Scoil Íosagáin

Policy on:
Anti-Bullying

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board), the Board of Management of Scoil Íosagáin, Upperchurch, has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

   - A Positive School Culture and Climate which:
     - acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
     - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
     - recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents/guardians informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis;
     - promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
     - promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members; and
     - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.

   - Effective Leadership:
     The Board of Management and Principal are committed to ensuring that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

Staff members
   - share a collegiate responsibility under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying and aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community;
   - actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school;
   - foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance;
   - develop children's self-esteem (SPHE curriculum, Weaving Wellbeing Programme)
   - actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
   - model respectful behaviour at all times;
   - explicitly teach pupils school rules and also what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school;
   - catch pupils being good, notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention;
   - Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory or derogatory language in the school;
   - Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent (**THINK kind hands, kind feet, kind words**); and
   - Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school's code of behaviour and review with pupils who ignore the rules;

- A School-Wide Approach:

  Bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved. It can affect everyone in the classroom, in the school and ultimately in the wider community. A positive school wide attitude and involvement can assist considerably in countering bullying behaviour in schools. In addition to the role of management and staff, parents have a role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere. The school recognises the need to work in partnership with parents and to keep them informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school- wide basis. Parents should also recognise that a school that openly discusses bullying is acting positively and that they need to work with their school to ensure there is a coherent school-wide approach to tackling the issue. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is available to view on the school website.

- Building a Positive School Culture & Climate:

  Our school will actively promote a positive school culture and climate by implementing the 'Welcome to Wellbeing' programme (Junior Infants – 1st Class) and the 'Weaving Wellbeing' programme (2nd Class – 6th Class). This programme is underpinned by the concept that a state of well-being is not simply the absence of the negative but the presence of the positive. The Weaving Wellbeing programme gives children the opportunity to weave positivity into their daily lives through a range of activities in a variety of areas; resilience skills (including mindfulness) and developing self efficacy through empowering beliefs.

- A Shared Understanding of what Bullying is and its Impact:

  All staff are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

- 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 homophobic and transphobic bullying.

- Effective Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils:

  Appropriate supervision and monitoring practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour.

  The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary. It responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive way.

- Supports for Staff:

  The BOM ensures that all school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy and this enables them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required.

- Consistent Recording, Investigation and Follow up of Bullying Behaviour. (including use of established intervention strategies)
  - ➢ The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording templates:
    - ▪ Stage 1 – Appendix 3
    - ▪ Stage 2 – Appendix 4
    - ▪ Stage 3 – Appendix 4

> Records of bullying behaviour are retained in secured storage in the office Anti-Bullying file.

- <u>On-Going Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy</u>

  The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of this policy and its implementation by the school (see Appendix 1 & 5)

3. Definition and Background

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 others. It is behaviour which is intentionally aggravating, and intimidating, serious and distressing to the victim and repeated over time. It can include emotional and negative ongoing behaviour by one or more pupils against a victim.

- **Physical Behaviours**
  Pushing, hitting, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping etc...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.

- **Verbal Behaviours and Intimidation**
  Name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates. 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.

- **Emotional Behaviours**
  Threats of persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Teasing, taunting, threatening, exclusion or extortion. Bullying behaviour thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty and secrecy in which the victim often feels a sense of hopelessness.

- **Damage to Property**
  Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's bag or lunch box. The contents may be scattered on the floor, items of personal property be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

- **Online Behaviours**
  Cyber bullying involves using the Internet or mobile phones to send hurtful messages or post information to damage people's reputation and friendships. Cyber bullying is similar to other types of bullying, except that it takes place online and through text messages sent to mobile phones. Cyber bullies can be classmates, online acquaintances, and even anonymous users, but most often they do know their victims.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. - Physical aggression - Damage to property - Name calling - Slagging - The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person - Offensive graffiti - Extortion - Intimidation - Insulting or offensive gestures - The "look" - Invasion of personal space - A combination of any of the types listed
Cyber	**Denigration**: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation **Harassment**: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual **Impersonation**: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name **Flaming**: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight **Trickery**: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online **Outing**: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images **Exclusion**: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety - Silent telephone/mobile phone calls - Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls - Abusive text messages

	• Abusive email
	• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Snapchat/ X (Twitter)/You Tube/TikTok/Instagram or on games consoles
	• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
	• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

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).

Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
	• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation
	• Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner
	• Physical intimidation or attacks
	• Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
	• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:
	• Malicious gossip
	• Isolation & exclusion
	• Ignoring
	• Excluding from the group
	• Taking someone's friends away
	• "Bitching"
	• Spreading rumours
	• Breaking confidence
	• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
	• The "look"
	• Use of terminology such as 'weird' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
	• Harassment

Special Educational Needs, Disability	- Name calling - Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs - Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying - Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. - Mimicking a person's disability - Setting others up for ridicule

Isolated instances of aggressive behaviour, which would be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour, would not be described as bullying. However when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.

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 are 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.

Indicators of Bullying Behaviour
The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:
(i) Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
(ii) Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy;
(iii) Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
(iv) Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
(v) Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
(vi) Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
(vii) Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
(viii) Possessions missing or damaged;
(ix) Increased requests for money or stealing money;
(x) Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
(xi) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

The school acknowledges that there are three parties involved in bullying – those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness the bullying. Staff and teachers bear this in mind when dealing with bullying incidences and try to support and work with all parties involved.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- The school Principal has a key role in dealing with bullying behaviour. She and other leaders in the school, including all teachers, strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable.

- The school Principal will co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy. Each class teacher has his/her own particular responsibility both in the classroom and out in the yard.

- In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the 'relevant teacher'. The 'relevant teacher' will normally be the class teacher. The 'relevant teacher' will be assisted by the Principal and or Deputy Principal during all stages of investigation.

- The Primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as practicable the relationships of the parties involved.

- All reports including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling', this confidence factor is of vital importance.

- Non-teaching staff such as Secretaries, Special Needs Assistants, Bus Drivers, must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher and/or principal.

- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any bullying issues.

- At least once in every school term, the Principal must provide a report to the Board of Management on the overall number of bullying cases referred to that have been, or are being dealt with in accordance with school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

- The BOM will take an annual review of the schools' Anti-Bullying policy and its implementation by the school (see Appendix 1 & 5)

5. Prevention Strategies

Education and Prevention Strategies that will be used by the school are as follows:

The School

- The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance (see Appendix 2)
- Children's self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences and achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners, and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school.
- Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff.
- Teachers will be vigilant. They will respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying will be investigated and dealt with in a safe manner. Pupils will gain a confidence in telling, which is of vital importance.
- They will use behavioural management strategies focusing on problem solving. These strategies will enable pupils to take an active role in finding a solution to problems.

- Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying. 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.
- The children will become familiar with the following whole-school Anti-Bullying slogans:
  - ➢ Say No, Get Away, Tell
  - ➢ Kind Hands, Kind Feet, Kind Words
  - ➢ Bully Free Zone

The Curriculum

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school's religion programme Grow In Love; the Social Personal and Health Education Programme incorporating the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes, 'Welcome to Wellbeing'/'Weaving Wellbeing' (a programme to enhance wellbeing in children) Visual Arts, Drama, Aistear and Circle Time. These are intended to develop self-esteem in our pupils and to heighten the awareness among pupils of respecting themselves and others.

The curriculum may be supported by outside facilitators where appropriate eg. Barnardos "Creative Breath Body Mind" mindful breathing programme.

Examples of lessons from these programmes are:

Grow in Love Jnrs/Snrs →Our World, We are Special, I Have a Name, Jesus, We can live as Jesus taught us, We can grow in love.

Grow in Love 1st →We Belong Together & God Loves Us, Friends, Respecting our Parents & Families, God made us, We are special, Living in Love, Growing in Love.
We can lose our way – Impact on others by not showing love – Acknowledging when we do wrong – Process of Reconciliation

Grow in Love 2nd →Our Class - A Circle of Friends, We Are Jesus' Followers, Jesus – Healer/Helper/Friend, Choices

Grow in Love 3rd →
Theme 6:   Love God. Love Your Neighbour.
Theme 5:   The Commandments Teach Us to Love and Share.

Grow in Love 4th →
Theme 5:   Living the Commandment of Love.
Theme 6:   I Have a Conscience. I Can Choose.
Theme 10:   God Calls Us to Forgive Others.

