

Scoil Barra Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the *Code of Behaviour Guidelines* issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **Scoil Barra** 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 by the DES in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
 - A positive school culture and climate which:
 - a) is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
 - b) encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment
 - c) involves collaboration among and between staff and pupils and promotes respectful relationships across the school community
 - d) encourages the work of the student council in this area
 - e) see appendix 1...Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate
 - 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-
 - a) build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - b) explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
 - Supports for staff
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

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

- a) deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- b) cyber-bullying and
- c) 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 will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. (see Scoil Barra Code of Behaviour Policy)

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

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

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

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):
 - a) All teaching staff
 - b) The Principal / Deputy Principal thereafter if necessary

5. The following education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) at the appropriate and relevant level for each class will be used by the school:
- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
 - Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
 - Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and how to stay safe while online. (see Anti-cyber Bullying Policy)
 - Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through their communications and interactions with pupils and other members of the school community.
 - There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour.
 - The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects
 - Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.
6. 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.

The primary aim for the relevant teacher in 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). With this in mind, the school's procedures are as follows:

- 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.

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will 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.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- 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.
- It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Incidents are generally best 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. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should 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.
- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member may be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will 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.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

- It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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.
- An additional follow-up meeting with parents of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily.
- 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 must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 3.
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - a) Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
 - b) Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
 - c) Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
 - d) 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 the school's complaints procedures;
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Procedures for recording bullying behaviour:

The Board of Management will ensure that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these are documented in the school's anti-bullying policy. All records will be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in

relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- The relevant teacher will use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
 - a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
 - b) the school has decided that 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.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at Appendix 3 will be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

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

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies will be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals to appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families if needed.

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be put in place. Pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be

developed to increase to feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

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

A bank of resources will be compiled to support the school's programme for working with pupils affected by bullying. These resources will be located in room 9b.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils:

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

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].
11. This policy will be made available to all school staff and also published on the school website (www.scoilbarra.ie) and a copy 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 staff, published on the school website (www.scoilbarra.ie) 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: _____ Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Appendix 1: 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 to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful 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. (see anti-cyber bullying policy)
- 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.

Appendix 2: Types of bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

Physical aggression: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in ‘mess fights’, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Intimidation: Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation. It may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person’s attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: ‘Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore’(implied or stated), a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy), non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours about a person or giving them the ‘silent treatment’.

Cyber-bullying: This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, email, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face-to face-contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person’s sexuality, appearance etc. (see anti-cyber bullying policy)

Name calling: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) that hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this

type refers to physical appearance, e.g. size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers are also targeted.

Damage to property: Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

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	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

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 (specify)			

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____

Date _____

(Relevant Teacher)

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Scoil Barra Cyber-bullying Policy

Scoil Barra aims to ensure that children are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. This school is committed to teaching children the knowledge and skills to be able to use ICT effectively, safely and responsibly.

Understanding Cyber-bullying:

- Cyber-bullying is the use of ICT (usually a mobile phone and or the internet) to abuse another person.
- It can take place anywhere and involve many people.
- Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff.
- It can include threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, vilification, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorized publication of private information or images etc.
- While bullying involves a repetition of unwelcome behaviour the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013**, states:

2.1.3. In addition, in the context of these procedures 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.

What is Cyber-bullying?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. The more common types are:

1. **Text messages** – can be threatening or cause discomfort. Also included here is ‘Bluejacking’ (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using bluetooth wireless technology)
2. **Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras** – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
3. **Mobile phone calls** – silent calls, abusive messages or stealing the victim’s phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible
4. **Emails** – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else’s name
5. **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
6. **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger), Yahoo Chat or similar tools
7. **Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal ‘own web space’ sites such as You Tube, Facebook, Ask.fm, Bebo (which works by signing on in one’s school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

Explanation of slang terms used when referring to cyber-bullying activity:

1. **‘Flaming’**: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language
2. **‘Harassment’**: Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages

3. **‘Cyber Stalking’**: Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating or engaging in other on-line activities that make a person afraid for his or her own safety
 4. **‘Denigration’**: ‘Dissing’ someone online. Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships
 5. **‘Impersonation’**: Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material online that makes someone look bad, gets her/him in trouble or danger, or damages her/his reputation or friendships
 6. **‘Outing and Trickery’**: Tricking someone into revealing secret or embarrassing information which is then shared online
 7. **‘Exclusion’**: Intentionally excluding someone from an on-line group, like a ‘buddy list’
- This list is not exhaustive and the terms used continue to change.

