

St. Anthony's Boys' National School

Ballinlough, Cork

Anti-Bullying Policy

2024/2025



Anti-Bullying Policy

(As incorporated into the school's Code of Behaviour)

Introduction.

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. Anthony'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 (2013)* and Circular 45/2013.

- Every pupil in St. Anthony's B.N.S. has a right to enjoy his learning and leisure free from intimidation.
- Our school community will not tolerate any unkind remarks or actions.
- It should be made clear that children reporting incidents of bullying are acting responsibly.
- The potential power of the bystander to diminish the impact of the bullying behaviour will be discussed by all class teachers with their pupils. There are no innocent bystanders in bullying.

A. Rationale.

1. The policy is required to assist schools in devising school-based measures to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to increase awareness of bullying behaviour in the school community as a whole e.g. school management, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents as well as those from the local community who interface with the school.
2. Involving and encouraging all members of the school community in developing, formulating and reviewing this policy on bullying promotes partnership, ownership and implementation of a 'living policy', one which is actively implemented/promoted in the whole school community.
3. The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions of everyone in the school. The behaviour of the adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts.
4. The Department of Education and Skills requires all schools to have a written policy on bullying.

B. Links to School's Mission Statement

“St. Anthony's B.N.S. is a Catholic primary school, which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

While St. Anthony's B.N.S. is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions. We encourage the involvement of parents through parent-teacher meetings (both formal and informal) and through their involvement in the St. Anthony's B.N.S. Parents' Association.

We endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

We promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.”

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; which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment and which promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
2. Effective leadership.
3. A school-wide approach.
4. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
5. 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.
6. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
7. Supports for staff.
8. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)
9. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Ref: *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)* - Chapter 6, Key Principles of Best Practice.

C. Policy Aims.

The main aims of an anti-bullying policy are as follows:

1. To create a positive school culture and climate that is inclusive and welcoming of difference.
2. To create a school climate which is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss bullying behaviour.
3. To raise awareness amongst the entire school community (including school management, teachers, pupils, parents, volunteers etc.) that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
4. To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring through which all aspects of school activity are kept under observation.
5. To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour.
6. To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour.
7. To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
8. To work with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour.
9. To facilitate ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy.

We aspire to fulfil the above aims by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the St. Anthony's BNS school, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

D. Definition of Bullying.

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)*, 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.'

E. Types of Bullying.

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

- **Physical aggression**

- **Intimidation**
- **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying**
- **Cyber-bullying**
- **Name Calling**
- **Slagging**
- **Damage to property**
- **Extortion**
- **Identity-based bullying**

(Appendix 1)

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 this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in schools under equality legislation. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

F. 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.

G. Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour.

Schools need to recognise that any pupil can be a victim of, or perpetrator of, bullying behaviour.

The pupil who is bullied

Any pupil, through no fault of their 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 more likely to encounter such behaviour. The child who is bullying is often encouraged to persist once they see their actions are having the desired effect.

Pupils who are bullied often experience difficulties in speaking up about bullying. The difficulties include:

1. Fear of reprisals
2. Concerns about being perceived as a "tell-tale" for reporting bullying
3. Concerns about "getting into trouble" with the Principal or teacher for reporting bullying
4. Not having evidence to back up a bullying allegation
5. Not knowing how the matter will be dealt with by the school
6. Not feeling fully confident of being believed

More vulnerable pupils

While bullying can happen to any pupil, it is known that some may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying. Such vulnerable groups include pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, those from ethnic minority and migrant groups and other groupings as outlined in *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)*.

The pupil who engages in bullying behaviour

- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may display aggressive attitudes and may be combined with a low level of self-discipline. They may lack any sense of remorse convincing themselves that the other person deserves the treatment they are receiving.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may be attention seeking: setting out to impress bystanders and responding to the reaction their behaviour provokes. They may lack the ability to empathise. They may appear unaware or indifferent to the other person's feelings. It is of note that pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour may suffer from a lack of confidence and may have low self-esteem.
- However, it must also be recognised that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or may not recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others.
- It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may also have been bullied themselves.