Grow in Love 5th →
Theme 5:   Conscience
Theme 6:   Social Justice

Walk Tall:
- Junior Infants – Belonging and Co-operating, Me and Others, Feelings
- Senior Infants – Developing Self-Esteem, Belonging, Feelings
- First Class – I am Unique, Feelings, Places Where I Belong
- Second Class – Influence of Friends, Bullying, Learning to Trust, Co-operate, Say No, About my Rights.
- Third Class –   Unit 1 -Setting the Scene – Classroom Rules, Listening etc
                    Unit 2 -Valuing Self and Others – Everyone is Unique
                    Unit 3 -Feelings and Friendships – Our Actions Affect the Feelings of Others

- <u>Fourth Class</u> – Unit 4 -Making Decisions
  Unit 5 -My Friends and Other People
- <u>Fifth Class</u> – Unit 1 -Self Identity
  Unit 4 -Feeling and Emotions
  Unit 6 -Making Decisions
  Unit 7 -Myself and Others
  Unit 8 -My Friends, Other People
  Unit 9 -Relating to Others – Listening, Communication

- <u>Sixth Class</u> – Unit 8 – My Friends & Other People
  Unit 9 – Relating to Others – Listening, Communicating, Name-calling, Conflict, Responses to Conflict.

Stay Safe Programme

The following areas are dealt with in all classes over an 8 to 10 week period (Term 1 of every 2nd year):
- Feeling Safe and Unsafe
- Bullying/Cyber Bullying
- Touches
- Secrets and Telling
- Strangers

Through this programme of positive action the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. It emphasises that bullying is unacceptable while also helping pupils to adopt strategies on how best to deal with bullying if it should occur.

RSE Programme

(Term 2, Annually)
- <u>Junior Infants:</u>   I can be Safe, We have Feelings, Making Choices, We are Friends
- <u>Senior Infants:</u>   Making Decisions, Others have Feelings too, These are my Friends.
- <u>First Class:</u>   Decisions and their Consequences, Showing our Feelings.
- <u>Second Class:</u>   Other People are Special, Personal Decisions. Being Friends.
- <u>Third Class:</u>   Expressing Feelings, Keeping Safe, Sometimes Friends Fight.
- <u>Fourth Class:</u>   Bullying Behaviour, Reasons for Rules, Myself and Others
- <u>Fifth Class:</u>   Making Healthy Choices, The Person I am, Different Kinds of Friends, Feelings and Emotions.
- <u>Sixth Class:</u>   Choices and Decision Making, Growing and Changing, Feelings and Emotions, Relationships.

Weaving Wellbeing

- <u>Junior Infants:</u>   All feelings are okay. I'm ready for my big feelings. It's good to be me.
- <u>Senior Infants:</u>   I can name my feelings. My friends have feelings. I can tame my feelings.
- <u>First Class:</u>   We can solve our problems
  We can express our feelings
  We are good enough
- <u>Second Class:</u>   Introduction to character strengths, identifying and using my character strengths.
- <u>Third Class:</u>   Positive emotions
  Feel good flow
  Random acts of kindness

- **Fourth Class:**   Planning Pen
                      Jigsaw of Perspective
                      N.A.B.B and Mindfulness
- **Fifth Class:**   Empathy and Respect
                      Try to forgive
                      No more snap judgements
- **Sixth Class:**   I can choose helpful self-talk
                      Focus on the positive
                      I am okay just as I am

Prevention Strategies for Cyber Bullying

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) ensures the following:

- Supervision is always in place when students are online.
- Websites are previewed and evaluated.
- Filters are installed through the school's Broadband scheme and these are regularly updated.
- Students' internet usage can be monitored by checking user files, temporary files and history files.
- Students do not have access to social networking sites such as Facebook and X (Twitter).

All members of the school community are fully aware of the sanctions that will be imposed for the misuse of school computers to cause hurt and distress to other members. Students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities online and offline as part of the implementation of the school's AUP. Students are taught that the Internet is not a private place and they should guard their private information online. The AUP policy promotes the positive use of technology, discusses etiquette and personal safety issues. Our school encourages a 'telling' atmosphere, including the reporting of cyber bullying.

The following advice is offered for children to help prevent cyber bullying

- **Don't reply to messages that harass or annoy you.**
- **Keep the message – you don't have to read it, but keep it.**
- **Tell someone you trust**
- **Block the Sender.**
- **Report Problems to the people who can do something about it i.e. Teacher or Parent.**

Prevention of Cyber Bullying at Home

Parents/Guardians must take full responsibility for their children's inappropriate use of the Internet or mobile phone outside school.

