Ballinteer Educate Together

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Statement

Ballinteer Educate Together National School seeks to ensure that every child is protected from bullying at school, is given an education free from fear and intimidation, and has a positive, affirming school experience.

The immediate priority, should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, (*thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted*) and resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved insofar as is practicable using a "Reform, not Blame" approach.

While, for the purpose of this policy, the terms 'bully' and 'victim' will be used, the school wishes to emphasise that the policy addresses these types of behaviours while endeavouring to ensure that the self-esteem and reputation of every child is protected.

Policy

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 Ballinteer Educate Together 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 behavior 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 behavior (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

Definition

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 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.

This definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.

A once-off fight or disagreement is not bullying nor is it necessarily bullying when two individuals (or groups) of about the same strength quarrel or fight. 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.

Appendix 1 gives additional information on different types of bullying as set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

OBJECTIVES

Ballinteer Educate Together School aims to adopt a proactive approach to anti-bullying. We will endeavour to keep the anti-bullying policy alive through an active process of consultation whereby all the constituted groups within the school community will be consulted prior to any proposed change in the school policy.

The main aims of the anti-bullying policy are as follows:

- To create a positive school culture and climate that is inclusive and welcoming of difference;
- To create a school climate which is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss bullying behaviour;
- To raise awareness amongst the entire school community (including school management, teachers, pupils, parents, volunteers etc.) that bullying is unacceptable behaviour;
- To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring through which all aspects of school activity are kept under observation;
- To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour;
- To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour;
- To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour;
- To work with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour;
- To facilitate ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy.

RATIONALE

Ballinteer Educate Together accepts that it is everyone's responsibility to report incidents of bullying to the school authorities, and that those employed in the school are obliged to act on any such disclosures.

Parents are expected to co-operate and collaborate with staff on bullying issues; and the staff acts in good faith when dealing with bullying behaviour.

Bullying must be intentional and directed and the victim must experience a degree of intimidation due to this behaviour. The school recognises that there are different forms

of aggression which do not necessarily constitute bullying but will be dealt with under the Code of Positive behaviour.

The school notes that bullying may focus on the more vulnerable members of the school and society, who are perceived as being different in some respects: this may include being physically, culturally, emotionally or academically different from other pupils.

We recognise that there are different forms of bullying and that individuals may fall into different categories of perpetrators/bullies and recipients of bullying/victims. These types include: Bully/victims; anxious bullies, passive victims, colluding victims and false victims. Different approaches may be required in dealing with these categories. Similarly, the school accepts that a variety of bullying behaviours exist and that different approaches may be employed to deal with these.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of Patron

To ensure the policy is in keeping with the ethos of the school. To support the Board of Management in their role in the implementation of the policy.

Role of Board of Management

- To approve the policy
- To ensure through the principal that the policy is implemented
- To ensure policy is reviewed annually
- To support the principal and staff in implementing the policy.
- To support and fund training of staff in the area of anti-bullying.
- To ensure all parents joining the school receive a copy of the Anti-Bullying School Policy.
- To provide the physical infrastructure to make the school environment a more child friendly place.
- To provide for the health and safely of all those using its premises.

Parents

- Parents will be supplied with information regarding bullying and what to do about it, and will be invited to report on suspicions to the class teacher or principal.
- The genuine concern of teachers for the child should be accepted.
- Any information regarding the involvement of the child should be accepted. Any information regarding the involvement of the child in bullying will be communicated to the parent. Parents are asked to accept this information in good faith.

- Parents will be invited to devise and implement, with the class teacher, a plan of action regarding the involvement of their child in bullying. The plan would relate to action that would be taken by both the teacher and the parent.
- Parents are asked that, when in the presence of their child, they will fully support any policy decisions relating to behaviour, discipline and bullying about which they have previously been consulted. If they need to question decisions, this will be done privately with the class teacher.
- Parents should acknowledge the unique role that both they and the teachers hold. Parents should acknowledge the different relationships which both they and teachers have with the child.
- Parents are asked to respect the need for confidentiality in all discussions re incidents of bullying.

