

ABBHEY VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

DONEGAL TOWN



Abbey Vocational School Policies

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mission Statement

Abbey Vocational School is dedicated to the holistic development of students in a caring environment where tolerance and respect are nurtured and valued.

1.2 School Ethos

1. The aim of the School is to allow the students to develop their spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical potential and become fully mature human persons.
2. While respecting and acknowledging the rights of the students, our school also seeks to promote a safe and harmonious working environment for all our staff members.
3. This spirit of cherishing the personal welfare of each individual will not take from the social and community development of the students and the importance of their becoming caring and responsible citizens.
4. As reflected in the Motto and Mission Statement of the School, the School acknowledges and undertakes to cherish the Religious, Cultural and Historical Heritage of its students.
5. The quality of relationships between teachers and students is crucial and is a powerful influence on behaviour in a school. The school code fosters relationships of trust between students and teachers. Adults have more responsibility than students for building these relationships.
6. In acknowledging the primary rights and duties of parents as educators of their children, the school will seek to work in close partnership with parents. We also see the School as an integral part of the local community and will follow the educational programmes of the Dept. of Education & Skills under the direction of Donegal Education & Training Board.

1.3 Rationale

The following ***Code of Behaviour*** aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment wherein students can learn and develop to their full potential.

The Code aims to provide a school where each and every student is given an equal opportunity to learn to the best of their ability and to benefit from such a positive learning environment.

In drawing up this Code the principles of the ***School Ethos*** have been carefully observed and preserved.

Our Code of Behaviour which is embedded within the school ethos emphasises the importance of positive relationships and good communication. We assist our school community in maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, we use various strategies to encourage students and staff to look at behaviour and its effects on others and the wider school community, based on the principles of **Restorative Practices**.

Through this approach students get the opportunity to learn more about their behaviour and how best to work through issues. We bring people together in a structured and agreed way to discuss concerns as they arise. In this way everyone is heard, valued equally and relationships are strengthened. Some of the strategies used involve;

- listening approaches

- restorative questioning
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and their behaviour on others
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour

Furthermore, special care has been taken to ensure that all sections are in compliance with all recent Education Acts, namely:

The Education Act 1998;
 The Education (Welfare) Act 2000;
 The Equal Status Act 2000;
 The E.P.S.E.N. Act 2004
 Health and Safety Act 2005

The use of the word “parent” includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997, or other person acting *in loco parentis* who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts, 1952 to 1998, or, where the child has been adopted outside the State, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter.

1.4. Preparation/Evaluation of Code

The teaching staff, pupils and their parents were involved in the development of this policy. It was reviewed under the NEWB guidelines for schools during the school year 2010/2011. Once again, all parties were involved in this review process. The National Behaviour Support Service also provided some guidance and support during this review process. The code has been amended annually up to and including May 2016.

In the Abbey Vocational School, it is our practice to review this Code of Behaviour regularly. Such reviews may take the form of discussions about the effectiveness of the code during staff meetings and other interested parties. If required, slight adjustments may be made to the code before the beginning of each academic year. However, school management, working in consultation with the Board of Management reserves the right to make adjustments to the code during the school year if such adjustments are deemed to be necessary.

1.5. Roles / Responsibilities

Board of Management

The Board of Management will ensure that an appropriate Code of Behaviour is in place. They will oversee the preparation / review of the code and only ratify it when they are satisfied that it lawfully meets the needs of the school. They will monitor the implementation of the code.

Principal & Deputy Principal

The Principal and Deputy Principal working under the direction of the Board of Management will consistently apply the agreed Code of Behaviour. They will oversee the implementation and teaching of the code by the teaching staff in the school. They will record and deal with all breaches of the code reported to them. School management will also establish procedures to regularly evaluate and review the code.

Year Heads

Year Heads working under the direction of the Principal and Deputy Principal will apply the agreed Code of Behaviour.

Teachers

Teachers will implement the Code of Behaviour consistently. They will deal with, record and if required report any breaches of the code. They may teach the Code of Behaviour to the students.

Class Tutor

The Class Tutor will teach the Code of Behaviour to their tutor class and discuss its meaning and how it is implemented. They may also discuss breaches of the Code of Behaviour with students and try to help the student recognise where they are having difficulty.

1.6. Communication of Code

Prior to enrolling in the school, parents of prospective students will be given a copy of the Code of Behaviour. It will also be available to view online on our school website - www.avsdonegal.com. Our students and their parents will also have direct access to the code as it will form the initial part of their school journal.

If a student or parent has a concern relating to the code they may communicate it through a member of the school management. Likewise if a parent has concerns or is considering bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter he/she may contact the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.

2. EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

2.1. General Policy Regarding Behaviour

A Learning Community

It will be the function of the Abbey Vocational School to establish behavioural procedures so that the right to learn is realised and the need to ensure that the values of mutual respect, self-discipline and social responsibility permeate the life of the school community. The school recognises the need to protect the rights of students and to ensure the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where effective learning and teaching can take place.

Safe School for Students

Every student attending the Abbey Vocational School has the right to enjoy school life. The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all of the school community. The school must be safe and secure for everyone. Therefore verbal abuse, physical abuse and other anti-social activities are forbidden. Please also refer to the Anti Bullying Policy on the school website - www.avsdonegal.com.

Everyone will be expected to move throughout the school in an orderly manner and comply immediately with any instructions given by any member of staff.

Health Promoting School

Parents, students and staff at the Abbey Vocational School are entitled to have a healthy and safe school environment. The school promotes and supports positive mental health. Consequently, smoking, consumption of alcohol and substance abuse are all prohibited. We encourage all our students to become involved in sport and other physical activities including PE Class. Students are also encouraged to eat healthily and our canteen has due regard to this.

Discipline and Sanctions

In order to achieve a healthy and safe school environment, self-discipline is required of all members of the school community. All students are therefore expected to subscribe to the school's Code of Behaviour as outlined in this document. If and when required, the school will apply sanctions in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. In the application of sanctions, the school will make a clear distinction between minor and major misconduct (see **Section 6 – Misbehaviour and Appropriate Sanctions**) and will keep all parties informed where appropriate.

When dealing with misbehaviour the school will endeavour to help the student understand the nature of the problem behaviours involved and work towards a satisfactory and lasting solution.