- Familiarise yourself with your child's internet and phone use. Encourage children to show you websites they like visiting and what they do there.
- A recommended App for monitoring internet activity and screentime on devices is "Family Link" App which provides tools that respect families individual choices with technology, helping them create healthy, positive digital habits.
- Encourage respect for others. Talk to your child about the harm that can be caused by cyber bullying and ensure that they understand what the consequences might be for everyone involved.

All incidents of cyber bullying that have their origins in school will be fully investigated, recorded and dealt with under the procedures laid down in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Incidents of cyber bullying that take place outside and affect a student in school will be brought to the attention of parents/guardians.

6. Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

Teachers are best advised to take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying. (Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 1993)

All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way, pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

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)/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour
- Bullying incidents should be reported to the class teacher and/or the supervising teacher for investigation.
- This reporting may be done by the pupil, parent/guardian or staff members.
- All reported incidents which are serious or are part of a pattern of behaviour will be noted, investigated and treated as circumstances require.
- All cases of bullying will be reported to the Principal.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying
Stage 1 – Informal Investigation and Action
- In investigating and dealing with incidents of alleged bullying, the relevant teacher (normally the class teacher) will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved. All teachers work collaboratively in dealing with incidents of alleged bullying. The relevant teacher may be assisted by the Principal and/or Deputy Principal during all stages of investigation.
- Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

Stage 1 – Informal Recording, 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.
- In any incident of bullying, the teacher should speak separately to the pupils involved in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then the group should be met as a group.
- Each member of the group should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from other members after interview by the teacher.

- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s); eg. in a Student Behaviour Reflection Form.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- At the end of Stage 1 the relevant teacher will complete an Incident Record Sheet outlining details of their investigation and whether or not bullying had occurred. (see Appendix 3 – Incident Record Sheet)

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation and Action
- 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;
- 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;
- It must also be made clear to all involved 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.
- Discipline sanctions used will be in line with the school code of behaviour, including the possibility of suspension/expulsion.
- 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;
- All interviews should be conducted outside of the classroom to ensure the privacy of all involved and with sensitivity and due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
- Group meetings and/or individual meetings may be held.
- 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).

Stage 2 – Formal Recording
- The relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve and to restore as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved (see Appendix 4) These records will be kept in the office (Anti-Bullying File)

Stage 3 – Formal Investigation (After 20 days)
- In cases, where the relevant teacher considers that bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within **20 school days** after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at appendix 4.
- 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 is practicable;
  - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far is practicable;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Stage 3 – Formal Recording
- The relevant teacher must use the recording template at appendix 4 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred; and
  - 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.
- When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in the pupils classroom file and by the Principal in the Anti-Bullying file in the office.
- Data gathered from these reports must be regularly (at least once a year) collated and analysed with a view to monitoring bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of the analysis must be retained and made available to BOM.
- These records will be kept until all the children involved reach the age of 21.

- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Parental Complaints Procedure.
- In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) should be sought.
- In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan."
- For cases of adult bullying the procedures as outlined in the INTO / Management Bodies publication "Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations" should be followed.

7. Supports for Pupils Affected by Bullying

- A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied must be put in place. Such pupils may need opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. The support that is required will depend upon the circumstances of the case. Teachers emotionally support victims, reassuring them that it was right to report the incident. They will be advised on how to prevent re-occurrence. Class lessons will be taught, mainly in SPHE dealing with respect, self-esteem and the issues of bullying.

- A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour must also be part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will need support from their teacher to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Teachers must ensure the bully recognises the harm caused and does not repeat the behaviour. They must be helped to recognise the consequences of their actions and facilitating change in their attitude and behaviour. Class lessons will be taught, mainly in SPHE, dealing with respect, self-esteem and the issues of bullying.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment

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

10. Evaluation of Policy

The level and type of bullying behaviour, if any, that may be happening in the school is assessed regularly and action taken as a result of these findings. Some of the more practical indicators of the success of the policy will be positive feedback from staff, parents/guardians and pupils and observation of behaviour both within the school and out in the yard.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on school website and provided to parents, B.O.M members and Parent Teacher Association Members. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. The reviewed policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and notification that the review is completed will be provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on ___27.02.2024___ [date].

Signed: ___P.J.Herrington___   Date: ___27th Feb 24___

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: ___Alma Quinn___   Date: ___27.02.2024___

(Principal)

Date of next review: ___Feb/March 2025___