

## Anti - Bullying Policy (October 2023)

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 St. Anne's National School has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

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.

### **Key elements of a positive school culture and climate**

- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his / her worth as a human being.
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- The school recognises the role of parents / guardians in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying / aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like

and feels like in class and around the school.

- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school - this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents / guardians and / or the Parents' Teacher Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground / school yard / outdoor supervision.

#### **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**

- The Board of Management has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured.
- Staff have a clear role to act in an exemplary capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying - and modelling best practice.
- The Principal as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to bullying.

#### **A school-wide approach**

- A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and St. Anne's N.S. school community comprises management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents / guardians.
- Beyond the school community, bullying may extend to outside of the school. Where this negatively impacts on a school, parents / guardians and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.
- The assistance of Gardaí, Tusla and Community Workers may be required in some cases.
- Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school / community sector to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner.

#### **A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

St. Anne's N.S. endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that staff, pupils, parents / guardians, and the wider community have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy.

### **Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that -**

- Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils through the school and the home working together;
- Address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including, homophobic and transphobic bullying by providing talks and advice for parents.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

### **Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

- Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent.
- Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively.
- All staff are well placed to inform if any behaviour which may constitute bullying is noticed.

### **Supports for staff**

- Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis.
- All staff must have a uniform understanding of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context.
- Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention.
- CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all staff members

### **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**

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**

These apply to all relationships in our school community, pupil to pupil, staff to pupil, pupil to staff, staff to staff, parent to staff, staff to parent. Staff includes everybody working in the school.

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| <p><b>General behaviours which apply to all</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Cyber</b></p>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook / Twitter / YouTube / Instagram / Viber / Snapchat / WhatsApp / Twitter or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> <li>• Abusive telephone / mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive website comments / Blogs / Pictures</li> <li>• Accepting inappropriate friend requests or asking for them</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his / her safety</li> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• Downloading inappropriate images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group / social media</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online conflict</li> <li>• Gathering 'negative' support on social media</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• Inappropriate phone calls</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• Personal inappropriate comments on media</li> <li>• Posting comments about staff online</li> <li>• Posting inappropriate photographs</li> <li>• Prank calling</li> <li>• Inappropriate use of 'Rate my teacher' website</li> <li>• Secretly recording</li> <li>• Silent telephone / mobile phone call</li> <li>• Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• Unprofessional social media exchanges</li> <li>• Videoing or taking photographs in school</li> </ul> |

**Identity Based Behaviours, including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, Name calling e.g. gay etc. Comments on religion, family status, marital status, negative comments on dress or appearance or accent, ignoring, innuendos about sexuality

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| <b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Relational</b>   | <p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip, spreading rumours</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; exclusion, 'keeping someone out of the loop'</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group, trips, games, pastimes, play dates</li> <li>• Taking someone's friends away, deliberately manipulating friendships and groups,</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Inappropriate speech - loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• Innuendo</li> <li>• Exclusion in the yard</li> <li>• Turning your back, huddling together, favouritism</li> <li>• Picking on certain teachers, implying relationships that don't exist, undermining a teacher's stance with child at home</li> <li>• Speculating inappropriately about people's personal circumstances, dismissing people's experiences and opinions, ganging up, snide remarks, undermining professional character</li> </ul> |
| <b>Sexual</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Innuendo</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues</li> <li>• Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>   |

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| <b>Physical:</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate physical contact or touching,</li> <li>• shoving,</li> <li>• pushing,</li> <li>• hitting,</li> <li>• kicking,</li> <li>• spitting,</li> <li>• pinching,</li> <li>• grabbing,</li> <li>• shaking,</li> <li>• throwing objects,</li> <li>• damaging or stealing or hiding personal property in rooms or cars,</li> <li>• invading space,</li> <li>• intimidating body language,</li> <li>• jostling in corridors, jocking,</li> <li>• kissing,</li> <li>• pulling down trousers,</li> <li>• pulling up skirts,</li> <li>• spilling drinks,</li> <li>• scribbling on work,</li> <li>• shouldering,</li> <li>• biting,</li> <li>• pinching,</li> <li>• slapping,</li> <li>• pulling hair,</li> <li>• egging houses,</li> <li>• banging into people.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Verbal:</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling, cruel nicknames, rude noises, talking behind back, whispering, slagging, burping, tone of voice, aggressive addressing of others or tone of voice, shouting, putting others down.</li> <li>• Bad or abusive language, mocking, using language that may exclude parents, referring to others in derogatory terms, speaking ill of others, talking over people, lack of courtesy</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Psychological:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments on personal appearance, intimidating stares, hurtful sarcasm,</li> <li>• Put downs, demeaning others,</li> <li>• Belittling others and their work and effort,</li> <li>• Comparisons between siblings, reporting untruths, lies,</li> <li>• Undermining, defiant behaviour,</li> <li>• Ignoring instructions from staff,</li> <li>• Not listening to concerns,</li> <li>• Undermining parenting or teachers' competence,</li> <li>• Unfavourable comparisons,</li> <li>• Using a previous teacher's approach against you.</li> <li>• Being unsupportive,</li> <li>• Uncooperative,</li> <li>• Put downs in front of a group.</li> </ul>   |