Aims of policy:

- To ensure that pupils, staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be combated
- To ensure that practices and procedures are agreed to prevent incidents of cyber-bullying
- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

Procedures to prevent Cyber-bullying:

- Staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management (BOM) will be made aware of issues surrounding cyber-bullying through the use of appropriate awareness-raising exercises.
- Pupils will learn about cyber-bullying through Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), assemblies, friendship week activities and other curriculum projects. (see Appendix 1)
- The school may engage a speaker to facilitate a workshop on cyber bullying for 5th and 6th classes annually.
- Classes 1st to 6th will participate in the ‘Bullying in a Cyber World’ programme.
- Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) will assist in learning about current technologies.
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat cyber bullying. (see Appendix 2)
- Parents will be expected to sign an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) contract prior to enrolment and to discuss its meaning with their children
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all relevant incidents of cyber-bullying to the school.
- All reports of relevant cyber bullying will be investigated, recorded and stored in the Principal’s office and monitored regularly.
- Procedures in our school Anti-bullying Policy shall apply.
- The relevant authorities/An Garda Síochána may be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content.
- This policy will be reviewed regularly. Pupils, parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and any related school procedure.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All Staff members are required to support the implementation of this Cyber-bullying Policy.

Evaluation:

This Policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new concerns/issues arise.

Ratification and Communication

A draft of this Policy was reviewed by the Teaching Staff at a Staff Meeting on the 15th January 2014.

The Draft Policy was subsequently reviewed and revised by the Policy Development Committee (made up of staff, parents’ and BOM Representatives) at a Meeting on the 13th February 2014.

The Policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its Meeting on the 3rd March 2014.

A copy of this Policy was made available to all members of Staff. Parents were made aware of the existence and availability of the policy by means of Family Note and this Policy is also included on the Scoil Barra website at www.scoilbarra.ie.

Implementation Date:

Implementation of this Policy commenced with effect from the 4th March 2014.

Signed:

Peter Sreenan, Chairperson, Board of Management.

Dated:

Appendix 1: Advice sheet for pupils and parents:

If you are being bullied by phone or on the Internet:

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online – if you are in a chat room, do not say where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you to build up a picture about you.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender
- There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, ie.reachout.com and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips.

Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning-off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number
- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider about this.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages.
- Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.
- Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Useful Websites

www.spunout.ie

www.childnet.int.org

www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart

www.antibullying.net

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying

<http://ie.reachout.com>

www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395 www.abc.tcd.ie

www.chatdanger.com

www.sticksandstones.ie

www.kidpower.org

Compiled in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils (Student Council) parents/guardians (email survey) and wider community (parish newsletter) in [Insert Date].

Appendix 2: Parent Information

Keeping Children Safe in a Digital Age

(ref. ©Parent Information Sheet from Dr. Maureen Griffin: Nov. 2012)