Attendance

Students are expected to be in attendance daily, to be punctual and to participate in all aspects of school life so that each student can maximise his/her potential. Please refer to our Attendance Policy available on the school website - www.avsdonegal.com.

Students who fail to have a satisfactory attendance record will be reported to the relevant state authorities in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

2.2 Teaching the Code of Behaviour

Reading Age

While compiling this Code of Behaviour the school management was conscious of the varying degrees of literacy that those who were required to become familiar with it may have. Tests have shown that this document has a reading age of 12.5 yrs. (Flesch Kincaid scale).

Students

Every student attending the Abbey Vocational School will have a copy of the Code of Behaviour included in their school journal. Teaching and discussing the code of behaviour will be undertaken as part of the pastoral care policy of the school. The form teachers will do this at various times throughout the year. However class teachers may also highlight various aspects of the code as the opportunity may arise.

Staff

The present cohort of staff was involved in the preparation and review of this code of behaviour. At the beginning of every academic year each member of staff is given an updated version of the code.

All new staff, including substitute teachers will be given a copy of the code of behaviour and asked to make themselves familiar with its contents.

Students with Special Educational Needs

The Abbey Vocational School is committed to supporting the diverse learning needs of all its students, and recognises that some accommodations may be required to implement the Code of Behaviour for students with special educational needs in order to foster behaviour for learning. Students with special educational needs may need support to conform to the behavioural standards and expectations of the school. To facilitate this, class teachers and onsite specialist personnel will check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special education needs can understand. Not

every student with special educational needs will need support in this area, but where it is deemed appropriate, the student's understanding of the codes of behaviour will be checked to ensure comprehension. In incidents where it has been established that the Code of Behaviour has been breached in such a manner that is not related to the student's special educational needs, that student may be subject to the same sanctions as any other student.

3. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

All members of the school community will be expected to display positive behaviour throughout the school. School management and staff will endeavour to lead by example, by displaying the expected standards of punctuality, courtesy, efficiency and compassion and general demeanour.

Positive behaviour will be recognised as often as possible by staff. This recognition may take the form of:

- verbal praise
- display of students work
- positive comments written in the school journal
- positive comments recorded on the student record

3.1 Rewards System

The school is committed to a policy of recognition, encouragement and reward of positive behaviour. Pupils will be given recognition for:

- Outstanding achievements
- Sporting accomplishments
- Extra-curricular success
- Good manners and demeanour

Acknowledgment may take the form of:

- Praise from staff members, privately and/or publicly
- An affirmative note in student's journal or exercise book
- A positive letter home
- Announcements made on the intercom
- Class rewards such as outings
- School Prize-giving
- Using local media

Our school aims to encourage each student to fulfil his/her educational potential, academically and in every other respect.

4. RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Students will be required to comply with the following:

4.1 Respect and Order

- A. Respect for all fellow students
- B. Respectful behaviour towards all staff members both inside and outside of school hours
- C. Good behaviour when travelling to and from school
- D. Respect for property of staff and fellow students
- E. Respectful language at all times
- F. Cigarette smoking, alcohol, illicit drugs and substances are prohibited
- G. The possession of catapults, knives, stink bombs, bangers, laser pens and other weapons are forbidden
- H. Mobile phones must be switched off on entering school buildings
- I. It is expected that students will respond positively and respectfully to correction from all staff members both inside and outside the classroom. It is particularly important that students will respond respectfully and instantly to any direction given by any teacher supervising during breaks
- J. Students are expected to move in an orderly and sensible fashion about the school

4.2 Uniform and Appearance

The complete school uniform will be worn at all times and shall be:

Boys:

Grey V-neck sweater with school crest

Maroon shirt

Grey trousers

Black shoes

Girls:

Grey V-neck sweater with school crest

Maroon shirt

Grey skirt or trousers

Black shoes

Incoming first years 2016/2017

Grey shirt for incoming first years 2016/2017.

Maroon jumper for incoming first years 2016/2017.

Otherwise as above.

P.E: Runners, shorts and sports top.

School Jackets are now considered to be part of the school uniform but must not be worn throughout the school building. The school reserves the right to specify what jewellery, accessories, fashion trends are acceptable or appropriate as part of the school uniform. Parents will be informed of this periodically by letter.

Please note that facial piercings are NOT permitted in the school. Only one set of studs in the ears is permitted.

4.3 Attendance and Punctuality

Regular attendance at school is expected (i.e. all day every day). A student absent from school for a day or days must bring a note of explanation written in the School Journal and the note must be written and signed by the parent. This note must be presented to the office.

It should be noted that the school has a legal obligation under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 to notify the Education Welfare Board where a student has been absent on a cumulative basis of more than twenty days in any one academic year.

Students are not permitted to leave the school during the course of the day without written permission from a parent or school management. The note from the parent must be written in the School Journal. This note must be signed by the Principal or Deputy Principal or the Year Head and must then be presented at the office when signing out. Notes allowing students to sign out should only be written in exceptional circumstances such as an unavoidable medical appointment. Notes must not be written to allow students to avoid certain lessons or for non-essential activities.

Any student leaving the school during the school day must sign the “Signing-out” book.

Visits to toilets, lockers, etc., must be confined to specific breaks. In exceptional circumstances the subject teacher may give permission to make such visits outside of specified breaks.

Students must be punctual for all classes. Anyone who is late three times (morning or afternoon) will be detained at lunchtime. In cases of persistent lateness to any particular class, the subject teacher will complete a referral form for the relevant Year Head. For insurance and indemnity reasons students at Junior Cycle (years 1, 2 and 3) are not permitted to leave school at lunch-time. (No students may leave at morning break.) In exceptional circumstances parents may sign an indemnity form for Junior Cert students to leave the school at lunchtime but on the understanding that these students go home for lunch.

Mitching or scheming from school or class is regarded as a serious breach of school discipline and will be dealt with accordingly. (See **Section 3** for sanctions.)

Students are not allowed outside the school grounds during the morning or lunchtime break without permission.

4.4 School Property

- Dropping litter and chewing gum are forbidden.
- Damage to school property, equipment or buildings is forbidden. This includes books provided under the school’s Book Rental Scheme. Repair or replacement of property damaged by students must be paid for by them.
- The school cannot be held responsible for property lost or stolen. Money and valuables should not be left in schoolbags, lockers or unattended.
- All students may be requested on occasion to participate in the school’s “Combat Litter” Programme inside the school and within the school grounds.