H. 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 in 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.

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

I. Raising Awareness of the Prevention of Bullying- Education and Prevention Strategies

St. Anthony's Boys National School will promote a preventative approach to bullying by implementing the following:

- Developing a whole school Anti-Bullying Policy in collaboration with the whole school community of all staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management.
- On enrolment, parents of Junior Infants and new pupils will confirm acceptance of the schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour. Parents/guardians will be required to sign an undertaking which supports the policy and its acceptance.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour will be available on-line to all parents and others on the school website www.stanthonys.ie
- A hard copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour will be available to parents and others on request from the school office.

- All teachers will implement the school's Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in full.

Curricula and Initiatives

- R.S.E. Programme
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Talk Programme
- Mindful Matters (Junior & Senior Infants)
- Mo & Ko. 1st Class
- Weaving Well-being 2nd -6th
- WISE (Well-being in School Every-day)
- Piloted G.A.P. (Gratitude, Altruism and praise) 4th Class
- Seminars for Cyber-bullying for pupils, parents and staff
- Bullying Awareness Week
- Community Gardaí Support
- Circle Time
- Cineáltas: Be Kind. Action Plan on Bullying & Bí Cineáltas Procedures.
- Well-being in School's Policy Framework Guidelines

Relevant links to other policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Usage/Internet Safety Policy

The following anti-bullying initiatives will take place in the school annually:

- September Friendship Week- class based fun activities which promote co-operation, sharing, friendship between all the children. Circle time, class discussions on friendship e.g. making friends/maintaining friendships/resolving conflict, responsibilities towards one another.
- Bullying Awareness Week- the school will run an annual awareness week in January 2024, where various classes and events will be run to increase knowledge of what bullying is and what impact it can have. This will be covered throughout the curriculum especially in the areas of S.P.H.E., art, poetry, prose and drama. This will include UN International Day Against Violence & Bullying at School including Cyber-bullying.
- Each class will devise classroom contract at the beginning of each school year which will promote inclusion, acceptance of difference and respect for one another. This class contract will be displayed in the classroom.
- Anti-Bullying posters will be made in senior classes, these will be discussed and displayed throughout the school.
- Additional lessons which deal specifically with bullying will be undertaken in each class e.g. 'Prim-Ed Bullying Series' with an emphasis on openness and discussion in this area. (Areas covered will include – What is bullying? / Forms of bullying / Cyber-bullying / Why do people bully? / Bystander bullies / Silent witnesses / Effects of bullying / How does bullying make me feel? / What can we do? / Preventing bullying, etc.)
- The whole school community will be encouraged to become a '**reporting school**' whereby the whole school community is encouraged to report/speak out if they are being bullied or if they witness a bullying situation.
- When children inform a teacher of a 'bullying' situation which occurred outside of school time, the teacher will advise the child to inform his/her parents. The child will be encouraged to tell their parents to support them in resolving the situation. The teacher will also contact the parents of this child to inform them.

- A class contract will be signed by all the children in all classes (Junior Infants – Sixth Class) which states that the class is a ‘reporting class’. This contract will be displayed in each classroom.
- Each Child and Parent from 1st to 6th Class will sign in their Homework journal an agreement to abide by the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy and to support the school in implementing it. This is completed on the first week of the school term each year. (pg10 Homework journal).
- A ‘Children’s Advice Sheet’ (**Appendix 2**), which informs children and parents what to do in a bullying situation, will be circulated to all parents at the beginning of each school year.
- Discussion of the underlying principles of the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour will form part of the agenda of all staff meetings.
- Where the opportunity arises, guest speakers with an expertise in the area of bullying prevention, will be invited to address pupils, staff and parents.
- Where a bullying situation has occurred, a designated ‘behavioural support’ teacher (class standard resource teacher) will support both the victim and bully in bringing about a change in behaviour and in preventing a recurrence.

