

Anti-Cyber-Bullying Policy

St. Columba's BNS 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.

In light of the increased teaching and interaction online of all our students due to the school closures we have drawn up an "Online Etiquette Document" (Appendix (i)) and a "Live Sessions Document". (Appendix (ii)) These documents should be adhered to in line with our Anti-Cyber-Bullying Policy.

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 i 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 web space' sites such as You Tube, Facebook, Instagram, 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 rumours 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 Muddy 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
- The school will engage a speaker to facilitate a workshop on cyber bullying for 5th and 6th classes annually. Classes 1st to 6th will participate in the ^A '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
- Pupils will be made aware in an age appropriate manner of our Acceptable Use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) contract/policy.
- Parents will be expected to make themselves aware of and adhere to our Acceptable Use of ICT policy prior to enrolment and to discuss its meaning with their children
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to the school
- All reports of cyber bullying will be investigated, recorded, stored in the Principal's office and monitored regularly

Procedures in our school Anti-bullying Policy shall apply

- The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content
- This policy will be reviewed annually. Pupils, parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and any related school procedure

INFORMATION FOR PUPILS:

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, le.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/bejngsmart www.antibullying.net www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying

<http://ie.reachout.com>

[www.childline.ie index. h su ort bull](http://www.childline.ie/index.html)

1395 [vwww.abc.tcd.ie](http://www.abc.tcd.ie)

www.chatdanger.com

www.sticksandstones.ie

www.kidpower.org

Compiled in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils (Student Council) parents/guardians and wider community.

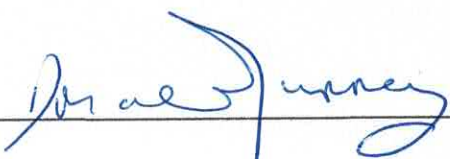
Ratification and Review

This policy and appendices were ratified by the School Manager on

9/6/22

Communication:

The policy has been made available to school personnel via the school website (www.stcolumbasbns.ie). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the patron if requested.

Signed: 

Donal Murray

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Appendix (i):

St. Columba's BNS Online Teaching Rules and Etiquette

While many of these guidelines may seem obvious, a new medium of communication can tend to throw off some of our instincts for proper etiquette, so we thought it would be helpful to provide a baseline of expectations from which teachers can draw as they work to develop an ideal online atmosphere for learning.

1. Be on time.

Punctuality is especially important for online meetings, because we are working in the absence of normal checks to ensure that everyone can be gathered to start classes on time.

2. Wear proper attire.

Learning from the comfort of your home can make it feel desirable to dress down, but we want to make sure we are looking presentable and professional for each other, just like we do at school. While Students may not be required to wear the uniform they did to school, to online meetings, but it is our expectation that students dress in a way that is modest, clean, and avoids any unnecessary distraction.

Unless you are ill, you will be expected to share your screen through video in order to engage in discussion, so please dress well.

3. Choose a good location.

As parents and students plan for online sessions, it will be important to think through an ideal location.

Another factor is the possibility of background noise. If siblings are at all likely to be loud in the room, try to isolate yourself. If your parents have a headset that you can borrow, this will make your situation much more flexible. As much as possible try to make sure nothing from your location becomes a distraction to others in the class.

4. When the teacher begins the meeting you should all mute your microphones.

This is to ensure that unavoidable background noise does not distract other classmates from hearing what the teacher or other students are saying. Please follow the teachers instructions regarding turning on and off of your microphones during the lesson.

5. Give your full, focused attention.

It goes without saying that giving your focused attention is one of the best things you can do to learn efficiently. However, when on an online meeting it may be tempting to use another device or engage with someone or something else in your surroundings rather than the meeting that you are a participant in. This is not permitted under any circumstance. As in school, your phone or other devices are not permitted during the digital session.

Giving eye contact to the screen is a good way to show your teacher that you are attending, unless of course you are taking notes. Side conversations with other students via another means of communication are definitely off limits. Show respect to the important learning process that you are engaged in during the digital meeting, just as you would if you were present in person with your whole class.

7. Participate fully.

Participating fully may look different depending on what your teacher is expecting of you at any particular moment. At times, your teacher will be leading the class in a discussion and this is when it is most important to speak up and share your thoughts. Of course, if your teacher is simply sharing instructions with you, then participating fully means paying close attention to be sure you understand, writing anything down you don't want to forget, and being ready to ask any questions you have about confusing parts when the teacher is done.

The fact is that the nature of an online format may increase the tendency of some students to sit back and observe. When there is a glowing screen in front of us, we can default to passive

Appendix (ii):

St. Columba's BNS Live Online Session Rules:

1. For large group sessions (full class/ half class) it is necessary to have two members of staff on these calls. This is to protect the integrity and safety of the session if there is a problem with one of the staff members connection. The 2nd staff member must be competent in their ability to maintain the lesson while the 1st staff member re-joins or competent in their ability to end the session where the re-joining is not possible.
2. For individual phone calls and or video meets it is necessary to have two adults. This can be the teacher/sna and the parent. The parent must remain present to assist the child in these type of calls/meets.
3. You should never meet with a child one-one online.
4. All the above are minimum requirements. If at any stage you would like more support on a call/meet please feel free to contact your colleagues.

spectator mode. Even if it's just taking notes, make the most of each online meeting by becoming as active a learner as you can be.

8. Do ask questions.

Connected to these thoughts on participation is the importance of asking questions during an online meeting. Your teachers are there to support and help you, and it makes it easier on everyone if you can ask a question while together in an online meeting. If you are experiencing some confusion or have a question about something, it's likely that someone else has that same question. Speak up!

Your teachers will be adjusting to the new medium of communication just like you, and it may be that they jump over a crucial detail, as they are focusing on so many new dynamics. It will only help the process of transition if you ask the questions that are occurring to you along the way.

Of course, if a teacher is in the middle of an explanation or a thought, then you may want to jot the question down as a reminder to yourself or type it into the chat box for the teacher to see. It's always possible the teacher is about to address your question, so we don't want to go to the extreme of constant interruptions. But in general, view an online meeting as the prime time to ask questions that the whole class will benefit from.

9. Be more careful with your words.

So much of our communication is built on presence with a person, including our truly incredible ability to read facial expressions and other nonverbals. We can't always articulate what we are reading in another person's countenance, but it informs the tone and temperature of our interactions with others in ways we don't even realize.

When moving communication to a new medium, we need to begin by being more careful than we would otherwise feel the need to be.

While online meetings with video do allow for some facial recognition, it may be delayed or affected in strange ways by the interposition of a screen. People don't converse in the same

way through a device as they would in flesh and blood. Comment threads are a good example of this.

Classmates and teachers may have developed ways of joking or interacting with one another that rely on a base of trust and nonverbals. Taking that full-bodied gamut away may mean that comments that would have been considered funny before are now offensive. Start into online meetings with a mindset of cautious learning. We're going to have to relearn some of our social interactions to avoid any misunderstandings and hurt feelings.

10. Keep up with all assignments.

Do your best each and everyday to do the work your teacher assigns.