Teachers

- Teachers should acknowledge and respect the unique role that both they and parents hold.
- Teachers should acknowledge the different relationships which both they and the parents have with the child.
- Teachers must respect the need for confidentiality when they are dealing with parents or children involved in bullying notwithstanding the professional obligations of the teacher.
- Teachers should acknowledge the importance of the parent – teacher partnership; they will particularly recognise the needs of those parents whose children are involved in bullying.
- Teachers should acknowledge the right of all children to a fair hearing.

Children

- All children will be encouraged to respect the rights of others.
- Bystanders will be encouraged to report any instances of bullying that they may be aware of, secure in the knowledge that confidentiality will be kept and their own safety and well-being preserved.
- Children will be encouraged and reminded to tell their class teacher and/or parents when they are unhappy.
- Children should find private time and report instances of bullying to the class teacher. If, for any reason, they are uncomfortable with approaching the teacher, then they should bring the matter directly to the Principal.
- Children should stay within sight of staff during break times.

Education and Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies used by the school include the following:

- The full implementation of the *Walk Tall, Stay Safe* and *Relationships and Sexuality Education* programmes as they apply during each school year. Through these programmes, children are:
    - Helped to examine the issue of bullying in a calm rational way, outside of the tense context of particular bullying incidents. In the process they are made more aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms that it can take.
    - Made aware that the consequences of bullying behaviour are always bad for those who are targeted, even if this is not always obvious at the time.
    - Encouraged to recognise, reject and report bullying behaviour
- The subject of bullying will be dealt with through the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and the Learn Together Programmes.
- Circle time, role plays and drama etc., will be employed to explore the theme of bullying and to identify approaches to dealing with various situations that students may find themselves in.
- 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 improve their relationships with others and 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.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school yard, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Yard Squad and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school on enrolment.
- 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; annual Anti bullying Week and parents/guardians seminars organised by PTA.; regular school assemblies by principal or deputy principal.

- 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 teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class for a 'private chat'.
  - Access to principal at all times.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Anti-bully or Worry box
  - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place. Bystanders who report witnessing bullying will not be named unless prior permission is granted but will be noted.
- The school will specifically consider the particular needs of children with Additional Educational Needs with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately. Targets and strategies particularly related to bullying prevention, the development of social skills and the fostering of inclusion will be identified in Student Support Files where appropriate.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied (Appendix 2: Reporting Guidelines for Parents).
- Full implementation of the *Acceptable Use Policy*, *Anti-Cyber-Bullying* and *Use of Mobile Phones* policies 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.
- Through presentations or other exercises, the school staff and parents/guardians are made aware of the nature of bullying and the signs that might indicate that a pupil is being bullied. They are encouraged to be vigilant in watching out for signs of bullying and to report any suspicion of bullying they may have to the class teacher and/or principal.
- Strategies specifically aimed at the prevention of cyber-bullying are detailed further in the school's *Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy*.

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.

The school staff will at all times be vigilant for any signs of bullying, particularly in the school yard and during break times. All accessible areas will be patrolled during break time. Yard matters will be included on the agenda of each staff meeting.

Possible Signs of Bullying

Parents and teachers must be aware of possible signs that an individual may have some involvement in bullying, be it as victim or bully; these may include:

- Deterioration in school performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm or interest in school
- Pattern of physical illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Anxiety about going to school each day
- Fear of going out to the yard at break time
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour. These may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after school holidays.
- Requests for money
- Damage to personal belongings
- Individual may refuse to say what is wrong.
- Individual may give improbable excuses.
- Self-harm
- Loss of trust in friends
- Unexplained or poorly explained physical injury

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

The following support systems may be employed by the class teacher when dealing with various forms of bullying:

- Mediation
- Peer mediation
- Peer mentoring
- No Blame Approach
- Method of shared concern
- Social skills training
- Behavioural counselling
- Curricular approach i.e. Learn Together Programme, Social, Personal Health Education (SPHE) Circle Time, and Assembly.
- Thematic Approach

Outside supports including the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) may be engaged, when necessary, to assist in tackling bullying.

Investigation of Bullying Behaviour

The class teacher will normally be responsible for investigating and dealing with bullying. Where necessary, school management and/ or SET team teachers will release the class teacher from their class to facilitate any such investigation.

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:

Step 1 – Interview with the bullied pupil.

Step 2 – Arrange a meeting for all those involved separately and, if appropriate, collectively. (i.e. victim, bully, bystander(s))

Step 3 – Explain the problem.

Step 4 – Share responsibility.