4.5 Mobile Phones

Students may not use mobile phones while in school. Mobile phones must be powered off, not simply silenced, on entering the school and left off for the duration of the school day, including break and lunchtime. Any contacts (including a report of illness) between a student and their parents during the school day must be made through the school office. Any breach of this rule will result in the confiscation of the phone. It will be held securely in the main office for 5 school days. Any refusal to hand over a phone at the request of any teacher or to remove its SIM card will be treated as serious misbehaviour and will be then dealt with under the serious misbehaviour section.

4.6 Illegal Substances

Consumption of alcohol, smoking and substance abuse are all prohibited in the Abbey Vocational School. Any student found in possession of, using or distributing any such substances will be dealt with under the procedures used for serious misbehaviour, (see section 5.5). This also applies to students while they are in the vicinity of the school prior to the beginning of school and after school ends.

4.7 Application to studies

Students must have prescribed textbooks and equipment. All books and other materials required for class must be brought to class. Students will be provided with the School Journal. The use of the Journal is compulsory and it must be made available to all teachers at all times. Communications from parents regarding absences should be written into the area in the Journal designed for this purpose. The Journal must be kept neat, tidy and in good condition. If graffiti or other unnecessary writing is found on the School Journal, it must be replaced immediately and the student will be responsible for the cost of replacement. Good behaviour is expected in class, in the general school environs and in all school-related activities. All homework must be attempted and a genuine effort made to complete it.

5. MISBEHAVIOUR & APPROPRIATE SANCTIONS

The following subsections do not represent an exhaustive list of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour and each individual case will be dealt with on its merits by the school authorities. When dealing with students who have breached the code of behaviour the school will always apply the principles of natural justice, i.e.

- The right of all sides to be heard
- The right to impartiality
- The right to know and defend any case that one has been accused of.

Although every case will be dealt with on its merits the school management may take account of previous records of good and/or poor behaviour in the school.

Bearing this in mind, unacceptable behaviour and sanctions that may apply in each case include the following:

5.1 Misdemeanours

Misdemeanours include isolated minor breaches of school regulations and isolated infringements related to school work, homework, discipline, general order (both within the classroom and externally). Where such behaviour is noted by the teaching staff or referred to them by caretaking or administrative staff, standard sanctions in general use may be applied, such as:

- Separation within the classroom
- Additional homework such as essays
- Extra questions or work appropriate to the subject area
- Report to the Class Tutor
- Supervised detention by the teacher
- Report to Year Head by completing referral form (See appendix D)
- Parental contact by Year Head

5.2 Isolated Incidents of Misconduct

Isolated incidents of misconduct may include the following:

- A. Use of abusive language
- B. Misbehaviour in class of an isolated nature

C. A fight between students in the school and its environs

D. An outburst of bad behaviour in class

Sanctions for such offences may include suspension, lunchtime detention, after-school detention and/or any of the sanctions listed in section 5.1.

5.3 Continuous Misconduct

Continuous misconduct includes repeated misdemeanours or repeated breaches of good order. Examples of this type of behaviour include:

- Continuous disruption of classes
- Failure to present homework on a continuous basis
- Failure to bring necessary books, equipment and resources on a continuous basis
- Bullying or harassment of other students,(the school also operates a separate anti-bullying policy)
- Offensive language to fellow students
- Offensive or abusive language to any staff member
- General behaviour inappropriate to the smooth operation of the school, both in the classroom and in the corridor

Sanctions for such offences include detention, carrying out school-related tasks, the placing of the student “on report”, lunchtime detention, after-school detention or suspension. Repeated continuous misconduct can bring further sanctions including exclusion of the student from the school or other such appropriate sanction as may be deemed reasonable.

It should be noted that a suspension will result in the student being excluded from school-related activities during the term of the suspension.

5.4 Serious Misbehaviour

As a guide for parents and pupils, here is a list of some of the offences which will be regarded as serious:

- Assault, threat or abuse of a member of staff by a student
- Assault, threat or abuse of a fellow student
- Damage to property of staff or students
- Putting a teacher’s or fellow student’s health or safety at risk
- Possession of drugs or alcohol. Sale, consumption or distribution of such alcohol or drugs
- Possession of knife or any other offensive or dangerous devices, including catapults, bangers, laser pens, stink bombs, etc.
- Repeated instances of bullying and harassment
- Defiance of and confrontation with any member of staff which could seek to undermine the authority of that person
- Attempts to intimidate, bully or harass any member of staff
- Use of social media to intimidate, bully or harass another student or any member of staff
- Malicious damage to property
- Theft within the school
- Smoking
- Serious misbehaviour on school-related activities or outings

Students who become involved in serious misconduct, whether inside or outside the school grounds, which may reflect adversely on the good standing and reputation of the school in the local community may be liable to sanction. The school reserves the right to invoke the code of behaviour to deal with such incidents and impose the full range of sanctions up to and including expulsion,

Serious misbehaviour may warrant instant suspension or possible expulsion. The school operates formal procedures in relation to suspensions and expulsions (including Appeals Procedures) which may be obtained on request from the school.

It should be noted that in all instances of misbehaviour and in the use of sanctions students will be advised and encouraged to correct their behaviour and be encouraged to participate more positively within the school.

Interventions for students in need of support:

- Meetings with NBSS support team

- Meetings with members of Pastoral Care Team
- Meetings with Guidance Counsellor
- Support around behaviour targets and behaviour plan
- Reward system for improved behaviours
- Behaviour support card
- Adult mentor check and connect approach
- Link with outside agencies such as TUSLA, Foróige, Jigsaw etc.
- Programmes such as Anger Management, Friends For Life etc. implemented
- Regular meetings with parents /guardians
- Link with school psychologist around proposed mental health support where deemed appropriate
- Incases of suspension - The student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
- Support is offered to the student in the re-integration process following suspension.

5.5 Procedures for Dealing with Serious Misbehaviour

5.5.1 Lunchtime Detention

A student can only be placed on lunchtime detention by the Principal, Deputy Principal or his / her Year Head. In normal circumstances lunchtime detention will only be applied after the student has received a number of verbal reprimands. A student may be placed on lunchtime detention for one day, however, depending on the severity of the misbehaviour he / she may need to serve a number of consecutive days in detention. Normally a student will be informed a day in advance of their detention. However management may impose an immediate detention if the situation warrants it.

