

ST PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

March 2014

1. Full Compliance

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St Patrick's National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and PostPrimary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. Key Principles of Best Practice

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

- A positive school culture and climate which:
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership

- A school-wide approach to creating an ethos of respect (Refer Appendix 1)
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and of its impact
- Section 5 and Appendix 1 refer to the implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that:
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils;
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber bullying and identitybased 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. The Definition of Bullying

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying, extortion, isolation, and persistent name calling,
- 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.
- Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons. Cyber bullying includes the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone. It may take the form of general insults or impersonation, defamation or prejudicebased bullying. **Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.**

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying. This and other negative behaviours are dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Refer Appendix 2 for **Examples of Bullying Behaviours**

4. The **Relevant Teachers** for investigating and dealing with bullying in this school are:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal,
- All class teachers. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying if circumstances warrant it.

5. **Our Education and Prevention Strategies**

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that are in current use in the school are as follows:

- Circle Time
- Drama/ Role Play
- Specific intervention in classes where we know bullying has occurred
- Parent Talks
- Individualised intervention programmes for vulnerable children such as 'The Incredible Five Point Scale'
- Talks by visiting Gardaí.

The following programmes are used by teachers in the school.

- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Alive O Programme
- New National Anti-Bullying Website' when goes live.

6. Our Procedures for investigating and dealing with Bullying

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

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/ guardian(s) may report concerns regarding bullying to any teacher in the school. However, it is best to discuss such concerns with the class teacher.
- All reports of bullying are investigated.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff report any bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation to assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Incidents are investigated and interviews conducted with sensitivity (usually outside the classroom and /or in a discreet area within the classroom)
- The relevant teacher's objective is to seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why with a view to resolving the situation.
- Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information, and will be expected to assist

the investigation. Children should understand there are no innocent bystanders if they remain passive where bullying is concerned—all bystanders *must* report bullying.

- If a group is involved, it is normal practice to interview individually at first, after which all those involved may be met as a group where each member is asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incidents.

Follow up and Recording

- If the relevant teacher determines that bullying behaviour has occurred, Behaviour Reflection Cards are used as a means of restorative practice and communication with home.
- The relevant teacher will inform the principal/deputy principal.
- The child/ children who have bullied will be asked to reflect on his/her/ their behaviour and its consequences for himself/herself/ themselves and for the person(s) who is/are the victim(s). (Restorative Practice)
- Actions taken will be recorded on the school's database system (Aladdinschools.com) in case of recurrence of the behaviour.
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;

- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

Where the situation has not been resolved within 20 school days and/or where cyber bullying has occurred and/or where there has been serious misconduct these procedures are followed:

- The relevant teacher will use the DES recording template to record the unresolved bullying behaviour.
- When the recording template is used, it will be retained on 'Aladdin School Administration System.' The principal/ deputy principal and The Board of Management will be informed.
- The situation will continue to be monitored to ensure that the problem has been resolved.
- The Code of Behaviour is invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal/deputy principal.
- In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this matter is private to the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.

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

7. The School's Programme of Support

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

- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Alive O Programme
- Drama (Role Play)
- Specific intervention in classes where we know bullying has occurred
- Parent Talks
- Individualised intervention programmes for vulnerable children such as 'The Incredible Five Point Scale'
- Circle Time.
- Restorative Practice.
- Our support teachers facilitate one-to-one and/ or small group self-esteem building activities.
- Curricular and extracurricular activities to develop positive self-worth.
- Developing pupil's awareness of the types of bullying .
- Particular account is taken of the important and unique role pupils with Special Educational Needs have to play in our school.

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.

10. 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.

11. Date This Policy Was Adopted

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:

Date: _____

12. Availability of This Policy

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.

13. Review of This Policy

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: _____

Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____

Date:

Appendix 1

School-Wide Approach to developing an ethos of respect and belonging

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Continuous professional development
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Lunchtime Pals 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. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to read it as part of the school's Code of Behaviour each year before re-registration. The policies are on the school website.
- 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.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Classroom post box
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- The school's Acceptable Use Policy includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- Supports currently available to schools - GLEN www.glen.ie, BeLonGTo www.belongto.org
- The full implementation of the SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Garda visits
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation

and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying supported by evidence based programmes,
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts 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 children 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 school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Seek support from 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 the 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/schoolyard/outdoor supervision
- Provide opportunity for the voice of the child to be heard.

Links to other policies

Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.

Appendix 2

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 rumors, 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 call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages
- Abusive email
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube 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).

<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
<p>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