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Refer to section 6.8.3. and 6.8.4 in the Procedures.

The relevant teachers in this school are:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- All class teachers
- Relevant Teacher is the teacher that witnesses bullying or to whom bullying is reported.
- The teacher on the yard is the relevant teacher, when an incident happens on the yard
- Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

### **Education and prevention strategies**

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

#### **School-wide approach**

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s) / guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school, in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school - posted on the school website and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's Anti - bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s) / guardian(s). The Code of Behaviour and this Anti-Bullying policy are available on the school website.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; and parent(s) / guardian(s) seminars; student surveys; regular school assemblies by principal, deputy principal, etc.

- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
- Direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, for example before break time.
- Hand note up with homework.
- Make a phone call to the school / trusted teacher in the school.
- Get a parent(s) / guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Involvement of the Student Council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. buddy system, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s) / guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school

#### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, Weaving Wellbeing, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression**
- **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe - Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Drugs Awareness** may be organised by PMCA for senior classes.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level in senior classes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

#### **Links to other policies**

○ School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Data Protection Policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.

**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:**

### Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

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

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

#### Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s) / guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

#### Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his / her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

- Parent(s) / guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated **outside** the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, **each member should be interviewed individually** at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his / her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an **early stage** to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s) / guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.

- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him / her how he / she is **in breach** of the school's Anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him / her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s) / guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s) / guardian(s) and the school.
- We are a restorative school that aims to restore relationships through dialogue in order to address harm.

We may use the following restorative questions: :

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected and in what way?
- How could things have been done differently?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

### **Follow up and recording**

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his / her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s) / guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;
  - Follow - up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
  - Where a parent(s) / guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s) / guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures:
  - In the event that a parent(s) / guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s) / guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

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

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

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

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

- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher(s) should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

### Formal

The relevant teacher must use the recording template to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) in cases where he / she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed **within twenty school days** after he / she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances **bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately** to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. This includes
- Serious assaults,
  - Belittling behaviour that has a serious impact on pupil's self-esteem,
  - Cyber bullying that impacts on a child's self - esteem.

These should be in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. Decisions around record keeping should be noted in this policy.

### Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s) / guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires

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

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Pastoral Care system
- Care team
- Group work such as circle time

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise the same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

### 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.

- Teachers and SNAs supervise all four yards.
- STAY Safe PROGRAMME is taught throughout the school.
- Class teachers and SET teachers reinforce the school Code of Behaviour and Anti - Bullying Policy.

- Pupils to be made aware of how to report bullying behaviour.
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy, internet sessions will be supervised by a staff member.
- Social media sites may be used by teachers for education purposes.

### 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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10.11.2022

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Teacher Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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 and provided to the Parents' Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

Signed: *Justin Kilcullen*  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 12.10.2023

Signed: *John Fingleton*  
(Principal)

