curriculum work is to educate students about their role in stopping bullying. Instead of being 'silent approvers' or 'assistants to the bully', children start to support the victimised child, developing a shared sense of responsibility within the class. At the end of each lesson, each class develop and agree on an anti-bullying class rule. KiVa posters/display in the school hall ensure that the program is constantly visible.

### **Tackling bullying incidents**

Redeemer Boys' N.S. has a dedicated task force to tackle bullying, the 'KiVa Team'. The team consists of three adults in school who have been specially trained to tackle bullying incidents. The team are Mrs McArdle, Ms Bolger, Mrs Rooney and Mr McArdle.

If a case of bullying is suspected or a parent or student reports a case of bullying the relevant teacher will fill out a screening form ( Appendix 1). The KiVa Team will decide if it is bullying or a conflict or fight between children. All cases that fulfil the criteria for bullying are dealt with in a systematic way by the KiVa Team and all children involved will be spoken to individually.

After this, all those children who were involved in the bullying (not the victim) meet together as a group where they agree on how they will change their behaviour. Support for the victim is also identified during their meeting with the KiVa Team. Follow up discussions with all students take place after an agreed amount of time to make sure that things are improving for the victim.

All adults at the school have received basic awareness training about bullying and will report any concerns to the KiVa Team. Parents of all those involved in a bullying situation are notified by the KiVa Team. However, discussions are primarily held between adults at the school and the students.

### **Guidance:**

#### **STAFF**

- To ignore is to condone. Listen carefully and, if necessary, make a note of the incident.
- All staff to be aware of the times and areas, when and where bullying could happen e.g. cloakrooms; toilets; areas of the playground.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help.
- Ensure all pupils are aware that there are consequences to any anti-social behaviour and that incidents will be dealt with and the consequences made visible if necessary.
- Make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour, and the consequences of any repetition, clear to the bully.
- Stress that it is the "behaviour" and not the pupil that is unacceptable.
- Try to support the bully in changing the behaviour, by using practical, attainable targets.

#### **PUPILS**

- Children need to know and use "The Anti-Bullying Code"
  1. Tell them - "Stop it I don't like it!"
  2. Tell someone else about how you feel (friend / adult / parent etc)
  3. Tell someone again if necessary

### **What to do if someone is being bullied:**

- When someone is being bullied, take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bully.
- If you see someone else being bullied tell an adult. (Do not try to intervene)
- If you witness severe bullying, e.g. physical violence, inform an adult immediately.
- You can write your concerns down and put in a school “Worry Box.”

### **PARENTS**

- Watch for signs of distress in your children, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, headaches, illnesses, missing personal items, requests for money, damaged clothes etc. It may be manifested as stomach pains, sleeping problems and tiredness.
- Listen when they talk to you about their social life, e.g. friends, playtimes, walking to and from school.
- Do not assume all they tell you is “bullying”. Bullying is persistent / repeated anti-social behaviour.
- If you think your child is being bullied, inform the school immediately, using the Kiva screening form which you can get from the school secretary.
- If necessary, keep a written record.
- Do not encourage your child to “hit back”. It may make matters worse and not be in your child’s nature. Instead, encourage your child to make friends.

### **Examples of strategies for staff:**

- Ensure that children can differentiate between “telling tales” and telling about bullying. (Telling tales – deliberately getting someone into trouble without any positive outcome. Telling about bullying – helping someone.)
- Ensure that children can identify between ‘bullying’ and falling out or arguing with their friends (peer conflict).
- Is the bullying a compensatory activity? E.g. no friends, being challenged academically, etc.
- Use drama lessons for social skills work, eg. Bullies and Victims (name-calling, how do others feel?) Dealing with anger and frustration.
- The “bully” will need 1:1 work e.g. work on empathy / choices etc
- Use Social Stories or similar if appropriate
- Let the “bully” and victim talk together, if appropriate, with a teacher present. Restorative practices may be used by trained adult so as not to escalate the situation.
- Discuss the “bully’s” aggression / behaviour with his/her parents / carers.
- Praise good behaviour in the bully.
- Give appropriate responsibility to the bully.
- Use the curriculum for opportunities to counteract stereotyping and prejudice, eg. cultural, racial, social, body image, sexual orientation - homophobic bullying etc.
- Make sure adults and older pupils are modelling good behaviour. We need to monitor our own behaviour rigorously to set good examples.
- Any damage done by the bully must be redressed as soon as possible.

