

**St Fergal's
National School
Anti-Bullying
Policy**



February 2022

1. Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines for schools issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) (Now subsumed into The Child and Family Agency), the Board of Management of St Fergal's Primary 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 by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in September 2013.

2. Key Principles of Best Practice

The Board of Management recognizes 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
 - (See appendix 1 for practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate)
- 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

3. Definition of Bullying

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:

1. deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
2. cyber-bullying
3. 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.

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.

4. Where can Bullying happen?

Bullying can take place:

- During school time (including break times)
- On the way to and from school
- Via mobile phone call, text, e-mail or social media
- School tours/trips
- Extra-curricular activities

Why do children bully?

Children can engage in bullying behaviour for many reasons:

- They may feel insecure and inadequate
- They may be bullied by parents or older siblings or others
- They may find it difficult to fit in with others
- They may feel they must succeed at all cost
- They may be frequently humiliated by others and in turn do this to others
- Inappropriate behaviour may go totally unchallenged at home
- They may have been, or continue to be, physically, sexually, psychologically or emotionally abused themselves.

5. Types of bullying

General Behaviours Which Apply To All Types Of Bullying

- Intimidation
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling/Taunting/Attempting to embarrass or humiliate
- Slagging
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Isolation/Exclusion and other Relational Bullying
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- The "look"
- Invasion of personal space
- Bullying of school personnel
- A combination of any of the types listed

Cyber Bullying

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.

Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.

While this policy addresses issues related to cyber bullying of students (i.e. situations in which one or more students are the victim[s] of bullying), the policy also applies to teaching and other school staff.

Key Measures Regarding Cyber Bullying

- Advice will be communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying (as perpetrator or as victim) and to advise them on reporting any incidents.
- Students will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at the school.
- Teachers will dedicate a standalone lesson to deal with the issue of cyber bullying.
- Students and staff are expected to comply with the school's policy on the use of computers in the School. (Acceptable Use Policy)
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.
- Parents and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks, including Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat.

St. Fergal's endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the Internet in the Computer Room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present

Types of Cyber Bullying

- **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 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/blog comments** 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
- Talking disrespectfully behind someone's back
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- Using facial expressions to insult, make fun of or look down on someone
- Use or 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

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

6. **Signs of Bullying:**

- Unexplained bruising, cuts or damaged clothes
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – refusal to say what is wrong
- Unexplained mood swings or behaviour
 - Becoming withdrawn
 - Becoming uncharacteristically clingy
 - Attention seeking behaviour
 - Aggressive behaviour
- Out of character behaviour in class
- Deterioration in educational attainments
- Loss of concentration
- Loss of interest in school
- Erratic attendance
- Reluctance to attend school
- Absence from school without parental permission
- Lingering behind in school after classes are over
- Increased requests for pocket money or stealing money
- Loss of or damage to personal possessions or equipment
- Artwork expressing inner turmoil

7. **Relevant School Personnel**

While all staff members (both ancillary and teaching) have a duty of care towards pupils we must acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the school.

Key personnel involved include;

- Class teacher(s) of all pupils involved.
- Supervising teacher(s) where relevant.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal
- Support teachers may be involved if deemed appropriate and/ necessary
- SNAs

8. Roles And Responsibilities

In the school's daily routine and life, the ways in which people interact with each other significantly affect each person's sense of self-worth, belonging and wellbeing. The fostering of high-quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents and ancillary staff is a responsibility shared by everyone. All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

Responsibilities of Board of Management

The board of management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The board is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The board will ensure that the proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately if they arise.

Responsibilities of School Staff

- To acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the school.
- To draw upon Restorative Justice Practices, taking into account the age of the pupils involved. The Board of Management will provide training for staff and pupils in the principles and procedures of a Restorative Justice System.
- To implement prevention and intervention strategies, which build and maintain a safe learning environment for the whole school community.
- To empower students to deal with conflict in constructive ways using Restorative Justice Practices.
- To take a pro-active stance regarding bullying by conducting class surveys (anonymous) asking pupils if they have been bullied; if they have seen anyone being bullied; if so, who, when, what was done, where and by whom?
- To take all reports of bullying seriously and to inform the Principal that an allegation of bullying is being investigated.
- To document any serious bullying incidents using the "Bullying Incident Report Form", which is sent to the Principal.