Step 5 – Identify solutions.

Step 6 – Let the pupils take action themselves.

Step 7 – Meet them again.

- At the initial meeting with the bully the teacher will:
  - Define the problem.
  - Decide on a course of action.
  - Involve him/her in designing a programme to change this behaviour.
  - Discuss with the child and decide on reasonable sanctions which will be used if he/she continues to bully.
- The class teacher will inform the principal that they are conducting an investigation into alleged bulling and the outcome of this investigation.
- Parents do not necessarily have to be involved at this stage.
- The teacher involved will file a copy of this programme signed by the child concerned and parent, if deemed necessary.

If the bullying persists

If the bullying persists and involves the same individuals or if the bully bullies other individuals the school will:

- Interview those involved in bullying including bystanders and others
- The victim(s) will record the events in writing.
- The bully will record the events in writing.
- The teacher will record their discussions with the pupils.

- The teacher will record their discussions with the both parents.
- These reports will be kept on file.
- The parents of the children will be obliged to respond in writing.
- A behavioural contract will be drawn up and agreed by the bully and/or victim. This contract will be signed by the teacher, parent and the bully and if necessary the victim. This contract will specify the sanction to be imposed if this contract is broken.

- *In cases where the class teacher considers that bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed **within 20 days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred**, it must be recorded by the class teacher in the recording template on the school's administrative software system (Appendix 3).*

- Serious instances of bullying behaviour will be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/ or Gardaí as appropriate and in accordance with the *Children First Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Sanctions

Sanctions may range from a written exercise, missing out on a school activity, to suspension and in extreme cases expulsion. Please refer to the school Code of Positive Behaviour.

Dealing with 'Bully Gangs'

- A 'NO BLAME APPROACH' may be employed for dealing with 'Bully Gangs'.
- The victims will be met separately; the victims will give an account of what happened.
- Every member of the 'gang' will be interviewed – and they will write down what happened.
- It will be agreed with every member of the gang separately what is expected of him/her and discussed how he/she has broken school guidelines.
- The 'gang' will be interviewed as a group. As a group each member will state what happened. It will be necessary to ensure that everyone is clear about what has happened.
- Strategies will be decided which involve children in solving the problem e.g. method of shared concern, no blame approach.
- False excuses or redefinition of incident will not be accepted.
- If there is serious injury to an individual the BOM will decide on whether to suspend or expel the bully/ bullies concerned. This is covered under rules for National Schools No.130

Supporting children affected by bullying

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

- The school's first priority is to end the bullying behaviour, indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil.
- Help will be provided to the victim of bullying behaviour to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills. A 'buddy system' will be implemented where appropriate.
- Where it is considered that the target of bullying could be encouraged to find ways in which they themselves can improve the situation, this support will be provided. It may be necessary to find out what type of victim the pupil is, e.g. is he/she a classic victim (not responsible) or a provocative victim (has a role to play)? If the victim is a provocative victim then he or she needs to realise that their own behaviour is contributing to the bullying behaviour.
- Follow up meetings will be held with the children individually and, where appropriate and agreed, as a group.
- Assertiveness training may be provided for victims and other groups. The aim of this is to allow opportunities for pupils to explore alternative strategies appropriate to the particular bullying situations they currently face or of previous situation which they would have preferred to have handled differently.
  This training may deal with:
  - Use of body language
  - Assertive techniques.
  - How to respond appropriately to different situations.
  - Resisting manipulation and threats.
  - Responding to name-calling.
  - How to enlist support.
  - Remaining calm in stressful situations.
  - Boosting of self-esteem.
  - How to be positive about oneself.
  - How to stand up for oneself.
  - Maintaining assertive behaviour.
  - The role of bystanders, the responsibilities of bystanders to help change behaviours.
- If it is the view of the principal that the child would benefit from professional counselling then they will be referred to the appropriate outside agencies.

Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this,

- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills,
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a "clean sheet" and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

Children new to the school:

Given that a new child to the school might be more vulnerable to bullying or has a history of involvement in bullying the school may:

- Require parents/guardians to forward all documentation, regarding their previous placement.
- Contact the previous school or institution attended by the child (with parental consent).
- With parental consent, contact any other body that may have had an involvement with the child in question.

