

Bohola National School

19914f

Anti Bullying Policy



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Anti-Bullying 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 Bohola 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 (See Appendix 1) 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; involves collaboration among and between staff & pupils and promotes respectful relationships across the school community; encourages the work of the student council in this area
- Effective leadership
- A school-wide approach
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils and explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies) and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Definition of Bullying:

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools **bullying is defined** as follows:

'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:

Pupil Behaviour:

Physical Aggression: This includes pushing, shoving and punching, kicking, poking and tripping people up. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While children commonly engage in 'mess fights' they can often be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Damage to Property:

Personal property can be the focus of attention for the bully; this may result in damage to clothing, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or 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 may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out) in the event of the victim not promptly "paying up". Victims' lunches may be taken. Victims may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to the bully. Sometimes this tactic is used with the sole purpose of incriminating the victim.

Intimidation:

Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it is based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting to victims can be the so-called 'look' - a facial expression that conveys aggression and/or dislike

Abusive Telephone Calls: The abusive anonymous telephone call is a form of verbal intimidation or bullying. The anonymous phone call is very prevalent where teachers are the victims of bullying.

Isolation: This form of bullying behaviour, a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all, of the class group. The person engaged in bullying behaviour usually initiates this practice. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the victim on blackboards or in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the victim or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard.

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; most name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g. 'big ears', size, clothes worn, colour or ethnic origin. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name-calling. This tends to operate at two extremes: first, there are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be slow or weak, academically. These pupils are often referred to as 'dummies', 'dopes' or 'donkeys'. At the other extreme are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are labelled 'swots', 'brain-boxes', 'licks' 'teachers' pets' etc.

Slagging:

This behaviour usually refers to the good-natured banter, which goes on as part of the normal social interchange between people. However, when this slagging extends to very personal remarks aimed again and again at the one individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or involves references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family, particularly if couched in sexual innuendo, then it assumes the form of bullying. It may also take the form of suggestive remarks about a pupil's sexual orientation.

Cyberbullying -through social media platforms or any online offensive behaviour directed at another person

Teacher Behaviour

A teacher may, unwittingly or otherwise, engage in or reinforce bullying behaviour in a number of ways:

- Using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language when addressing pupils, making negative comments about a pupil's appearance or background. • Humiliating, directly or indirectly, a pupil who is particularly academically weak or outstanding, or vulnerable in other ways.
- Using threatening or intimidating gestures, or any form of degrading physical contact.

Effects of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a

consequent lowering of their self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Bullying may occasionally result in suicide. It is, therefore, important to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention is desirable.

Indications of Bullying Behaviour, Signs and Symptoms:

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches)
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, those signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

Isolated or once-off incidents do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of 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 and appears as Appendix 1 of this document.

Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour

The Victim:

Any pupil, through no fault of his or her own may be bullied. It is common in the course of normal play for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour. As pupils are particularly quick to notice differences in others, pupils who are perceived as different are those more prone to encounter such behaviour. However, the pupils who are most at risk of becoming victims are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour is directly related to the pupil's continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression. It is of note that some pupils can unwittingly behave in a very provocative manner that attracts bullying behaviour.

The Bully:

It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour. Pupils who bully tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self-discipline. They can lack any sense of remorse; often they convince themselves that the victim deserves the treatment meted out. Pupils who bully can also be attention seeking; often they set out to impress bystanders and enjoy the reaction their behaviour provokes. They tend to lack the ability to empathise. They are unaware or indifferent to the victim's feelings. Others seem to enjoy inflicting pain. It is of note that many bullies suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem. It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying are also bullied. They tend to be easily provoked and frequently provoke others.

The Bystander:

Most students in a classroom or school do not bully others regularly and are not victimised by bullies. Many 'bystanders remain neutral or try to support the victim

when they see bullying occurring but unfortunately, some students who observe bullying are much more likely to encourage or assist the bully than to attempt to help the victim. With appropriate instruction and guidance, however, bystanders can be empowered to take an active role in preventing bullying from occurring and to report bullying to adults when it does take place

Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying

'At the centre of a whole school response to bullying is the creation of a positive school climate which focuses on respect for the individual...' *Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 1993* Equip the children with positive skills'

This school fosters a positive school ethos among pupils, staff and parents. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying. •

Through a programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of happiness, friendship, openness, mutual respect and tolerance. This will be evident throughout the school.