Responsibilities of Pupils

- To show consideration respect and support towards others.
- To be able to identify bullying behaviour.
- To not bully others.
- To tell if they are being bullied, or if they see someone else being bullied.
- To engage in responsible reporting when witnessing or experiencing bullying behaviour.
- To feel empathy for targeted members of the school community and, as a result, take safe and sensible action as a bystander.

Responsibilities of Parents

- To support the school in the implementation of the policy.
- To watch out for signs that their child may be bullied.

- To speak to their class teacher if their child is being bullied or they suspect that this is happening.
- To instruct their children to tell if they are bullied or if they have seen other students being bullied.
- To notify the school if they think that their child is displaying bullying behaviour and to work with the school in addressing the problem.
- To never directly approach a student or the parent of a student at the school to intervene in behavioral issues.

9. Our Education and Prevention Strategies

A. **Creating a culture of "telling".**

- 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. Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying and if anyone witnesses bullying behaviour, it should be reported. 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.

REMEMBER: YOUR SILENCE IS THE BULLY'S GREATEST WEAPON

- Teachers should repeatedly reinforce the message that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour, they should not retaliate in any way, but they should tell an adult. Teachers will teach the children to ask 'can I speak to you in private? Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with.
- Teachers will ensure that class lessons will be provided to enable pupils "how to tell" (telling protocol)
 - and also that they can inform the school by the following means:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand a note to the teacher.
 - Have another pupil tell on their behalf.
 - Ask your parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell the school on your behalf.
 - Administer Bullying Questionnaire?

B. **Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by:**

- Displaying school's anti-bullying statement (*Bullying is wrong and is not tolerated in St. Fergal's Primary School. We are a telling school*) in school foyer and other prominent places around the school environment and going over aspects of bullying at school assemblies. (What is bullying? What is not bullying? What to do if you feel you are being bullied? What to do if you see somebody else being bullied?)
- Engaging in formal teaching within the class setting through SPHE and RE programmes.
- Creating an annual awareness month for school community about bullying. This will be in October each year and will involve discussion, lessons, anti-bullying games, poster/slogan competitions, bullying questionnaires for classes 3rd-6th.
- To focus on the topic of bullying on at least one school assembly (October) of each school year as per the recommendations from *Dealing with Bullying in Schools* (Office of the Ombudsman for Children 2013).
- Teaching the children our 7 anti-bullying statements which will be known as our anti-bullying code (**see Appendix 4**). This code will be displayed throughout the school.
- ICT: The Website HTML Heroes Programme (3rd – 6th Classes) will be used to raise awareness of cyber-bullying and safety strategies for pupils when using IT.
- Senior Classes will have talks and discussions about Cyber-Bullying. (Gardaí, Outside Agencies)

C.

Other Strategies

- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum: Within this curricular area the theme of bullying is explicitly taught under the following theme areas:
 - (1) Definition
 - (2) Prevention
 - (3) Reporting
- The Walk Tall and Stay Safe programme emphasises the promotion of pupil self-esteem and will be taught each year.
- Hidden Curriculum/Incidental Learning: Situations involving conflict amongst pupils, which may arise in the classroom/playground etc. can be used as a teaching tool where appropriate.
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect and a positive school climate for all members of the school community.
- Religious Education: 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.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be 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 student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) at the start of year. Parents are informed that the policy is on the school's website or available in hard copy from the office.
- Positive reinforcement by teachers in classroom setting (praise, positive individual feedback, class dojo, Students of the week, good notes home, golden time, spot prizes, stars, stickers, sent to the principal etc.)
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by teachers and staff.
- Promotion of extra-curricular activities which encourage co-operation among pupils
- All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty and report incidences to the specific class teacher, as the class teacher will be more aware if a similar incident has occurred previously.
- Circle-time sessions, role-play, Socially Speaking programs and puppetry are methodologies which are used to discuss and explore issues of bullying.

10. School Procedures

The primary focus 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).

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher to ensure pupils gain confidence in 'telling'. It is made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales, but are behaving responsibly (Stay Safe Programme).