Date: 12.10.2023

**Appendix 1**  
**Activities to promote anti-bullying:**

- The ethos of the school is to focus on the positive, catch them being good.
- Modelling of desired behaviour - respect is key.
- Extra-curricular activities; Hurling, Camogie, Chess, Guitar lessons, Science, Coding, Club Gaelige, Football, Gaelic, Hockey, Art and Crafts, French, Drama.
- Links with the community - e.g. GAA club coach, Community Games, Tidy Towns.
- Curricular - each child is given the opportunity to succeed; differentiation, playing to strengths and interests.
- The Anti - Bullying Sociogram may be implemented annually.
- A Wellbeing Committee for pupils from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>
- Assemblies - celebrate achievements, showcase talents, celebrate milestones, praise friendly behaviour, manners and respectful behaviour.
- Facebook, Twitter & Website - showcase our successes, keeping parents informed, highlighting achievements; individuals, groups and whole school.
- Awareness amongst staff; each September staff meeting (and regularly throughout the year) behaviour is discussed and it is ensured that all are aware of procedures.
- All school staff are asked to monitor children and report any concerns to the relevant teacher.
- Staff relations - social committee organise events, Adult Anti - Bullying Policy
- Internet Safety -parent sessions on Internet safety, Cybersafe kids webinar for children and parents.
- Supervision - At least 2 adults on all yards during break times. On wet days, these adults circulate around the classrooms and monitor behaviour.
- Student council: Pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Classes.
- Mindfulness awareness: Mindfulness group (co-ordinated by members of SET team), noticeboard in corridor, classroom initiatives / homework activities, staff CPD opportunities
- Best line on yard & PE equipment for each class group as a reward.
- Play-stations on yard with 6<sup>th</sup> class children acting as prefects.
- Whole school awareness measures:
  - Grandparents' Day
  - Anti-bullying surveys

- Assembly awards
  - Anti-bullying parent's session
  - Random act of kindness awards
  - SPHE curriculum - Walk Tall, Stay Safe & RSE programmes. Weaving Wellbeing.
- 
- Strong culture of telling, pupils and parents are always encouraged to communicate issues to teachers.
  - Communication links with parents
  - Staff meet and greet in the morning and afternoon when pupils arrive and depart the school
  - Anti-bullying policy - clear and structured guidelines for teachers, parents / guardians and pupils - expectations are clear. Reviewed regularly.
  - Code of Behaviour: expectations are clear. Reviewed regularly.
  - Outdoor classroom / buddy benches / picnic benches funding sourced - to be completed in the very near future.

## Appendix 2:

## Template for recording bullying behaviour / incident record

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

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

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

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

| 3. Source of bullying concern / report<br>(tick relevant box (es))* |  | 4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))* |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Pupil concerned   |  | Playground  |  |
| Other Pupil   |  | Classroom   |  |
| Parent  |  | Corridor  |  |
| Teacher   |  | Toilets   |  |
| Other   |  | School Bus  |  |
|   |  | Other   |  |

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

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

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

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

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

|            |                          |        |                                   |                 |
|------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Homophobic | Disability / SEN related | Racist | Membership of Traveller community | Other (specify) |
|            |                          |        |                                   |                 |

## 8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

## 9. Details of actions taken

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

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

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

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

## Appendix 3

## Sample investigation, intervention and follow-up strategies

**1. Initial report / disclosure of bullying behaviour**

Any member of staff may witness bullying or be made aware of it by pupils, parents or others. Teachers may make an immediate intervention if it is warranted. The incident should be reported to the relevant teacher. Non-teaching staff must report to the relevant teacher

| Action taken by relevant teacher  | Support and / or sanction may include                      |
|---|--|
| Investigate incident-speak with students separately and try to resolve the issue using an established intervention technique e.g. Restorative Approach  | Serious talk with student(s) re effects of their behaviour |
| Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable   | Verbal warning. Student/s involved warned to stop          |
| Always consult with appropriate colleagues or management  | Seek verbal agreement re: future behaviour.                |
| Inform parents at an early stage  | Outline a fair outcome <i>if appropriate</i>               |
| Keep a record (colour coded recording system: e.g. blue = informal, white = formal).<br>Specific files may be used.   |  |
| Teacher will follow up progress with: victim and bully, bystanders or others involved.<br><br><b>N.B. If the incident has not been resolved within 20 days the relevant teacher must record the behaviour on the incident template (See Appendix 2)</b> | e.g. an apology, return of property etc.                   |

## Appendix 4

**Subsequent report / disclosure e.g. second or more serious incident by the same student**

| <b>Action taken by</b>                        | <b>Procedure</b>   | <b>Support and/or sanction may include:</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| Relevant teacher principal may be involved    | Incident investigated by the relevant teacher                            | Serious talk with the student re: behaviour and future behaviour                              |
| Member of the Care Committee may be involved. | Principal / Deputy principal informed                                    | Sign written agreement re future behaviour  |
|   | <b>Both sets of parents</b> informed by the relevant teacher / principal | Parents / Guardians sign written agreement re future behaviour. e.g. 2 strikes and you're out |
|   | Keep a record informal / formal  | Detention / suspension / other agreed sanction from school's Code of Behaviour                |
|   | Follow up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved. | Monitor future behaviour.   |

