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Anti- Bullying Policy

Rationale

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. Finbarr's Boys 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. This policy was devised in November 2013 with the consultation of the teachers, parents and B.O.M.

Principles

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:

1.A positive school culture and climate which-

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

2.Effective leadership;

The Principal and other leaders in the school, including all teachers, will strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable. Practical steps are taken to challenge and respond to bullying. The Principal will involve both staff and pupils in developing and implementing a vision of the school where diversity is accepted and celebrated.

3. A school-wide approach;
A positive school-wide attitude and involvement is implemented in countering bullying behaviour in schools. In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils 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. 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.

4.A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;

The school will publish the anti bullying policy on the school website to ensure that all relevant members of the school community have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour. The manner in which a school will communicate this shared understanding amongst its pupils will depend on factors such as the age and maturity of the pupils concerned.

5.Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
- o   build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- o   explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

6.Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
The BOM will ensure there is adequate playground supervision and staff will maintain vigilance in monitoring for bullying incidents.

Supports for staff;

Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and BoM and it will be discussed at staff meetings to monitor effectiveness of the policy

Definition

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*

Bullying is defined as follows*:*

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

> The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:
>
> - deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
> - cyber-bullying and
> - identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying basedon a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

> Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

> However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

> Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

Class/SEN teachers/HSCL
Principal/Deputy Principal

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
• Invasion of personal space
• A combination of any of the types listed
• Exclusion

Cyber
• (It should be noted that Facebook is for over 13s only)
• 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 text messages
• Abusive email
• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Tik tock/Twitter/YouTube or on gaming 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)
• Gender and sexual orientation

- 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 travelling community
- discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or travelling 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 and exclusion
- Ignoring
- Excluding from the group
- Taking someone's friends away
- 'Bitching'
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough that the victim can hear
- use of terminology such as 'nerd' 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

Prevention Strategies

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

- Staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management (BoM) will be made aware of issues surrounding all forms of bullying through the use of appropriate awareness-raising exercises
- B.O.M. will ensure that there is adequate playground supervision.
- Every effort will be made to ensure there is a warm , welcoming environment in the school where every child feels safe and respected. This will include improving the school environment physically eg buddy benches in yard, co-operative games provision, signs and displays promoting respect and inclusivity
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community
- Staff offer clear guidance about what steps to take if being bullied or witness bullying and ensure boys understand how school deals with bullying
- A restorative practice approach will be employed when dealing with conflict scenarios.
- School staff will encourage students to help them identify bullying "hotspots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
- Staff will consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school- this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of children with a disability.
- Staff will explicitly teach what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like through circle time/ role play/ drama/ SPHE programmes Stay Safe and Walk Tall.
- The principal will have one or more school assembly focused on the issue of bullying
- Fun Friends and Friends for life programmes will be taught to 1st/2nd and 5th/6th on a rolling basis.
- Life Skills programme will be taught in conjunction with SCP staff to 4th, 5th, 6th classes on a rolling basis.
- Display key respect messages around school and discuss in class and at assembly. Children will be involved in making posters promoting positive anti-bullying messages through their art lessons such as "Give racism the red card" and Say no to bullies and other similar slogans.
- Emphasis will be put on catching children being good and giving positive feedback when respectful behaviour and language is observed.
- The school will actively promote the right of all to be safe and secure in school through class and assembly talks.
- Promote a telling culture where emphasis is put on telling an adult if bullying is occurring to you or others and promoting this as a positive thing to do rather than "telling" or "ratting".
- The school will facilitate a workshop on cyber bullying for 5th and 6th classes when possible through the local community Gardaí.
- Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and planning sessions will focus on developments in anti- bullying strategies and policy development
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat all types of bullying including cyber bullying through HSCL course provision or access to external agencies.
- Parents are expected to sign acceptance of Acceptable Use of ICT on enrolment form and to discuss its meaning with their children
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of bullying to the school

- All reports of bullying will be investigated, recorded, stored in the Principal's office and monitored regularly
- The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content re cyber bullying.
- This policy will be reviewed annually. B.O.M., pupils, parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and any related school procedure

Procedure for Investigation

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows

(i)   The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);

(ii)   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;

(iii)   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. 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;

(iv)   Non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

(v)   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;

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

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

(viii) Incidents are generally 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 should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner; The school will use the Restorative Justice questioning format with a no blame approach.

(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 account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements; this will be done in a Restorative Justice session around a table and a no blame approach will be employed.

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

(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 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 (by reference to the school policy). 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;

(xv)   Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

(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 should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic

effect;

(xviii) 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, it must recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template attached as an appendix to this policy.

(xix) 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; and
>
> Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

(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 of Incidents

Bullying incidents should be recorded in a factual and objective manner using the template at Appendix A. Records must be maintained in line with GDPR regulations. Records will adhere to the following parameters.

- While all reports of bullying must be investigated, the relevant person will use their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept, the actions to be taken and any discussion with those involved in the investigation.
- If it is established by the teacher that bullying has occurred then appropriate written records must be taken to assist in resolving and restoring the relationships in as far as it is practicable. The use of Restorative Practice questions will be used as the basis for investigation.
- The relevant teacher must use recording template attached (Appendix A) and inform Principal.

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

- Support from the class teacher by giving the child opportunity to discuss privately the effect of the bullying if the child is upset or feeling vulnerable
- Class teacher/Principal monitors the boys involved and liaises with parents re progress in handling the effects of the bullying
- Support through discussion with SET and school based psychologist/therapists employed through SCP if deemed helpful
- Referral to Connaught St. counseling services /CAMHS if deemed necessary in severe cases
- School may facilitate opportunities for victims and bullies to identify solutions to specific bullying incidents that they are directly involved in. They may use restorative methods, including mediation, to support victims and perpetrators of bullying to understand one another and resolve their differences.
- Provide opportunities to explore diversity and different aspects of identity and the challenges that these groups may face through SPHE lessons.

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.

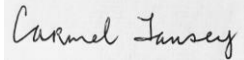### Prevention of Harassment

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

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on September   2017

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 annually. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) 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

Carmel Tansey

_____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _Maeve Daly_

(Principal)

Date:_____

Reviewed September 2022

Appendix A   Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1 .Name of pupil being bullied and Class group

2.Name(s) and class(es) of pupils involved in bullying behaviour

Name	Class

3. Source of bullying concern   4.Location

Pupil concerned	Playground
Other pupil	Classroom
Parent	Corridor
Teacher	Toilets
Other	Other

5. Name of Person who reported the Bullying

6. Type of Bullying behaviour (please tick relevant box)

Physical aggression	Name-calling
Damage to Property	Malicious gossip
Intimidation	Isolation/exclusion
Cyber-bullying	Other

7. Where behaviour is identified as identity based bullying please indicate type of bullying

Homo-phobic	Disability
Race/ethnicity	SEN
Other	

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Outline actions taken

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10. Signed _____(relevant teacher)

   Date_____

11.Date Report submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal
_____

Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	Y
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Y
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Y
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Y
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Y
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Y
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Y
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Y
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Y
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	N
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	N
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	N
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	N
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	N
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	NA

Signed *Carmel Tansey*   Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *Naeve Daly*

Signed _____   Principal   Date 13.9.2022
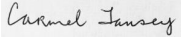
Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: Parents and Guardians

The Board of Management of St. Finbarr's BNS wishes to inform you that:

o   The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 13.9.2022

o   This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

Signed *Carmel Tansey*   Date 13.9.22
Chairperson, Board of Management
Signed *Maeve Daly*   Date 13.9.22
Principal