Detention lasts for 30 minutes. Students are allowed 10minutes at the beginning of their lunch break and 5 minutes at the end. The detention room will be supervised by a teacher who will record all who are present in the detention book and assign work for them to complete. This work must be attempted and handed back up to the teacher. Students who fail to turn up for detention, or arrive late, or do not follow the directions of the teacher in charge, or in any way disrupt the detention room may be faced with after school detention, suspension or expulsion.

5.5.2 After-School Detention

A student can only be placed on after-school detention by the Principal or Deputy Principal. In normal circumstances after-school detention will only be applied after the student has served a number of lunchtime detentions or that the student has been “on report” for some time, or in cases where it is deemed by the Principal more suitable than a suspension. When a student is placed on after-school detention his / her parents will be notified. They will be informed why their son / daughter has received this sanction and when it will take place. They may also be invited to the school for a meeting to try to help resolve the poor behaviour being displayed by their child.

After – school detention lasts for 1hour 15 minutes and begins 15 minutes after the end of the school day. The detention room will be supervised, the names of those present will be recorded and work will be assigned for them to complete. This work must be attempted and handed back up to the person in charge. Students who fail to turn up for after-school detention, or arrive late, or do not follow the directions of the person in charge, or in any way disrupt the detention room may be faced with suspension or expulsion.

5.5.3 Suspension / Expulsion

In the Abbey Vocational School the Board of Management formally delegated the authority to suspend to the Principal. Therefore, only the Principal can suspend a student. The Abbey Vocational School operates separate suspension and expulsion policies which are available from the school office on request or can be viewed on our school website; www.avsdonegal.com

However the following is a summary of the content of each policy

Suspension or possible expulsion will be applied, following an enquiry by the Principal, a staff member or disciplinary committee delegated by him/her to do so.

5.5.4 Procedures in cases of immediate suspension

The student will be suspended immediately.

The parents will be notified in writing or by phone informing them of the reason for and duration of suspension.

The parents may discuss the decision with the Principal by meeting him/her or his/her representative. Parents may appeal the decision of the Principal to the Board of Management where they may present a case to the Board.

If the Board of Management upholds the decision of the Principal, the parents may appeal the case to a sub-committee of Donegal Education and Training Board within fourteen days of the Board of Management meeting at which the case had been heard.

A Parent, together with the suspended student may be asked to meet with the Principal or his/her representative before the student is re-admitted to the school.

Any work in preparation for state examinations missed through suspension is the responsibility of the student.

5.5.5 Procedures in cases of expulsion

The student will be suspended immediately pending a decision on expulsion.

Parents will be notified in writing, informing them of the reason and advising them of the Principal's recommendation for expulsion.

Parents may present a case to the Principal by meeting him/her. Following such a meeting the Principal will inform them of the decision/recommendation made.

If the Principal recommends an expulsion, the Board of Management will meet to make a decision on the matter.

Parents will be advised in writing of their rights to present a case to the Board of Management of the school before a decision is reached.

Parents may appeal the decision of the Board of Management to a sub-committee of Donegal Education and Training Board within fourteen days of the Board of Management meeting at which the case has been heard.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Scope of Policy

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, Staff, Parents and Students of the Abbey Vocational School and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to all pupils who wish:

1. to enrol into the Abbey Vocational School
2. to enrol into the Transition Year or Leaving Certificate Applied Programme in the Abbey Vocational School
3. to enrol into the ASD class in the Abbey Vocational School
4. to repeat the Leaving Certificate in the Abbey Vocational School

and to their parents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies, which are available on request from the school office. The Code of Behaviour is attached and must be read and signed as a pre requisite to enrolment.

2. Mission Statement

Abbey Vocational School is dedicated to the holistic development of students in a caring environment where tolerance and respect are nurtured and valued.

3. Operating Context

3.1 Relevant Legislation:

In the Operating Context, the Admission and Participation Policy is being set out in accordance with the provisions of

The Education Act 1998, The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, The Equal Status Act 2000, The EPSEN Act 2004, The Education & Training Board Act 2013

Subject to:

The context and parameters of the Department of Education & Skills Regulations and Programmes;

The rights of the Patron, i.e. E.T.B as set out in the Education Act;

The Mission Statement as set out above;

The funding and resources available.

The school supports the principles of:

Inclusiveness in enrolment policies

Equality of access and participation in the school

Parental choice in relation to enrolment

Respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society

The enrolment of students who have a disability or other special educational needs

3.2 Funding Bodies:

The financial, physical and teaching resources of the school are provided by

Grants received from the Department of Education & Skills via Donegal E.T.B.

The teacher allocations from the Department of Education & Skills

Additional facilities for school and community use

The implementation of the School Plan and School Policy, having due regard to resources and funding available

The school operates within the guidelines and regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education & Skills and Donegal Education and Training Board.

The school follows the curricular programmes detailed in the prospectus for the school year as prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

4 School Details

4.1 Type of School:

Multi-Denominational, Co-educational school
Under the trusteeship of Donegal E.T.B.
Grant aided, publicly funded

4.2 Management:

Under Donegal E.T.B., as patron of the school
Board of Management

Members of Board of Management:

Mr. Oliver Plunkett (Teacher Rep)
Ms. Caroline Mohan (Teacher Rep)
Mr. Matthew Shovlin (Parent Rep)
Mrs. Mary Coughlan (Parent Rep)
Mr. Gabriel O Donnell (E.T.B. Member)
Mrs. Bernie Mulhern (E.T.B. Member)
Ms. Joanne Irwin (E.T.B. Rep)
Mr. Geoffrey Browne (E.T.B. Rep)

Principal: Mrs. Geraldine Diver

Deputy Principal: Mr. Ronan Doherty

4.3 Organisations:

A Parents' Association and Student Council have been established.

4.4 Curriculum Provision

Programmes: - **Junior Cycle:**

Junior Certificate Programme

Senior Cycle:

Transition Year

Leaving Certificate Programme

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA)

Special Needs are catered for by Learning Support and Resource teachers allocated by the Department of Education & Skills.