Children with Additional Educational Needs:

The school will specifically consider the needs of children with Additional Educational Needs with regards the programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying. Special measures which may not be described in this policy, may be required to support these children. These supports will be addressed according to the Student Support File or Individual Education Programme of the children concerned. In so far as is appropriate for the individual child, policy procedures will be adhered to.

Harrassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps as 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.

The school needs to deal with sexual harassment and identity-based bullying whenever it occurs and to deal with assumptions about sexuality, gender and identity in the curriculum and within structures in the school. The Ethical Education (Learn Together) implemented in the school will engage with these topics.

Sexual, racial or homophobic/ transphobic harassment or bullying will be treated as serious misbehaviour under the Code of Positive Behaviour. Repeated or persistent behaviour of this nature will be treated as extreme misbehaviour which may lead to the implementation of sanctions up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Sexual harassment includes:

- Inappropriate touching.
- Use of derogatory names, insults or sexist jokes.
- Sexist graffiti.
- Bringing sexist materials into the school.
- Sexist comments or innuendo through any media.
- Ridicule of an individual on the basis of stereotypes.
- Inappropriate comments of a sexual nature.

The distinction between sexual harassment and general unacceptable behaviour is not clear and the invisibility of sexual harassment will continue unless children can name it and challenge it directly.

Homophobic/Transphobic bullying includes:

- Use of derogatory names, insults or homophobic/transphobic jokes.
- Homophobic/transphobic graffiti.
- Bringing homophobic/transphobic materials into the school.
- Homophobic/transphobic comments or innuendo through any media.
- Ridicule of an individual on the basis of stereotypes.

Racial harassment includes:

- Physical assault because of colour, ethnicity or nationality.
- Use of derogatory names, insults or racist jokes.
- Racist graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges of insignia.
- Bringing racist materials into the school.
- Verbal abuse or threats.
- Incitement of others to behave in a racist way.
- Racist comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to racist organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for cultural differences e.g. food, music, dress etc. Refusal to co-operate because of a person's colour, ethnic origin of nationality.

Response to harassment:

- Raise awareness.
- Follow procedures for investigating, reporting and follow-up as outlined in this policy.

Adult-Child Bullying i.e. Teacher - Child

- Such a complaint may be made by a parent or significant adult against a teacher. In this case please refer to agreed procedures. Any allegation of bullying by a teacher of a child will be taken seriously by the school and acted upon by the Board of Management in accordance with the *Children First Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.
- We recognise that it is not bullying when a teacher has made a fair and just comment on a student's work or, after investigating an alleged wrong doing in accordance with school procedures, finds it necessary to speak frankly with a child and enforce an appropriate sanction in line with our Code of Positive Behaviour policy.

Bullying in the Workplace

- Where there is an allegation of bullying between a teacher and the principal, a teacher and a teacher, a teacher and a member of the Board of Management or a teacher and/or a member of the Board of Management the 'Working Together Document' agreed between the Managerial Bodies and the I.N.T.O. will apply.
- Any non-teaching staff may use this approach when dealing with alleged bullying but will be advised at the appropriate stage to seek advice from their representative body.

Bullying between Members of Staff and Members of the School Community

- In the event of a parent wishing to raise an issue with a teacher, the best approach is to set up a meeting to discuss this with the teacher in the first instance, then with the principal if necessary and if the issue is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction. School guidelines on this and other communication issues outlined in the School's Communication Policy. This procedure is an agreed one at national level between teachers' union and the management bodies and is recognised and supported by the Department of Education. There is no parallel procedure in the event of a teacher wishing to raise an issue with a parent.
- Teachers are entitled to expect that this procedure will be respected and that they will not be subjected to criticism in any forum or other public assembly and/or on social media or group messaging platform. This includes situations where a teacher may not be explicitly named but is clearly identifiable due to the context of the discussion. The school community understands that the committee of any constituted group within the school community is responsible for the conduct of its members during any meetings/talks they organise. It is the responsibility of the chairperson/acting-chairperson to ensure the proper conduct of meetings. Ballinteer Educate Together wishes to state that repeated breaches of this procedure may

represent bullying and may result in appropriate action being taken to resolve any such incidents.