- All children in school need to understand what bullying is, and its consequences.

### **Working with pupils who are victims**

- Let the victim and their parents/ carer know there will be a determined effort to stop the bullying.
- Help him restore his self-esteem and confidence, eg. write down good things they think about themselves, especially those to do with the curriculum.
- Make sure that the victim does not believe that the bully is right.
- Take his/her mind off the bullying by helping master a new skill or by joining a new group, e.g. Active Committee / Green Schools / Sports activity etc.
- Help establish victim in a new peer group for play etc.
- Ask older pupils to be supportive.
- Ensure victim has an adult contact.
- Establish a nurture group with a trained adult e.g. Circle of Friends, Positive People etc
- Give self-protective strategies:
  - Ensure children know the Anti-Bullying code
  - Talk through individual strategies for that child
  - Rehearse strategies e.g. keeping calm and walking away
  - Stay with the group
  - Stay calm – walk away quietly but confidently
  - Always tell someone; Don't be ashamed
- Ensure regular follow up after intervention has finished.
- Working with the child showing bullying behaviour
- Discuss with the parents / carers the issues
- Determine if there are issues at home that could be causing the behaviour
- Let the child and their parents know what the school plans to do
- The school will put in place appropriate strategies depending on the needs of the child e.g. Behaviour Chart etc
- Refer to outside Agency if appropriate
- Ensure regular follow up after intervention has finished

Reporting to Board of Management:

Any bullying incidents will be reported to the Board via the Principal's report.

### **5. Education and Prevention Strategies:**

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, 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*):

### **School-wide Approach**

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school and involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Upholding the Incredible Years ethos which promotes positive behaviour. **Classroom DINA is delivered in Junior and Senior Infants.** We also use a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- **Implementing the KiVa antibullying programme (Unit 1 and 2 from First to Sixth Class).** KiVa includes both *universal* and *indicated actions*. The *universal actions*, such as the KiVa curriculum (student lessons and online games), are directed at all students and focus mainly on preventing bullying. The *indicated actions* are to be used when a bullying case has emerged. They are targeted specifically to the children and adolescents who have been involved in bullying as perpetrators or victims, as well as to several classmates who are challenged to support the victim; the aim is to put an end to bullying.
- 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.
- Actively involve parents/guardians, the Parents' Association and the wider community in awareness raising campaigns around all aspects of bullying, to include social media awareness.
- Whole-staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it – both in terms of prevention and intervention
- Raise pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects, taking particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN.
- The pupils at Redeemer Boys' National School will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through involvement in the Active Flag campaign, the Green Schools campaign, Feis Mhuirtheimhne, Prayer Assemblies, Choir performances, Concerts and extra- curricular activities such as Gaelic football, soccer and basketball to develop their self-esteem.
- Redeemer Boys' National School will engage in collaboration with the School Completion Programme, The House and After Schools programme to support children with social difficulties.
- An anti-bullying awareness week will be organised during the year to raise awareness of issues involved with bullying e.g. racial issues and cyber bullying.

- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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.
- Ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.
  - Direct approach to a teacher at an appropriate time, e.g., after class
  - Hand note up with homework
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school
  - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf
- Supervisory and monitoring measures will be used to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour. The consistent investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour (including the use of established intervention strategies) will be used by staff.
- The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and parents/guardians are made aware that the policy can be accessed via the school website.
- The Board of Management will ensure that temporary and substitute staff has sufficient awareness of the school’s code of behaviour and its anti-bullying policy.