4.5 Extra-Curricular Activities / Parallel Curriculum:

These activities complement the formal curriculum in contributing to the all-round holistic development of students. Such activities offered in the school include: Drama/Music, Gaisce, GAA, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Athletics, Swimming, Golf and Educational Tours. Participation in extra-curricular activities is promoted through intra and inter-school activities, lunch break e.g. soccer league and after school hours. All students are encouraged to participate in these programmes.

4.6 Other Relevant Information:

Full particulars of the school calendar for the current session including school opening hours, Parent/Teacher meetings will be provided at the beginning of each year.

The school may, at its discretion, request parents to pay annual levies towards extra-curricular activity expenses.

The school is committed to continued development of a School Book Rental/Loan Scheme.

5. Enrolment Procedures

The Board of Management has formally sanctioned the school Principal to oversee the enrolment of students to the school. His/her decisions may be appealed to the Board of Management.

Application/enrolment will be in accordance with the Education Act 1998, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and Equal Status Act 2000.

The school, subject to the limitations in this policy, supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational needs
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society
- Openness, accountability and transparency

Equality of access and participation is the key value that determines the enrolment of pupils in our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status or religious/political beliefs and values.

5.1 Application/Enrolment for incoming first year student

Parents seeking to enrol a child are requested to return a completed Enrolment Form (available from school). The enrolment period will begin immediately after the open evening (date of which will be circulated to all feeder primary schools and advertised locally) and will cease at 4:30pm on the date specified on the enrolment form.

5.2 Provision of key information by parents:

All applications must include the following information:

- Pupil's Name, Age, Date of Birth, Address, PPS Number, Copy of Pupil's Birth Cert;
- Parent/Guardian names and addresses, Mother's maiden name;
- Telephone contact numbers, SMS contact number;
- Emergency contact numbers, Email address;
- Details of medical conditions, including disabilities or special educational needs;
- Family doctor, Medical Card No;
- Other family members in attendance at school;
- Nationality;
- Previous School(s) attended;
- Reason for transfer, if applicable;
- Records, References, Disciplinary information.

Application Form must be completed in full.

5.3 Enrolment Criteria:

The following criteria will apply:

- Pupils from Primary Schools within the Abbey Vocational School catchment area
- Siblings and step-siblings resident at the same address of a current pupil
- In the matter of applications from students who are either refugees or asylum seekers, the Board of Management acts in accordance with the policy developed by the Education & Training Boards Ireland representing all of the Education & Training Boards

Procedure in The Event of Over-subscription:

If a situation arises where Abbey Vocational School receives more applications to enrol than it can cater for the following will apply and in the following order:

1. Pupils living in the catchment area and attending Primary schools in the catchment area
2. Pupils who have family members already enrolled in the school
3. Date of application received (if after the closing date)
4. Random Lottery overseen by two members of Board of Management

Decision-making process:

Decisions will be notified to parents within 21 days of receipt of the above information (**See Ref 5.2 Provision of key information by parents**) and any other further information, which may be required and will be prescribed under Section 19 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In making decisions on applications the Board will have regard to relevant Department of Education & Skills provisions in relation to

- Class size
- Staffing provisions
- Requirements concerning accommodation, such as physical space or the health and welfare of the children, e.g. to be a recognised pupil of this school a student must be 12 years of age by 31st December in the calendar year of the child's entry into first year. Birth Certificates are required for this purpose

Reservations by Board of Management:

While recognising the right of students and parents to enrol in the school, the Board of Management has a responsibility to respect the rights of the existing School Community and, in particular, the students already enrolled. This requires balanced judgments, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all students.

5.4 Special Educational Needs:

The Board of Management and staff of the school will endeavour to:

- Identify children who may be applying for admission to the school who have special educational needs and to become familiar with their needs
- Request copies of the child's medical, psychological report/individual education programme
- Request immediate assessment, where necessary

Parents/Guardians of students with Special Educational Needs, whether educational, medical, psychological or social needs, should submit all relevant information suitably in advance of March of the year of enrolment, in order that the school may plan and acquire the necessary resources, both teaching and ancillary, to provide an appropriate programme of education for the child.

Application for the provision for Special Educational Needs to the National Council for Special Education and the Department of Education & Skills will be in writing and supported by the reports supplied by parents/guardians. Co-operation between the Parent/Guardian of students with special educational needs and the Board of Management / School is essential to ensure that appropriate facilities are allocated and in place for September. In some instances it may be necessary for the Board of Management or the Principal, acting on its behalf, to defer enrolment of a particular child pending receipt of assessment, reports and/or the provision of the appropriate resources by the Department of Education & Skills, to meet the particular special educational needs of the student.

5.5 Transfers from other second level schools:

In the case of students seeking to transfer to the Abbey Vocational School from another

Post-primary school, the following procedures apply:

- Parents who request a place for their son/daughter(s) must attend an interview with the Principal.
- Parents who request a place for their son/daughter(s) must complete an application form and provide key information outlined in **Ref 5.2 (Provision of key information by parents)**. The student applying may be interviewed by the Principal who may be accompanied by the Deputy Principal or a member of the teaching staff. The reason for the proposed transfer will be discussed with the parents/guardians and the student, as appropriate.
- All relevant data – (as per the Education Welfare Act, 2000) concerning the applicant will be sought by the Principal from the Principal of the school, which the applicant is attending or has most recently attended.
- Transfer to the school shall be on the basis that it would be in the best interests of the student concerned, given curricular provision, subject choices, and facilities available at the time and any other relevant factors affecting the educational benefits to the applicant and the likely impact on students already in the school.
- Having due regard to the statutory and constitutional rights of parents and their children, the Management of the Abbey Vocational School reserves the right to refuse any application in particular circumstances, which might include but is not exclusively confined to the following:
 1. 1. An established prior record of poor behavior
 2. 2. Lack of adequate resources to cater for particular needs
 3. 3. Applications to transfer into the school will be considered having regard to the overall wellbeing of existing pupils and the availability of physical space and resources. Following consideration by the School Management of individual applications to transfer into the school, where there are good grounds for forming the fair and reasonable opinion that it would not be in the best interests of the existing students and/or the applicant to accept such a transfer, it is the policy of the school to refuse to enrol such applicants.
- Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any ongoing statutory procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or The Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- A decision about the transfer of the student to the school will be conveyed to the parent/guardian within 21 days of the receipt of all the required information by the Principal.