J. Procedures for noting and reporting an incident of bullying behaviour.

1. All reports of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, should be recorded and investigated (**Appendix 3: Incident Report**)
2. All cases of bullying behaviour by pupils should be referred to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
3. On becoming aware of a bullying incident involving a child with Special Educational Needs, the SNA must immediately report to the class teacher and the SET
4. If the Special Education teachers become aware of a bullying incident, they must also report this to the class teacher immediately.
5. Parents/Guardians of victims and bullies should be informed by the Principal/Deputy Principal following initial investigation of the incident so that they are given an opportunity to discuss the matter. They are then in a position, to support their children before a crisis occurs.
6. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their son’s class teacher) if they feel their child is being bullied. Parents/Guardians should not assume that the problem will go away.
7. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but behaving responsibly. There are no innocent bystanders in bullying.
8. Ancillary staff, temporary staff and parents have a duty to report any incidents of bullying witnessed by them to a teacher/Deputy Principal/Principal.
9. Where a case relating to a pupil remains unresolved at school level, it will be referred to the school’s Board of Management.

K. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

1. Teachers are best advised to take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way. Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. The school’s ‘Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour Form’, (Appendix 4) should be used. These report forms are available from the office. On completion, they will be stored securely by the Principal in his office. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident. It is school policy to request the assistance of another staff member in such investigations.

2. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, investigating 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 non-aggressive manner.
3. The Principal will speak to the investigating teacher and will review the written information provided and will hold further investigations if necessary, with the assistance of another teacher.
4. If a gang is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then the gang should be met as a group. Each member should be asked for his account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

If it is concluded 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 Code of Behaviour and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the victim's point of view. Each member of the gang should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from the other members after interview by the teacher.
5. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the Principal will meet separately with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the two parties involved, as appropriate in the presence of another teacher. The Principal will outline the results of the investigation and will explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy. The following steps will be taken:
 - St. Anthony's Boys National School will utilise a **restorative practice approach (Appendix 5)** in its initial stage of resolving the situation. All staff will be made aware of the importance of this practice.
 - A verbal undertaking will be given by the perpetrator to stop the offending behaviour. This will be done in the presence of the perpetrator's parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal/Deputy Principal and another teacher. The perpetrator will also be requested to apologise to the victim in the presence of the Principal and another teacher and give an undertaking that the offending behaviour will stop.
 - The Principal and staff will monitor and evaluate the situation, providing support to both victim and perpetrator.
 - A designated 'behavioural support' teacher (class standard resource teacher) will also support both the victim and bully in bringing about a change in behaviour and in preventing a recurrence.
 - With any reported incident of bullying behaviour within the school, the parents will be kept apprised of developments and stages of the investigation as the situation dictates and as early as reasonably possible.
 - If the bullying recurs, a pupil behaviour contract (**Appendix 6**) will be entered into by both parties and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of both parties will be informed. The contract will be monitored regularly by the Principal with the assistance of the class teacher and another member of staff to see that the situation is resolved.
 - If after the above, the bullying behaviour recurs, a formal meeting of the perpetrator, his parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be held and a formal suspension in line with the schools Code of Behaviour may occur. The Chairperson will have the authority to enact an immediate suspension or in certain circumstances may issue a final Chairperson's warning to the perpetrator e.g. where an extended period of time has elapsed since the last incident. The school's Code of Behaviour will be invoked from this point on.

L. Adult behaviour and bullying of children.

General: Concerns in relation to inappropriate adult behaviour are best resolved through early contact between the parties concerned. This early contact between the parent/class teacher or the class teacher/parent or indeed any other adults in the school community, will help resolve most issues at this initial stage. Failing resolution at this stage, the school Principal will be involved. If the situation is still not resolved at this stage, the Chairperson and finally the Board of Management will be involved.