### **Implementation of Curricula**

- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media. 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.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language. Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.

- Self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour. We will, through both our curricular and extra-curricular programmes, provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- Make specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. This can be achieved using the school wide delivery of lessons on all aspects of bullying and the SPHE curriculum including the RSE programme and evidence based programmes such as Walk Tall and Stay Safe.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in the delivery of these programmes.
- We will use all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all, to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice, stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Geography and History can be used as references to colonisation, exploitation and dictatorships which can illustrate the negative aspect of power within a global context.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in 'Sexual Orientation Advice for Schools', see Appendix 1.

**6. Procedures for investigating bullying (please see below for default procedures if for some reason KiVa procedures cannot or are not followed):**

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):

**The primary aim of investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);**

**The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

**Reporting of bullying behaviour:**

Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

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.

*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.***

#### **Investigating and dealing with incidents:**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- Incidents will generally be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
- 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 interviewing by the teacher.
- Where appropriate, those involved will be asked to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the class teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 will give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- In cases where it has been determined by the class teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the Deputy Principal will be informed of the details of the investigation.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

- It will 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.
- If appropriate, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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.
- 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 (Appendix 3).

### ***Follow up and recording***

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.*
- *Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy 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 CPSMA complaints procedures (see Appendix 2). If having exhausted these procedures the parent 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***

It is important that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour is as follows:

#### ***Informal pre-determination that bullying has occurred***

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or reported to them in the hardback class diary or the yard diary. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

#### ***Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred***

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must 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 keep a written record within the hardback class diary.

### ***Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)***

- The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - 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
  - 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 or Deputy Principal as applicable.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question in a folder and a copy maintained by the principal within the anti-bullying folder in the principal's office.

### ***Established intervention strategies***

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchoolsKenRigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchoolsKenRigby.pdf)
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

### **7. The School's Programme of Support:**

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
  - Pastoral care system
  - Curricular subjects promoting pastoral care
  - Group work such as circle time
  - Diary time with School Completion Programme project worker
  - The House and After School Services
  
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
  
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

#### **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.

#### **Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

All teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s) need to be aware that pupils with special educational needs (which include pupils with learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties) tend to have greater involvement in bullying. A pupil with special educational needs may have a heightened sensitivity and may over-react to certain situations. These situations will be addressed in accordance with the Special Educational Needs Programme or Individual Educational Programme of the pupil/s concerned. In so far as is appropriate for each individual pupil, policy procedures will be adhered to.

#### **Adult Bullying/Harassment**

The procedure set out below may be initiated in relation to any of the following circumstances, which may occur in the workplace or otherwise in the course of employment.

- Adult bullying
- Sexual harassment or
- Harassment on other specified discriminatory grounds which could in the circumstances be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

Any such behaviour is not acceptable within Redeemer Boys' N.S. A complaint of sexual harassment or bullying may result in disciplinary action. Where a complaint of sexual harassment or bullying is not upheld, no action shall be taken against the complainant provided the allegation was made in good faith. If the complaint was brought maliciously, it should be treated as misconduct and the disciplinary procedure invoked.

It is also open to any member who considers that he/she is being discriminated against, to contact his/her CEC District Representative or INTO Head Office with a view to referring a complaint to the Director of Equality Investigations or Labour Court, as the case may be.

For the purposes of the procedures outlined in this document, Redeemer Boys' N.S. adopts the **definition of bullying** set out by the Health and Safety Authority:

*"Bullying in the workplace is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person or persons. Bullying is where aggression or cruelty, viciousness, intimidation or a need to humiliate, dominate the relationships. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while to be condemned, should not be described as bullying. In the workplace environment there can be conflicts and interpersonal difficulties. Many of these are legitimate industrial relations difficulties which should be dealt with through the appropriate industrial relations channels. Only aggressive behaviour which is systematic and ongoing should be regarded as bullying."*

Adult bullying can take many forms which usually include:

- Intimidation or harassment
- Aggression
- Verbal abuse
- Humiliation
- Undermining
- Dominance or abuse of power
- Different or unfavourable treatment
- Exclusion or isolation

**Key features** of adult bullying are that the behaviour is generally:

- Persistent and/or systematic
- Unwanted
- Subtle
- Non-physical

The exercise of legitimate management functions, in a reasonable and fair manner, does not constitute bullying.