- **5.6 Code of Behaviour**

The school's Code of Behaviour for the current session is attached. This code includes:

- Acceptable standards of behaviour
- Rewards systems
- Disciplinary measures that may be taken
- Procedures before suspension or expulsion

Each parent/guardian of a student applying for enrolment to the school will be required to sign an undertaking in relation to the Code of Behaviour as a condition for enrolment in the school.

5.7 Right of Appeal

Parents have the right to appeal a refusal by a school to enrol a student to the Education & Training Board and also under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as restated in Circular Letter M48/01 of the Department of Education & Skills.

Ratified by Board of Management on 19th June 2012.
Amended in June 2015.

Anti-Bullying Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

Abbey Vocational School is dedicated to the holistic development of students in a caring environment where tolerance and respect are nurtured and valued.

School Ethos

- The aim of the school is to allow the students to develop their spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical potential and become fully mature human persons.
- In all our activity in the School, the welfare of the individual students will take priority over administrative, bureaucratic and financial concerns.
- While respecting and acknowledging the rights of the students, our school also seeks to promote a safe and harmonious working environment for all our staff members.
- This spirit of cherishing the personal welfare of each individual will not take from the social and community development of the students and the importance of their becoming caring and responsible citizens.
- As reflected in the Motto and Mission Statement of the School, the School acknowledges and undertakes to cherish the Religious, Cultural and Historical Heritage of its students.
- A special interest of our School is to make our students aware of ecological and environmental concerns and to encourage in them a love for nature in all its aspects.
- In acknowledging the primary rights and duties of parents as educators of their children, the school will always seek to work in close partnership with parents. We also see the School as an integral part of the local community and will follow the educational programmes of the Dept. of Education and Skills under the direction of County Donegal Education & Training Board.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to protect our student body from being bullied.

In September 2013 the Dept. of Education & Skills issued “Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools”.

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

What is Bullying?

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:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

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

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

Examples of Bullying Behaviours

<p>General</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the mice grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Gestures • Invasion of personal space • A Combination of any of the types listed
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory words to start a fight and online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which are then posted online • Outing: Posting for sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyberstalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abuse of communication on social networks • Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures • False accusations • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name Calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Racial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation and exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • Bitching • Spreading Rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome and sexual comments or touching • Harassment

3. The relevant* teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

*The relevant teachers in this school are: The principal, deputy principal, year heads, Class tutor, Pastoral Care Team.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances are appropriate.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

Preventative Strategy:

The school will work proactively to ensure as far as it can that bullying does not take place. Bullying can be prevented by raising awareness of all in the school community about the reality of bullying and its detrimental effects. The school uses the following approaches:

- Discussion during form class on a regular basis
- Students encouraged to report matters of concern
- Pastoral Care team – available for students to speak to
- The school seeks opportunities to enhance the self-esteem of all pupils

- The school has leaflets for parents and students on bullying behaviour – these are available on request.

Principal

Principal/Deputy Principal addresses all incoming students on the first day of enrolment, or as soon as is practicable, on the need for good behaviour and the need for compliance with all school rules. (A copy of the School Code of Behaviour to be provided to each student.) School disciplinary procedures to be explained to students and the necessity for these emphasised so that an atmosphere conducive to learning is maintained and the highest possible standard of education provided for all pupils.

Bullying behaviour by any student undermines the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. Students at this meeting to be left in no doubt that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated in the school and the importance of reporting any bullying or abuse to the school authorities at an early stage should be emphasised. When dealing with bullying the code of behaviour will be applied.

Class Tutors

Under our Pastoral Care system each class group will be allocated a Class Tutor. As soon as possible after admission in September the teacher is to meet the designated class group in order to get to know each individual and to explain his/her role throughout the school year. The Class Tutor should be regarded as the students' friend and as the liaison between the class and the Principal/other teachers. Students should be encouraged to speak to the Class Tutor or any member of the Pastoral Care Team or any teacher whenever any difficulty may arise and especially with regard to any form of abuse, whether inside or outside of the school.

The Class Tutor should ensure that all students:

- Have a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour;
- Are familiar with what it contains;
- That new admissions after 1st September have the rules explained to them and the necessity for compliance by everyone. (Some students may be absent when the Principal/Deputy Principals address them early in September.)

Year Heads

This duty is to be allocated to an Assistant Principal. He/she holds regular meetings with the Class Tutors and the pastoral care team to discuss all aspects of discipline, especially bullying and to take action where necessary. He/she is responsible for the provision of resource material for the use of Class Tutors in dealing with bullying behaviour of any sort and also work closely with the Principal on all aspects of policy on bullying.

Year Heads should meet on a regular basis and formulate any necessary amendments to school policy for the Principal's consideration/approval.

A staff meeting to be held on the first day of the new school year to appoint Class Tutors and Year Heads for the session. Countering bullying of any kind will be an important part of their function.

Parents

Parents are strongly encouraged to contact the school as soon as they suspect their son/daughter is being subjected to bullying behaviour. A record should be kept of incidents. The matter will be dealt with seriously. Parents should be encouraged to keep a record of any incidences. (See Appendices 1, 2 & 3.)

Strategies that may be used by the school are as follows:

- Full implementation of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe and CSPE programmes and curricula to ensure that school culture support a safe social and personal environment. Training for staff in delivering these programs
- Whole school training on bullying (to include all schools personnel, students and parents and the wider community)
- Whole school delivery of lessons on bullying
- Whole school delivery of lessons on relational aggression, cyber bullying, homophobic and transforming bullying diversity and inter culturalism
- Training for SPHE teachers on resolving bullying
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures – parents’ seminars, monthly student surveys, regular school or group assemblies by principal, deputy principal or year heads.
- Development and promotion of an anti-bullying code for the school to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in common areas of the school and in classrooms
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to moderate student use of communication technology within the school.
- Encouragement of the student council to become involved in contributing to receive school environment. Buddy, mentor and other student support activities can help to support first year students with their transition to post primary school and encourage a culture of peer support
- Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell: direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, hand a note up with homework, make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school, anti-bullying box, get a parent or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Administer a confidential questionnaire during the term to all students.