Optional programmes:

- Fun Friends and Friends for Life Programme:
Positive self-esteem and emotional resilience is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences / achievements and by providing opportunities for success.
- Mind Up Programme, this programme is used throughout the school in promotion of emotional regulation and emotional resilience.
- Incredible Years Programme, children experience continuous consistent positive reinforcement through proactive teaching methodologies and classroom management throughout the whole school. There is a whole school awareness and adherence to "The Golden Rules", through strong establishment, explanation, reinforcement and reiteration.
- Whole school response; Teachers will encourage and use the 4 Rs system: REACT, REFUSE, RECORD, REPORT.

- Restorative Practice (RP) Staff mentors / practitioners have completed training in the delivery of RP techniques. Teachers are upskilling and modelling these techniques throughout the school in classroom and yard settings.
- 'Playworks Programme' in the school yard, provides very clear yard strategies, constant and consistent monitoring and supervision provide a safe and inclusive environment for all children at yard time.
- Supervision and in-class wet day activities are in place in all classrooms to ensure children are occupied and that a positive atmosphere exists at break times.
- Buddy Systems and Friendship areas are regularly used throughout the school
- Friendship Week, Anti Bullying Awareness Month
- Health Promotion and Wellbeing: Staff, pupil and parent committees
- School surveys -anonymous surveys where children can share their observations / concerns / suggestions
- Pastoral Care Team
- Educational Supports Provide one to one / small group support to children with SEN to ensure they understand and achieve the learning outcomes intended.
- Classroom Strategies: Peer mentoring, role play, discussing bullying regularly, scenario cards, worry boxes, activities, social stories, Peace corners, sensory boxes. Mindfulness and Brain Breaks as a practice in classrooms, teaching skills of empathy and awareness of others.
- According to the NCCA Guidelines, we aim to provide additional support to children with general learning difficulties to ensure all children can be better enabled to achieve the learning outcomes of the SPHE curriculum / Anti - Bullying lessons. (www.sess.ie/resources/curricular-material)
- Webwise Primary Programme is used in order to assist and support teachers when teaching about safe and responsible uses of the internet. www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources/
- Internet/Cyber Safety workshops for children and or parents

Role of Staff

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of misbehaviour. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour rather than control. Positive behaviour is always recognised, affirmed and sought.
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
- The principal is informed of any instance of bullying.
- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, at school assemblies and on any informal occasions when the opportunity arises.
- Pupils are taught skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying in conjunction with our new Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes throughout the school.

Supports for Staff

The Board of Management, through the Principal, must ensure that members of school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's Anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required.

Each Staff member is furnished with an updated policy after each review, so that they understand their role as outlined therein.

Support for staff should be appropriate to the individual's role and should enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases.

The Board refers staff to the school's Dignity in the Workplace Policy, which deals with procedures for staff who experience bullying.

The Board of Management must also make appropriate arrangements to ensure that temporary and substitute staff have sufficient awareness of the school's Code of Behaviour and its Anti-bullying policy.

Substitute and new staff are provided with a Substitute/Welcome Folders which includes a copy of this policy.

Advice for Pupils: (SAY NO, GET AWAY, TELL, Stay Safe Code)

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive - shout NO. Get away: Walk away confidently. Tell: Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse- So don't fight back. REPORT to a teacher or parent(s)/guardians instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

All staff will promote through posters in each class and around the school the Stay Safe Code: SAY NO, GET AWAY AND TELL along with promoting some Safety Tips in dealing with bullying situations.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- **TAKE ACTION** - Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully. (NB...children should be made aware of these points on a regular basis)

Advice for Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.

- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Policy concerning Bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- Bohola National School does not welcome bullies.

Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

- The class teacher(s) initially
- The principal thereafter if necessary

Education and Prevention Strategies:

The following **education and prevention strategies**, at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by the school:

- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth
- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online
- Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner
- There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.

The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including

their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour.

- The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects
- Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. GAA and soccer coaching is offered to some classes from outside agencies and teachers are also involved in coaching the school's soccer and gaelic teams.

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:

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). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- (i) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved
- (ii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). 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
- (iii) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher
- (iv) Parents 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

(v) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset

(vi) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents

(vii) Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved

(ix) 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

(x) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) 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 nonaggressive manner

(xi) 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

(xii) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher

(xii) Where the relevant teacher(s) has/have 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

(xiii) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

(xiv) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions

being taken. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils

(xvi) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school;

(xvii) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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

(xviii) An additional follow-up meeting with parents of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily

(xx) 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 complaints procedures

(xxi) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

RECORDING:

Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the *template for recording bullying behaviour* (Appendix 3).