### **Bullying/Harassment Procedures**

The procedure outlined below is designed to address adult bullying, sexual harassment or other harassment arising in the workplace or otherwise in the course of employment, in a fair and effective manner. In implementing the procedure, it is recommended that emphasis should be placed on assuring the party who considers that he/she is being bullied/harassed that his/her complaint is acknowledged, that the matter will be investigated effectively and sensitively and in accordance with due process.

Equally, where it is found that bullying or harassment has occurred, the emphasis, firstly, is to ensure that the offending behaviour immediately cease and secondly, to help the offending party acknowledge that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and that steps must be taken to address the matter constructively thereby avoiding any recurrence.

It is important to ensure that resolution is achieved at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, it may be appropriate for the victim or the offended to attend counselling or obtain such other help as may be required.

#### **Stage 1: Address the Matter**

- i. The party (party A) who considers that he/she is being bullied, sexually harassed or harassed on other specified discriminatory grounds, should decide to address the matter. However, in light of the potential effects of bullying or harassment on an individual, including loss of confidence, extreme upset, anxiety or fear, a party may initially decide to seek INTO counselling, in order to consider the most appropriate application of the procedures with regard to the specific circumstances.
- ii. Party A should keep a record of the pattern of behaviour or instances where he/she considers that bullying/harassment has occurred. The record should contain details such as dates, times, persons present, details of what was said or what occurred.

#### **Stage 2: Informally Address the Problem**

- i. The party who considers that he/she is being bullied, sexually harassed or harassed on other discriminatory grounds (Part A), should request a meeting with the other party (B), in order to discuss matters. The following should apply:
  - where necessary, the meeting may be facilitated by a third party, generally a teaching colleague;
  - Party A should clearly outline his/her difficulties and should clearly object to the bullying/harassment and request that it stop
  - It is important that party A bear in mind, that the other member of staff may not be aware that his/her behaviour is causing difficulty;
  - Both parties should seek to resolve their differences and establish a pattern of interaction exclusive of any forms of bullying/harassment;
  - Party B may respond to party A at that meeting or if requested, should be given an opportunity to consider his/her response, in which case the meeting may be adjourned. Party B should respond to a constructive manner;
  - The resolution, as appropriate, may include any of the following: a commitment to cease the particular behaviour or modify the behaviour; a plan to eliminate situations where the parties would be in conflict; monitoring.

Alternatively, it may emerge as a result of the discussions between the parties, that there may have been a degree of misunderstanding in relation to certain behaviours and the resolution may make provision for compromise or appropriate explanation or acknowledgement.

- ii. If there is no satisfactory indication of resolution between the parties, party A should refer the complaint to stage 3, i.e. formal procedures.

### **Stage 3: Principal Teacher or Chairperson of the Board of Management**

- i. Stage 3 provides a mechanism for the Principal to intervene and resolve the matter. However, if the Principal is one of parties, the Chairperson of the Board of Management should then be involved, in an individual capacity, in order to achieve resolution. In circumstances where the chairperson may also be involved at Stage 2, another member of the board may be designated to intervene.
- ii. Party A should advise party B that he/she is proceeding with Stage 3.
- iii. Party A should state his/her complaint in writing and request the Principal (or Chairperson of the Board of Management, as the case may be) to investigate the matter.
- iv. The Principal or Chairperson of the Board of Management should:

- Obtain background details including details of what occurred at the previous stage,
- Consider the patterns of behaviour and the timescale
- Hear the parties and seek to resolve the matter
- Act in a fair and impartial manner and deal with the matter sensitively, having regard to the nature of the problem and the principles of the process
- Exercise judgement and make decisions which he/she considers necessary to resolve matters

v. The outcome of the discussions should be noted by the parties. The matter should be dealt with confidentially. Where resolution has not been possible and particularly where there is a likelihood of the offending behaviour continuing, either party or the Principal (or the Chairperson of the Board of Management as the case may be), should refer the matter to the Board of Management in accordance with Stage 4.