6. 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:

Initial report/disclosure of bullying behaviour

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction May include
<p>Subject teacher, Class Tutor, or any teacher</p> <p>Members of the care team</p> <p>If the teacher feels they can resolve the situation.</p> <p>Always consult with an appropriate colleague or management</p>	<p>Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable</p> <p>Speak to both students separately and try to resolve the issue using an established intervention technique e.g. Restorative Approach</p> <p>Keep a record (informal)</p> <p>Teacher will follow up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved</p> <p>N.B. If the incident has not been resolved within 20 days, the relevant teacher must record the behaviour on the incident template.</p>	<p>Serious talk with student(s) re effects of their behaviour</p> <p>Verbal warning. Student(s) involved warned to stop</p> <p>Seek verbal agreement regarding future behaviour</p> <p>Outline a fair outcome if appropriate e.g. an apology, return of property etc.</p>

Subsequent report/disclosure e.g. second incident by the same student

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction may include:
<p>Relevant Teacher</p> <p>Tutor, year head involved</p> <p>Member of the pastoral care team may be involved</p>	<p>Incident investigated by the year ahead using restorative approach</p> <p>Principal/deputy principal informed</p> <p>Both sets of parents informed by the year head</p> <p>Keep a record</p> <p>Year head follows up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved</p>	<p>Serious talk with the student regarding behaviour and future behaviour</p> <p>Parents sign written agreement regarding future behaviour</p> <p>Speak with school counsellor</p> <p>Detention/other agreed sanction from school's code of behaviour</p>

Where bullying behaviour persists/serious incident of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction
Relevant teacher Principal or Deputy Principal involved Year Head Pastoral Care Committee may be involved The incident may be referred to the Board of Management at the discretion of the Principal	Parents and student meet with Principal/Deputy Principal Use established intervention strategies Feedback to Year Head Record Kept Follow-up progress with the victim and bully, bystanders or others involved and continue to monitor the situation.	Detention/suspension/other agreed sanction from the school's Code of Behaviour Parents are met and conditions set regarding students future behaviour Counselling offered Referral to child psychologist/Garda juvenile liaison office Contact with other support agencies e.g. anger management The future of the student in the school may be considered.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

Our Structure of Support

- Class Tutor
- Year Head
- Pastoral Care Team
- Guidance Counsellors
- Principal/Deputy Principal

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will ensure that they receive 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 program of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the schools intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour will receive assistance on an ongoing basis when necessary. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting the needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils to observe incidents of bullying behaviour would be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers.

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 area\ 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.
- 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 “hotspots” 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.

Recording of Bullying Behaviour can be found in Incident Form in Appendix 4

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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16/06/2014.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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 (where one exists). 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)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date of next review: _____

Evaluation

All school policies are subject to regular review. This policy will be reviewed in the light of experience.

This document has been drawn up in accordance with the Dept. of Education & Science "**Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools**" published in September 1993.

Once finalised, the policy should be disseminated widely by means of booklets, newsletters, posters, notice boards and parent meetings.

Appendix 1

How can I tell if my child is Being Bullied?

There are some signs to look out for if you have suspicions. These can include:

- Unexplained bruises;
- Afraid and anxious when going to or coming from school or work;
- School performance getting steadily worse for no obvious reason;
- Being generally nervous, tense, unhappy;
- Not explaining suspicious incidents / vague explanations;
- Signs of being isolated from others of the same age;
- Signs of regular interference with personal property, books, etc;
- Frequently asking for (or perhaps stealing) money;

Although these can also indicate problems other than bullying, it's important that you don't ignore them. Try to encourage the child to talk about what's going on, either to you or to another trusted adult.

Appendix 2

How can I tell if my child is a bully?

Here are some indicators of bullying behaviour:

- A tendency to bully family members;
- Being a victim of bullying;
- Regularly witnessing bullying behaviour in their environment;
- Being frequently short-tempered and/or aggressive;
- Having past experiences which can still cause negative feelings;
- Bringing home items that you know weren't bought;
- Speaking of others in a negative way, perhaps on the basis of their appearance or beliefs or social status;
- Showing an interest in violent behaviour;
- Showing little sensitivity towards others;
- Having low self-esteem;
- Being the subject of previous complaints or suggestions of bullying behaviour.

Appendix 3

How do I Inform the School of my Concerns? (Parent)

- Contact the school.
- Make an appointment to meet with someone in authority in the school.
- Don't exaggerate. Be honest and stick to the facts as you understand them.
- Make some notes beforehand to make sure you don't forget to mention any important points.
- Recognise that you may be upset when you speak to the teacher.
- Accept that your child may not have told you all the facts and that there may be another side to the story.
- Ask for a copy of the school's policy on bullying.
- Find out what action the school intends to take.
- Arrange for a follow-up meeting with the teacher to measure any improvement in the situation.
- After the meeting you may wish to make a note of what was agreed and send a copy to the teacher.
- If you are not happy with the teacher's response, make an appointment to see the Principal.
- If you still feel dissatisfied having spoken to the Principal, contact members of the Board of Management who are there to represent your interests. Remember to keep copies of all letters you send and receive.
- If your child is happy to have you attend you can request that all interviews with him or her on this issue are conducted in your presence.

Internet – Acceptable Use Policy (Adopted by BOM June 2011 - Amended May 2017)

The aim of this **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school **AUP** is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the **AUP** – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the **AUP** annually. Before signing, the **AUP** should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

A second version of the **AUP** was revised in June 2011 by *all the parties involved in the Abbey Vocational School*.

This version of the **AUP** was revised in Feb 2017 by *all the parties involved in the Abbey Vocational School*.

School Strategy

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.

Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.

Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.

Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.

Access to personal storage must be supervised by a teacher.

Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, or otherwise objectionable materials.

Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

Students will be familiar with copyright issues relating to on-line learning.

Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.

Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email

Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.

Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.

Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet.

Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.

Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.

School Website

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work which has been approved on the World Wide Web under the supervision of a teacher.

The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.

Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password-protected.

Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Personal Devices:

Students using their own technology in school should follow rules set out in this agreement. They will only use hand held /external devices (mobile phones /USB devices) in school if they have permission and **under strict teacher supervision**. Please also see mobile phone policy.