- For children under 13 years - the focus should be on **avoiding** risk online.
- For children over 13 years - the focus should be on managing risk online.
- Facebook is designed for children aged 13 and over. If your child is 13 or over and has an account make sure their settings are private and watch their “friends”. Also, check the age your child is online. For more information on keeping your child safe while using Facebook see <http://www.facebook.com/safety>.
- When searching online use safer search engines for younger children such as <http://www.askkids.com/> or <http://www.safesearchkids.com/>. Visit www.google.ie/familysafety/ for more information.
- YouTube is designed for children aged 13 years and over so parental involvement is central. Use “safety mode” to filter search results (last option on the bottom of the page - make sure it is turned on).
- For online gaming check the content of the games. The PEGI (Pan European Games Information e.g. content age rating: PG, 12, 18 etc.) rating system rates games based on content, not skill level. See <http://www.pegi.info/en/index/> for more information.
- Access parental controls for your child’s gaming console. For a step-by-step guide on parental controls for Xbox 360 see <http://support.xbox.com/en-GB/billing-and-subscriptions/parental-controls/xbox-live-parental-control>. For Wii parental controls see http://www.nintendo.com/consumer/systems/wii/en_na/ht_settings.jsp?menu=pc. For PlayStation 3 parental controls see <http://uk.playstation.com/ps3/support/general/detail/linked233999/item391100/Parental-controls/>. For PSP parental controls see <http://manuals.playstation.net/document/en/psp/current/settings/parental.html>.
- Access parental controls for your child’s mobile phone and keep mobiles downstairs at night. The main mobile operators in Ireland - Meteor, O2, Vodafone and 3 have published a booklet to explain the additional features of modern mobile phones. This booklet can be downloaded from <http://www.ispai.ie/docs/mobgd08.pdf>.
- Mobile Minder is a relatively new service for android and smart phones. This service enables parents to monitor all contacts to and from their child’s phone. Parents are alerted if text messages containing words linked to cyber-bullying, sexting or unusual behaviour are sent or received. For more information see <http://www.mobileminder.com/>.
- Cyber-bullying is a behaviour issue, not a technology problem. Appropriate behaviour online is the same as appropriate behaviour in real life. It is therefore imperative that we teach our children how to be respectful and responsible when online. For more information on cyber-bullying through mobile phones see <http://www.o2online.ie/o2/about-o2/child-protection/> or through the internet see <http://www.internetsafety.ie/>.

- Chatting online is one of the main activities children engage in through online sites, games consoles, online gaming and mobile phones. Parents should discuss with children from a young age, what is okay to share online and what is not (e.g. personal details). Parents should be aware of how their child is chatting online (i.e. to friends or strangers [children might call them “randomers”], through text or webcam?). Parents can familiarise themselves with online chat lingo if they are concerned about their child’s online chatting. See <http://transl8it.com/> or www.netlingo.com/ for more information.
- See www.isfsi.ie “News Section” for individual articles on cyber-bullying, mobile phones, online gaming, Facebook, searching online and YouTube.
- Useful websites: www.webwise.ie, www.pegi.info, www.hotline.ie, www.isfsi.ie

Webwise: 10 Tips for Parents:

98% of young people in Ireland use the Internet. 44% are online everyday.
28% access the Internet through personal devices like mobile phones and games machines.

Young people are primarily going online to make friends, play games, download music, and do their homework. As parents, the most important thing you can do to reduce the online risks is to engage with their digital lifestyle.

1. Discover the Internet together:

Be the one to introduce your child to the Internet. This could make it easier to share both positive and negative experiences in the future.

2. Agree with your child on rules for Internet use:

Try to reach an agreement with your child on how long they should spend online and what types of sites and activities are ok.

3. Encourage your child to be careful when disclosing personal information:

They should be selective about what personal information and photos they post to online spaces. Once material is online it is subject to all kinds of unauthorised use.

4. Talk about the risks associated with meeting online friends:

Young people are making friends online but they should only physically meet these strangers in the company of an adult or others they trust.

5. Teach your child about 'source criticism' on the Internet:

Not all information found online is correct. Educate your children on how to verify information they find.

6. Don't be too critical towards your child's exploration of the Internet:

Remember, it is not always their fault if they come across inappropriate content on the Web.

7. Report online material you may consider illegal to the appropriate authorities:

It is important that we all take responsibility for the Web and report matters which we believe could be illegal to www.hotline.ie.

8. Encourage respect for others:

As in everyday life there are informal ethical rules for how to behave when relating to other people on the Internet.

9. Know your child's Internet use:

To be able to guide your child's Internet use, whether it's on their mobile phone or PC, it is important to understand how children use the Internet and know what they like to do online.

10. Remember that the positive aspects of the Internet outweigh the negative aspects:

The Internet is an excellent educational and recreational resource for children. Encourage your child to be Webwise and explore the Internet to its full potential.

Find out more at www.webwise.ie.

Webwise is the NCTE's Internet safety initiative. Webwise provides internet safety information, advice, and tools to parents, teachers, and students. Webwise is part-funded by the EC's Safer Internet Programme.

NCTE, DCU, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Tel: (01) 700 8200 Email: internetsafety@ncte.ie Web: www.webwise.ie