**Where bullying behaviour persists / serious incident of bullying**

| <b>Action taken by</b>  | <b>Procedure</b>   | <b>Support and / or Sanction</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| Principal or Deputy Principal / Relevant teacher involved   | Parents and student meet with the Principal / Deputy Principal.  | Detention / Suspension / other agreed sanction from school's Code of Behaviour   |
| Care Committee may be involved.   | Use established intervention strategies<br>Formal record kept.   | Parents are met and conditions set regarding the student's future behaviour.   |
| The incident may be referred to the Board of Management at the discretion of the Principal.<br><br>If not dealt with within 20 days it must be referred to the BOM. | Follow up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved and continue to monitor the situation. | Counselling / other supports offered<br>Referral to NEPS, child psychologist / Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer<br>Contact with other support agencies e.g. re: anger management<br><br>The future of the student in the school may be considered. |

## Appendix 5

## Friendship Questionnaire

Name -----

Class -----

Would you like to talk to someone about bullying?      Yes  No Do you know someone who is having a hard time?      Yes  No 

## Bullying Sociogram

- Are you happy with the atmosphere in your classroom?
  - Who are your friends?
    - Are you being bullied in any way?  
(Take details and reassure student that the problem will be addressed)
- Is there anyone in class having a hard time or being picked on?
  - Is anyone being left out, or ignored?
- Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages or emails to make others feel bad about themselves?
  - Is anyone being unfair to others?
- Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
  - Can you give examples?
- Who do you think is causing the problem?



## Appendix 7

### Sexual orientation – advice for schools

#### General points

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

#### Practical suggestions

- Depending on the context and the age group of the children, the teacher could ask a child or a class group what they mean by the word 'gay'
- A school could decide on a response to this question, such as *'The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay.'*
- To give factual information like this in an open and straightforward way may help to remove the secrecy which is necessary for any bullying to flourish.
- Homophobic insults should be treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable.
- Schools promote a culture of communication which actively discourages abusive name calling.
- Please see GLEN [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie) BeLonGTo [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org) for information and guidance on policy development.
- The Resource 'Growing Up' LGBT was developed by SPHE, GLEN and BeLonG to support teachers in teaching about LGBT.
- The 'Stand UP' programme developed by BeLonG To is also available to schools.

**Appendix 8**  
**Table A: Key Elements of a positive school culture and climate**  
**(DES Anti-Bullying Procedures)**

| Area of Focus   | Y / N<br>Comment |
|---|------------------|
| The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.   |                  |
| The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his / her worth as a human being.   |                  |
| The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.  |                  |
| The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.  |                  |
| The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.   |                  |
| The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.   |                  |
| The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.  |                  |
| The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner. |                  |
| The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.   |                  |
| The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.   |                  |
| The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.   |                  |
| The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities  |                  |
| The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school  |                  |
| Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying / aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community   |                  |

### Appendix 9

#### Sample Action Plan to promote a positive school culture and climate

**Target:** To develop practices to ensure a positive school culture and climate is prioritized across the school

Appendix 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures has been referenced to develop our Action Plan

| Tasks: What steps do we need to take   | Who will do it?                       | When will it be done? | Complete<br>Ongoing<br>Deferred |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| As a staff we will model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times  | All staff                             |                       | Ongoing                         |
| We will explicitly teach pupils at all class levels what respectful language and behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school  | All staff                             |                       | Ongoing                         |
| We will engage in CPD events in relation to Anti-Bullying and also set aside planning time as a staff for this area  | All Staff                             |                       | Ongoing                         |
| We will agree key respect messages and display them in classrooms, assembly areas and around the school. The pupils will be involved in the development of these messages and they will be cross referenced with the Code of Behaviour | Staff representatives per class level |                       | Ongoing                         |
| We will consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school- this includes homophobic and racist language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN  | All Staff                             |                       | Ongoing                         |

## Appendix 10

### Advice in relation to Record Keeping

- The school should keep records.
- Records of bullying behaviour may be more secure if filed separately from a student's general file.

### Retention of Records

- Litigation in relation to a school's duty of care may be initiated some years after a student has left the school.
- In the case of very serious incidents schools might be best advised not to put an end date on the storage of data..