#### **Stage 4: Board of Management**

- It is open to any of the parties or the Principal (or Chairperson of the Board of Management, as the case may be) to refer the matter to the Board of Management for investigation. The referral should be in writing and dated and should include a copy of the written complaint.
- The Board of Management should consider the issues and investigate the matter.
- The Board may enquire into the background of the difficulties including obtaining details on the sequence of initiatives taken at previous stages.
- The Board or the Chairperson of the Board may meet teachers individually or collectively and may also request written submissions from the regard also to the principles of due process.
- The board may request the principal teacher to furnish a written submission.
- The board may afford the parties an opportunity to present their case orally at a board meeting, in each other's presence.
- Following oral presentations the Board of Management may designate the Chairperson to meet with the parties again, separately or jointly, if further clarification is required or to work towards resolution.
- The Board of Management may convene a number of meetings in order to achieve resolution.
- The Board of Management shall act in a fair and impartial manner in order to achieve resolution and shall deal with the matter sensitively, having regard to the nature of the problem.

Having considered all matters, the Board of Management should reach a view on the matter not later than 20 school days after receipt of the written request/referral. Where the Board of Management finds that bullying/harassment has not occurred, both parties should be informed accordingly. No action shall be taken against the complainant provided the allegation was made in good faith. If the complaint was brought maliciously, it should be treated as misconduct and appropriate action taken. Where a complaint is found to be substantiated by the Board of Management, they should deal with the matter appropriately and effectively given the extent and nature of the bullying/harassment.

This may include:

- The issuing of a clear warning that bullying/harassment is not acceptable in the school workplace and that it will not be tolerated
- A demand that all forms of bullying/harassment cease and that acceptable patterns of interaction be established between the parties
- An instruction to the offending party that he/she apologise/express regret or give an assurance that the bullying/harassment behaviour will cease
- Seeking a commitment to attend counselling or the welfare service
- More serious disciplinary sanctions as may be commensurate and appropriate, such as:
  - oral warning
  - written reprimand
  - written warning
  - final written warning
  - suspension
  - dismissal

As part of the resolution, the Board of Management should continue to monitor the situation and should put systems in place to ensure the successful implementation of resolutions.

### **Training**

This Policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly and any training needs arising from the implementation of the policy will be addressed.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024.
11. 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.** 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. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Frank Mullen  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Michelle Murray  
(Principal)

Date: 18/09/2024

Date: 18/09/2024

Date of next review: Term 3 2024-25

# Appendix 1: KiVa Screening Form



## Kiva Case Document (KCD)

### Screening

To be filled out by the adult who is the first to know about the hurtful behaviour.

#### SCREENING: IS THIS BULLYING?

Hurtful behaviour was reported on (insert date) .....20.....

The person who has been contacted first was .....

The person who reported the hurtful behaviour was

- the student targeted by the hurtful behaviour
- a peer of the targeted student / Name: .....
- student's Mum / Dad / Name: .....
- a teacher / Name: .....
- someone else / Name: .....

The student who was targeted: ..... Class: .....

What has happened? Provide concrete examples of behaviours that were perceived hurtful:

.....  
.....  
.....

How many times has the hurtful behaviour occurred? .....

When was the last time it occurred? .....

For how long has the situation been going on? .....

Students who have taken part in the hurtful behaviour: .....

.....  
.....

On the basis of the information acquired this is:

- a conflict or a fight between children
- a case of hurt feelings due to misunderstandings
- a single case of an aggressive or a hurtful act
- continuous bullying → to be directed to the KiVa Team.