Reporting bullying behaviour

- If parent(s)/guardian(s) suspect that their child is being bullied, where possible, they are asked to make an appointment with the class teacher to discuss their concerns. This will allow the teacher to give them their full attention while discussing the matter.
- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Non-teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.

Investigation

Incidents of Bullying will be dealt with on a staged basis.

Stage 1

Informal Stage - pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- In determining if a bullying incident has taken place, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement and how best to resolve the situation
- In some instances the class teacher may ask the child/children involved in the alleged bullying incident to fill in an

Incident Report (Appendix 6a)
I Was Wrong (Appendix 6b)

- All staff must keep a written record of any significant incidents or repeated incidents witnessed by them.
- All incidents must be reported to the relevant class 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.
- Teachers endeavour to engage in interviews with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved may also be called upon to provide relevant information.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage - determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, it is important to gather all of the facts from both sides (what, where, when, who, why?). This will involve an interview with the 'alleged bully' which will be recorded on the 'template for recording bullying behaviour' (see appendix 2). Templates will be stored in the principal's office.
- All reports of bullying will be dealt with initially by the class teacher with the knowledge of the school principal.

Upon determination that bullying has occurred, following process should be followed in stage 1:

- Where other staff members are available to supervise the class(es) concerned, incidents are, where possible, investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- 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;
- Where necessary pupils may be asked to provide a written account/diary of the alleged incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, 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). If deemed appropriate, the school may invite parents/guardians for face-to-face meetings to provide them with an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school. It is explained to the alleged bully how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.

- The aim for the class 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.
- Teachers endeavour to support each member of a group through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher. This support may take the form of close monitoring by staff members involved (both in class and at play time). Other staff members are made aware of potentially vulnerable children following the investigation. This is communicated to the relevant staff.
- The teacher should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional or judgmental language.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regards to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way (see Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 6.8.9 page 30-31) for further suggestions.
- Where possible, an adult witness is present.
- The child/children and parents involved will be asked to sign "Pupil Behaviour Promise 1" (see Appendix 3a) which is filed in the principal's office.
- The code of behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal.
- If parents are still concerned that the bullying has not stopped, they may request further intervention/support from the class teacher and/or the principal to become more involved.

Stage 2

If this child breaks their 'Pupil Behaviour Promise 1' and re-offends (even if the incident involves a different student than the first incident) then the principal and if possible the class teacher will interview the child/children again.

The following are the steps that will be followed in stage 2

- The same interviewing process as described in stage 1 will be applied at this stage. The principal will conduct an interview with the 'alleged bully' which will be recorded on the 'Template for recording bullying behaviour' (see appendix 2). This Template will be stored in the principal's office.
- The principal can interview a child on their own. However, where possible, they will try to have another adult present.
- It is explained to the child that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise.
- Again attempts will be made to resolve the situation. Once more students will sign the "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 2**" (see appendix 3b). This promise will also need to be signed by their parents.
- Their parents will be called into the school to discuss the situation. At the discretion of the principal, the initial meeting with parents may take place with or without their child.
- As a consequence to their continued inappropriate behaviour, and if deemed prudent by the teacher or principal, the student may be excluded from specific class activities, outings, yard time, or others as per the school's code of behaviour.
- Parents will also be encouraged to implement some form of consequence at home.
- The code of behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal.

- The student and their parents will be informed that if another similar incident occurs, the bullying will be considered to be at stage three. Parents are informed that their child may be suspended for up to 3 days.
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigations and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

Stage 3

- If the child re-offends and breaks their promise for a second time, the principal will discuss this matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Following this, school-based sanctions, as set out in the school's code of behaviour, will be implemented. These sanctions may include suspension and/or expulsion from the school.

Incidents that are deemed by the principal to be of a very serious nature may skip the first stage and go directly to stage 3.

Child Protection

- In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance 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 (DLP) must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.
- Serious instances of bullying behaviour will be handled in accordance with the Children First and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child, but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services regarding further procedures to be adopted by the school.