All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

(i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s), the relevant teacher(s) will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same

(ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher(s) 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

(iii) The relevant teacher(s) must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour which is available on the server

Sanctions:

The use of sanctions is an important element in the school code. They are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns. The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Bullying:

Bullying is a serious misdemeanour and the sanctions applied are the same as those listed below for serious misdemeanours.

- Apology to the victim if appropriate.
- A record is kept on files of pupils involved. Pupil/s write an account of the incident/s that lead to the Bullying behaviour and what they have learned from this episode in their lives - parents must sign this.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others.
- Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the Principal/Deputy Principal informs parents.
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.
 - In certain situations, where appropriate, the class teacher, in consultation with the principal may deal with a particular situation using his or her discretion.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:

- Interrupting class work/arriving late for school/running in school building/not listening and speaking out of turn/leaving seat without permission at break or lunch time/placing unfinished food in bins/leaving litter around school/not wearing correct uniform/being discourteous or unmannerly/not completing homework without good reason/ Refusing to wear the school uniform in a continuous basis.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with Minor Misdemeanours

- The class teacher will normally deal with classroom misdemeanours. • Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Time out from friends and others (to reflect on the misbehaviour).
- Loss of privileges such as 'Golden Time', Game time, extra recreation time etc. • Noting incidence of yard misbehaviour in yard book. • Note in homework journal or other to parents.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with REGULAR occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept of regular instances of misdemeanour.
- Following three instances of misdemeanour the pupil receives supervised detention on Friday during lunchtime.
- Class teacher communicates with parents sooner rather than later.
- Principal/Deputy Principal meets parent(s)/guardians concerning behaviour.

Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:

Constantly disruptive in class/telling lies/stealing/damaging or interfering with another person's property/bullying/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/using or writing unacceptable language/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger/deliberately leaving taps on/misuse of fire equipment/ bringing in mobile phones without permission

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept of all serious misdemeanours.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others.

- Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility.
- Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian.
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:

Deliberately vandalizing school property/aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil.

Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or matches to school.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Gross Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept in the Incident Book
- Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian.
- Suspension or expulsion may be considered.

Suspension - Procedures

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.

If the parents (and the pupil) do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period.

Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the health and safety of pupils and

teachers, the Board has deferred responsibility to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Longer suspensions will require Board of Management approval. This approval may be obtained at a regular meeting of the Board or at an emergency meeting at which the Chairperson and Principal have outlined for the Board the reasons why they feel it is necessary to impose a further suspension.

In line with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Board when any pupil's period of suspension equals or exceeds six school days.

When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be requested to remove the student from the school.

The Principal will meet with the parents/guardian to outline the decision to implement the suspension and will present the parents/guardian with a written statement of the terms, duration and date of the termination of the suspension.

Reinstatement

Following, or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s (and pupil) must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils.

The Principal in consultation with the parents, the class teacher and the pupil (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil, if required, and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be readmitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and the Principal.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil in an extreme case where repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour interfere with the educational opportunities of fellow students or where there is a threat to the health and safety of either students or staff.

Where expulsion is considered the school authorities will have tried a range of other interventions and will have formed the opinion that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour.

This sanction would be imposed under the terms of the Education Welfare Act (2000). Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, 'A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an educational welfare officer' (Section 24(4).)

It is the right of a Board of Management to take '...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.' (Section 24(5)) Appeals Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

The Principal will advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

A copy of the circular (22/02) outlining the appeals procedure as well as an application form will be sent to the parents by post. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student.

The school Principal will prepare a response if and when the Dept. of Education and Skills are investigating an appeal.

SUCCESS CRITERIA: (by which the policy will be judged) •

Atmosphere of discipline within the school.

- Children are aware of school rules.
- Staff apply school rules.
- Growth in self discipline.
- Co-operation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code.

- Comments or compliments on behaviour.
- Children working to the best of their ability.
- Class working to the best of their ability.
- Improvements in behaviour.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. Therefore, various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals so that appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families if needed.

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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 19th October,2023.

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

Signed: Teresa Mulligan (Principal)

Signed: Fr Stephen O Mahony (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 19th October, 2023

Date of next review: October 2024

APPENDIX 1: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

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

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly 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 and/or the Parents' 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
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying 'hot spots' and 'hot times' for bullying in the school
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision
 - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils

APPENDIX 2: Types of bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

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, email, 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) that 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 who, 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 locker or 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 may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour

Appendix 3: Template for recording bullying behaviour

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 -tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents -tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

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

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour - tick relevant box(es)

Physical aggression		Cyber-bullying	
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Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip	
Name calling			
Other (specify)			

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____

Date _____
(Relevant Teacher 1)

Signed _____

Date _____
(Relevant Teacher 2)

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____