Notwithstanding the above, the Board of Management will adopt and implement, without modification, the document '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*' (2013) as school policy. Adult bullying of children is dealt with as a child protection issue in this document. In '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017)*' it states that 'Bullying behaviour when perpetrated by adults, rather than children, could be regarded as physical or emotional abuse.' (Chapter 6.3)

An allegation of bullying, made by a child or by the parent/guardian of a child against another adult within the school community (school employee, another parent/guardian/other) will be dealt with in line with procedures as outlined in Chapter 5 of '*Child Protection for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*'.

In investigating all allegations of bullying, the principles of natural justice and fair procedure shall be applied. If school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child bullying by another adult (school employee or parent/guardian/other), they are obliged to refer this matter to the Designated Liaison Person, who will seek advice from the Health Service Executive (HSE). The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

All schools are obliged to follow the procedures as outlined in this document without modification. Reference should be made to the school's Child Protection Policy (Summary Document) and to the recently published document '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*' for further information. These documents are available from the school office on request and are available on the school website www.stanthonys.ie

In all its policies, practices and activities, St. Anthony's B.N.S. will adhere to principles of best practice in Child Protection and Welfare as outlined in '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (2013)*' and in '*Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)* and in the *Children First Act (2015)*.'

M. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place. These measures seek to prevent bullying behaviours wherever possible and, when bullying does occur, to intervene at the earliest opportunity.

N. 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.

O. Bullying / Harassment Procedure (Adult to Adult)

St. Anthony's B.N.S. will adopt the procedure outlined by the I.N.T.O. below which may be initiated in relation to any of the following circumstances, which may occur in the workplace or otherwise in the course of employment:

- adult bullying;
- sexual harassment; or
- harassment on other specified discriminatory grounds which could, in the circumstances, be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

The Board of Management of St. Anthony's B.N.S. recognises that any such behaviour is not acceptable within the school. It should be noted that a complaint of sexual harassment or bullying may result in disciplinary action. Where a complaint of sexual harassment or bullying is not upheld, no action shall be taken against the complainant provided the allegation is made in good faith. If the complaint was brought maliciously, it should be treated as misconduct and the disciplinary procedure invoked.

Preamble

The procedure outlined below is designed to address adult bullying, sexual harassment or other harassment arising in the workplace or otherwise in the course of employment, in a fair and effective manner. In implementing the procedure, the emphasis will be placed on assuring the party who considers that s/he is being bullied/harassed that his/her complaint is acknowledged, that the matter will be investigated effectively and sensitively and in accordance with due process.

Equally, where it is found that bullying or harassment has occurred, the emphasis, firstly, is to ensure that the offending behaviour immediately cease and secondly, to help the offending party acknowledge that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and that steps must be taken to address the matter constructively thereby avoiding any recurrence.

The Board of Management of St. Anthony's B.N.S. will ensure that resolution is achieved at the earliest opportunity. Further, it may be appropriate for the victim or the offender to attend counselling or obtain such other help as may be required.

Stage 1: Decide to address the matter

1. The party (party (a) who considers that s/he is being bullied, sexually harassed or harassed on other specified discriminatory grounds, should decide to address the matter. However, in light of the potential effects of bullying or harassment on an individual, including loss of confidence, extreme upset, anxiety or fear, party a may initially decide to seek INTO or other assistance, including Employee Assistance Scheme or other counselling, in order to consider the most appropriate application of the procedures, in the circumstances.
2. Party (a) should keep a record of the pattern of behaviour or instances where s/he considers that bullying/harassment has occurred. The record should contain details such as dates, times, persons present, details of what was said or what occurred.

Stage 2: Informally address the problem

1. The party who considers that he/she is being bullied, sexually harassed or harassed on other discriminatory grounds (party a), should request a meeting with the other party (b), in order to discuss matters. The following should apply:
 - where necessary, the meeting may be facilitated by a third party, generally a teaching colleague;
 - party (a) should clearly outline his/her difficulties and should clearly object to the bullying/harassment and request that it stop;
 - it is important that party a bear in mind, that the other member of staff may not be aware that his/her behaviour is causing difficulty;
 - both parties should seek to resolve their differences and establish a pattern of interaction exclusive of any forms of bullying/harassment;

- party (b) may respond to party (a) at that meeting or if requested, should be given an opportunity to consider his/her response, in which case the meeting may be adjourned. Party (b) should respond in a constructive manner;
- the resolution, as appropriate, may include any of the following, e.g. a commitment to cease the particular behaviour, modify the behaviour, plan to eliminate situations where the parties would be in conflict or monitoring.