Follow up

- The class teacher will arrange a follow up meeting with the pupil who has been bullied to ensure that the bullying has stopped
- is ready and agreeable, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date.
- 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
- It is 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. It therefore should not be a topic for discussion outside the school led process.
- In cases where the reporting teacher feels that the reported incident wasn't 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 2 and presented to the principal*** with an accompanying letter explaining the reason why they think it hasn't been adequately addressed.

- 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) will be informed that they write to the board of management, who will in turn investigate and respond to the parent(s).
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) 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.

11. The Schools Programme of Support for Working with Pupils Affected by Bullying

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

Students who are bullied:

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - Lessons in SPHE, Walk Tall and Stay safe as appropriate
 - Group work such as circle time
- Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to help parents find the appropriate supports available.
- Appropriate Strategies for restoring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parents/guardians.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties*- NEPS)
- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling.

Students involved in bullying behaviour:

- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling or to other services (e.g. Lucena Clinic).
- Empathy awareness needs to be developed and this could be done through SPHE lessons.
- Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties*- NEPS)

To the relevant class

If deemed necessary, it should be reinforced to students that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher

12. Principal report to the Board of Management

At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

1. The overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 2) since the previous report to the Board and
2. Confirmation that all cases referred to at (1) above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but will not identify or include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

13. **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.

14. **Links to Other Policies**

Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Record Keeping Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy and Attendance Policy.

15. **Children with Special Needs**

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.

16. **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.

17. **Ratification and Review by Board of Management**


This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 4.4.2022.

This policy has been made available to school personnel/members of the school community and published on the school website with hard copies available to parents in the school foyer. Copies of this policy will be made available to the DES and the school's Patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year or when necessary. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website or in school newsletters. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the DES.

Signed: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 4/4/22

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 04/04/22

Date of next review:

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 1

Restorative Questions

Questions for the child alleged to be involved in the bullying behaviour

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of then/since?
- Who could have been affected by what you did and how?
- What could you have done differently?
- What needs to happen now to make things right?

Questions for the child alleged to be the victim of the bullying behaviour

- What did you think when you realised what was happening?
- How did this make you feel?
- How did this impact on others?
- What was the hardest thing?
- What needs to happen to make things right?

Appendix 2 – sheet

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

Name:				Class:					
Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour									
Name(s)				Class(es)					
Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*									
Pupil concerned		Other pupil		Parent		Teacher		Other	
Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern									
Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *									
Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying							
Damage to Property		Intimidation							
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip							
Name Calling		Other (specify)							
Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category									
Homophobic		Disability/SEN related		Racist		Membership of Traveler Community		Other (specify)	
Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact									
Details of actions taken									
Signed: (Relevant Teacher)			Date:			Date informed principal:			

Appendix 2a

Form for investigating alleged bullying behaviour

1. Name(s) of pupil(s) subjected to the alleged bullying behaviour

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour Name

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

3. Date on which the allegation was made _____

How behaviour came to light		Where behaviour took place	
Pupil Concerned		Playground	
Other pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		School bus	
		Other	

4. Brief description of behaviour and its impact

5. Details of actions taken 8. Does the behaviour constitute bullying behaviour?

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____



Pupil Promise 1



I understand that I have
bullied another pupil and I
promise not to do it again

Pupil's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parents signature: _____ Date: _____





Pupil Promise 2



I understand that I have broken my first promise not to bully another pupil. Therefore, I promise for the second time not to bully another pupil in school. I also understand that if it happens again, I will be in serious trouble

Pupil's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parents signature: _____ Date: _____

Our Anti-Bullying Code



- 1. We at St. Fergal's love and appreciate that we're all different and equal**
- 2. We will treat each other with kindness and respect**
- 3. Try to make everyone feel that they belong**
- 4. Bullying can happen, anywhere and anytime**
- 5. We work together to stop bullying. We make a record of bullying events**
- 6. We keep our eyes and ears open for bullying and we take action to stop it**
- 7. In St. Fergal's we report any bullying behaviour to any adult**



Appendix 5

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

	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?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
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?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
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?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
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?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

I WAS WRONG!

"An apology is the superglue of life. It can repair just about anything."

What happened?

My reasons?

Why was it wrong?

My apology

My promise

Signatures

Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____ Date: _____