Also the cases, which are not directed to the KiVa Team, require intervention! In these cases schools' established procedures take place. For example, the Class Teacher deals with the situation discussing with the students involved, or the dispute is solved by mediation, or a consequence is given. In some cases, it will be necessary to be very assertive about the hurtful behaviour of the student.



Screening

To be filled out by the adult who is the first to know about the hurtful behaviour.

SCREENING: IS THIS BULLYING?

Hurtful behaviour was reported on (insert date) ..... 20.....

The person who has been contacted first was .....

The person who reported the hurtful behaviour was

- checkbox the student targeted by the hurtful behaviour
checkbox a peer of the targeted student / Name: .....
checkbox student's Mum / Dad / Name: .....
checkbox a teacher / Name: .....
checkbox someone else / Name: .....

The student who was targeted: ..... Class: .....

What has happened? Provide concrete examples of behaviours that were perceived hurtful:

.....
.....
.....

How many times has the hurtful behaviour occurred? .....

When was the last time it occurred? .....

For how long has the situation been going on? .....

Students who have taken part in the hurtful behaviour: .....

.....
.....

On the basis of the information acquired this is:

- checkbox a conflict or a fight between children
checkbox a case of hurt feelings due to misunderstandings
checkbox a single case of an aggressive or a hurtful act
checkbox continuous bullying -> to be directed to the KiVa Team.

Also the cases, which are not directed to the KiVa Team, require intervention! In these cases schools' established procedures take place. For example, the Class Teacher deals with the situation discussing with the students involved, or the dispute is solved by mediation, or a consequence is given. In some cases, it will be necessary to be very assertive about the hurtful behaviour of the student.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTO/CPMSA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS.**

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#### **INTO / CPSMA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

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The Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the Catholic Primary School Managers' Association reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. The purpose of the procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage.

#### **Introduction**

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

- (i) on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- (ii) frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
- (iii) complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

#### **Stage 1**

- 1.1** A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2** Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3** If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

#### **Stage 2**

- 2.1** If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2** The Chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### **Stage 3**

**3.1** If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:

- (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; *and*
- (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### **Stage 4**

**4.1** If the complaint is still not resolved the Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

**4.2** If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the parent making the complaint should be so informed within three days of the Board meeting.

**4.3** If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:

- (a) the teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
- (b) the teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
- (c) the teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
- (d) the teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
- (e) the board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting; and
- (f) the meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1(b).

### **Stage 5**

**5.1** When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within five days of the meeting of the Board.

**5.2** The decision of the Board shall be final.

**5.3** This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years.

**5.4** CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party three months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means schools days.

## Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

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

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

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


### 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"/>

### 4. Location of incidents (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"/>

### 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	<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 (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

--

### 9. Details of actions taken

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

## **Appendix 4: Sexual Orientation Advice for Primary Schools.**

### **GENERAL POINTS**

- Schools can foster a culture that is accepting of difference. This can be expressed where appropriate, rather than making the assumption that everyone understands it.
- An integral part of RSE is learning to respect others; this will include respect for families or individuals who are different from the norm.
- The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 provide protection against discrimination on nine grounds, one of which is sexual orientation. The Acts oblige those who manage schools to protect students and staff from discrimination or sexual harassment.
- If children are using the word 'gay' in a negative fashion it is better not to ignore it in the hope that it will go away. The same advice would apply for any instance of bullying.
- Schools are advised to develop a strategy for responding to children who have questions about sexual orientation or who are taunting others about being gay. This should be done in the context of the school's ethos and RSE policy and with the awareness that primary school children are probably too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity.

### **PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS**

- Depending on the context and the age group of the children, the teacher could ask a child or a class group what they mean by the word 'gay'
- A school could decide on a response to this question, such as "The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay."
- To give factual information like this in an open and straightforward way may help to remove the secrecy which is necessary for any bullying to flourish.
- Homophobic insults should be treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable.
- Schools promote a culture of communication which actively discourages abusive name calling