1. Any pupil/student whose teacher wishes them to use a personally owned mobile device within school must read and sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) section and the Mobile Phone Policy section in the school journal (page 3).
2. A parent /guardian of the pupil/student must also read, sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) section and the Mobile Phone Policy section in the school journal (page 3).
3. Students take responsibility for appropriate use of their device at all times. The school is not responsible in any way for the device or for its use.
4. Students/parents/guardians are responsible for their devices, including any breakages, costs of repair, or replacement.
5. The Principal and Deputy Principals reserve the right to inspect or monitor student mobile devices during school hours.
6. Violations of any school policies or rules involving a student device may result in a student not being allowed continue using the device during school hours and/or disciplinary action, for a period to be determined by the school.
7. During school hours students are allowed use their device for learning related activities **only and only at the instruction of the teacher.**
8. Students will comply with teachers' requests regarding use of devices during school hours, and classes. Special accommodations will apply to school tour abroad as outlined in the excursion policy
9. Mobile devices must be charged prior to bringing them to school so as to be usable during school hours. Charging devices in the school is not permitted.
10. Students may not use the devices to record, transmit or post photos or video of other teachers or students. No images or video recorded at school can be transmitted or posted at any time without the permission of their teachers.

11. Student may use the school wireless network and content filtered broadband. Use of other 'unfiltered public wireless connections, such as mobile networks, is not allowed during school hours.

In order to ensure that photos and videos are being used safely:

- Any pictures should try to focus on group activities, rather than photos of an individual. Group photos should always be preferred over full face pictures of individual children.
- Names, especially full names, should not be used, and if they are, the names need to be kept separate from images.
- Students will be educated about the risks associated with the taking, using, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular, teachers will recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet
- When taking digital/video images ensure that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute
- Students must not take, use, share, or publish images of others without consent
- Pictures to be published on the school's website, or elsewhere, which include pupils will be selected carefully and will comply with good practice guidance on image use
- Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website
- Student work can only be published with the permission of the student and parents or carers

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Date Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

The above list of legislation is not exhausted and teachers, students and parents should familiarize themselves with all the relevant legislation. Breach of all of the above legislation will be considered to be a breach of discipline

Support Structures

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Mobile Phone Policy

Ratified by BOM 27th October 2017

Purpose

The following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved.

The school's policy on mobile phones / devices is therefore devised with the intention of ensuring that teaching and learning can take place without interruption and also with the intention of protecting students and staff from potential invasion of privacy, harassment or bullying.

Rationale

The Abbey Vocational School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly, at any time.

However the Abbey Vocational School gives the assurance that during school hours, should a parent urgently need to contact their child/children (or visa-versa), this can be done using the school phone. It is vitally important to ensure that there is no disruption to classes from mobile phone and that they are not used inappropriately.

Policy

Where a student brings a mobile phone/digital device to school, it must be switched off and out of sight after the first bell in the am and until the last bell in the pm. This includes the period of time the student is on the school grounds during breaks and lunchtimes.

Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Study, Extra- Curricular Activities, School Trips, and Tours etc.) must abide by the rules governing these activities and have mobile phone/digital device switched off unless they have been given teachers permission to do otherwise. However, if it is necessary for the student to contact his parent/guardian, then permission to turn on a mobile phone must be sought from the supervising teacher. The phone must be turned off again at the conclusion of the conversation. The supervising teacher will ensure that this has happened.

We acknowledge that mobile phones may have a positive role to play in teaching and learning. Teachers may give permission for the use of mobile phones in classrooms and other learning environments. In these instances this takes place under strict supervision of teachers and as per AUP policy:

Extract from AUP policy:

1. Any pupil/student whose teacher wishes them to use a personally owned mobile device within school must read and sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) section and the Mobile Phone Policy section in the school journal (page 3).
2. A parent /guardian of the pupil/student must also read, sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) section and the Mobile Phone Policy section in the school journal (page 3).
3. Students take responsibility for appropriate use of their device at all times. The school is not responsible in any way for the device or for its use.
4. Students/parents/guardians are responsible for their devices, including any breakages, costs of repair, or replacement.

5. The Principal and Deputy Principals reserve the right to inspect or monitor student mobile devices during school hours.
 6. Violations of any school policies or rules involving a student device may result in a student not being allowed continue using the device during school hours and/or disciplinary action, for a period to be determined by the school.
 7. During school hours students are allowed use their device for learning related activities **only and only at the instruction of the teacher.**
 8. Students will comply with teachers' requests regarding use of devices during school hours, and classes. Special accommodations will apply to school tour abroad as outlined in the excursion policy
 9. Mobile devices must be charged prior to bringing them to school so as to be usable during school hours. Charging devices in the school is not permitted.
 10. Students may not use the devices to record, transmit or post photos or video of other teachers or students. No images or video recorded at school can be transmitted or posted at any time without the permission of their teachers.
 11. Student may use the school wireless network and content filtered broadband. Use of other 'unfiltered public wireless connections, such as mobile networks, is not allowed during school hours.
- Outside of the above conditions, students are not permitted to use their mobile phones at all during the day, including at break or lunchtimes.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact. The school assures parents that their children can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

If a student needs to make a telephone call during the day they must ask permission from the class teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal and a school telephone may be used, if deemed appropriate.

Confiscation and Sanctions

Students who are found using mobile phones in the school will have the phone confiscated. The following procedure will apply.

- The phone is to be turned off, in the presence of the student.
- The phone is to be handed into the office where the following details are recorded; the students name, the date, the class/period in which the phone was confiscated and the teachers name.
- The phone is then put into an envelope, sealed and the name of the student put on the outside.
- The phone is then lodged in a secure safe in the Deputy Principals Office. The phone may be held for up to five school days (not including Saturday and Sunday) at the discretion of management.
- A replacement phone may be provided in certain circumstances.

Extra-Curricular Situations

In the circumstances where students are travelling away to matches, debates, quizzes etc, students are permitted to take their mobile phones with them, in case it is necessary to contact home.

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in to the office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Their safety and security is wholly the responsibility of the student.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones. Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phone and/or passwords should not be shared.

Inappropriate Conduct

Any student/s found using a mobile phone to gain advantage in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the school.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the school.

Students using mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person by using SMS messages.

The taking, sending or posting of photos or objectionable images or comments is forbidden. Students using mobile phones to bully or harass other students or staff will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the school.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person (Section 10 of the non-fatal offences against the person Act 1997). Therefore it may be necessary for the school to inform the Gardaí and/or Child Protection/Support Services.

This Policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management of The Abbey Vocational School.