- Parents are entitled to confidentiality with respect to all discussions they hold with teachers. They are entitled to expect (notwithstanding the professional responsibilities of the teacher) that this confidentiality will not be breached, including in circumstances where, although a parent is not explicitly named, they are clearly identifiable. Ballinteer Educate Together recognises that repeated breaches of confidentiality may represent bullying.

Inspectorate

It is expected that inspectors will familiarise themselves with all school policies. If a teacher should have any difficulty with an inspector then that teacher should follow the agreed procedures

Teacher and Parent

- A member of staff feels that excessive and unreasonable demands are being placed on him/her by a parent or parents of a child in the school, this may include constant meetings being called, teacher having to repeatedly account for actions or curricular decisions, might feel that he or she is being bullied. Similarly if a teacher feels that he or she is constantly being monitored or is being undermined and that their professionalism is constantly being questioned then he or she may feel that he or she is being bullied.
- This should be referred to the Principal.
- The parent should be informed that he or she should follow agreed procedures.
- It is school policy that probationary and substitute teachers when meeting a parent or parents in a formal setting may have a senior member of staff in attendance.

Dissemination of Information

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

Dissemination of this policy document and the information contained will be through:

- School website
- School newsletter
- Email to parents
- Information booklet on the school
- Referred to in talks to parents
- Parent Teacher Association

Ratification and Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. An action plan will be put in place to address any areas for improvement identified by the review. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school staff, published on the school website and provided to the PTA. A record of review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **12th March 2019**.

Chairperson   Acting Principal

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Robert Cochran   Órla McCarthy

APPENDIX 1: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Types of Bullying Behaviour

- ○ **Physical Aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- ○ **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/ or dislike.
- ○ **Isolation/ exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore" (implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the 'silent treatment'.
- ○ **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.
- ○ **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can

also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those wo, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

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

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

APPENDIX 2: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

REPORTING GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

All members of the school community have a responsibility to report bullying. If you believe that your child is affected by bullying behaviour (either as a victim, bully or by-stander) please make an appointment to speak with your child's class teacher. Appointments can be made via phone or email.

Once you have made an appointment you may find it useful to write an account describing what you know about the bullying behaviour.

Possible signs of bullying

Parents and teachers must be aware of possible signs that an individual may have some involvement in bullying, be it as victim or bully; these may include:

- Deterioration in school performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm or interest in school
- Pattern of physical illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Anxiety about going to school each day
- Fear of going out to the yard at break time
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour. These may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after school holidays.
- Requests for money
- Damage to personal belongings
- Individual may refuse to say what is wrong.
- Individual may give improbable excuses.
- Self-harm
- Loss of trust in friends
- Unexplained or poorly explained physical injury

Parents are asked to consider any factors at home which may have coincided with the onset of behavioural changes.

Possible indicators that your child may be a bully:

- Child may be sullen.
- May have violent outbursts.
- May not be able to account for money or possessions.
- May be acting differently.

Possible indicators that your child may be a victim of bullying:

- May be reluctant to go to school. This is not to be confused with school phobia.
- May be unable to explain why some of his/her belongings are missing or damaged.
- Change in behaviour – quiet or withdrawn.

If you think your child is a victim of bullying:

It may be useful to consider the following questions before coming to the school:

- What happened to the child?
- How often?
- Who is responsible?
- When did the bullying take place?
- Where did the bullying take place?
- Did your child report this?
- To whom was it reported Who told you (parent) about this bullying?
- What are the signs that something is wrong?
- Is your child anxious about anything else?

If you think your child is a bully:

It may be useful to consider the following questions before coming to the school:

- Who is your child bullying?
- What does your child do to this person?
- When does it happen?
- Where does it happen?
- How long has it been going on?
- How did you get to know of it?
- Has anyone reported it to the school?
- Why do you feel that he or she is involved?
- Is your child witnessing bullying behaviour at home or in the community?
- Parents should record full details and inform the school.

On approach to the school

All incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported will be investigated and recorded. The contact person in the school (usually the class teacher) will:

- Attend to the safety needs of the victim.
- Acknowledge what the person says, listen actively and record factual information.
- Will use a standardised reporting form on the school administration system (Aladdin).
- Follow agreed procedures including keeping the principal informed.

APPENDIX 3: Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. **Name of pupil being bullied and class**

    Name: _____   Class: _____

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

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

3. Source of bullying concern/ report (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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 the behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

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

8. **Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

9. **Details of actions taken**