Alternatively, it may emerge as a result of the discussions between the parties, that there may have been a degree of misunderstanding in relation to certain behaviours and the resolution may make provision for compromise or appropriate explanation or acknowledgement.

2. If there is no satisfactory indication of resolution between the parties, party a should refer the complaint to stage 3, i.e. formal procedures.

Stage 3: Principal teacher or chairperson of the board of management

1. Stage 3 provides a mechanism for the principal teacher to intervene and resolve the matter. However, if the principal teacher is one of the parties, the chairperson of the board of management, should then be involved, in an individual capacity, in order to achieve resolution. In circumstances where the chairperson may also be involved at stage 2, another member of the board, may be designated to intervene.

2. Party (a) should advise party (b) that he/she is proceeding with stage 3.

3. Party (a) should state his/her complaint in writing and request the principal teacher (or chairperson of the board of management, as the case may be) to investigate the matter.

4. The principal teacher (or chairperson of the board of management, as the case may be) should:

- obtain background details including details of what occurred at the previous stage;
- consider the pattern of behaviour and the timescale;
- hear the parties and seek to resolve the matter; act in a fair and impartial manner and deal with the matter sensitively having regard to the nature of the problem and the principles of due process; exercise judgement and make decisions which s/he considers necessary to resolve matters.

5. The outcome of the discussions should be noted by the parties.

The matter should be dealt with confidentially. Where resolution has not been possible and particularly, where there is a likelihood of the offending behaviour continuing, either party or the principal teacher (or chairperson of the board of management as the case may be) should refer the matter to the board of management in accordance with stage 4 below.

Stage 4: Board of Management

- It is open to any of the parties or the principal teacher (or chairperson of the board of management, as the case may be) to refer the matter to the board of management for investigation. The referral should be in writing and dated and should include a copy of the written complaint.
- The board of management should consider the issues and investigate the matter.
- The board may enquire into the background of the difficulties including obtaining details on the sequence of initiatives taken at previous stages.
- The board or the chairperson of the board may meet teachers individually or collectively and may also request written submissions from the parties, having regard also to the principles of due process.
- The board may request the principal teacher to furnish a written submission.

- The board may afford the parties an opportunity to present their case orally at a board meeting, in each other's presence.
- Following oral presentations, the board of management may designate the chairperson to meet with the parties again, separately or jointly, if further clarification is required or to work towards resolution; the board of management may convene a number of meetings in order to achieve resolution.
- The board of management shall act in a fair and impartial manner in order to achieve resolution and shall deal with the matter sensitively, having regard to the nature of the problem.

3. Having considered all matters, the board of management should reach a view on the matter not later than 20 school days after receipt of the written request/referral.

4. Where the board of management finds that bullying/harassment has not occurred, both parties should be informed accordingly. No action shall be taken against the complainant provided the allegation was made in good faith. If the complaint was brought maliciously, it should be treated as misconduct and appropriate action taken.

5. Where the board of management finds that bullying/harassment has occurred, the board should deal with the matter appropriately and effectively.

This may include:

- the issuing of a clear warning that bullying/harassment is not acceptable in the school workplace and that it will not be tolerated;
- a demand that all forms of bullying/harassment cease and that acceptable patterns of interaction be established between the parties;
- an instruction to the offending party that s/he apologise/ express regret or give an assurance that the bullying/harassment behaviour will cease;
- seeking a commitment to attend counselling or the welfare service;
- more serious disciplinary sanctions as may be commensurate and appropriate, such as:
- oral warning
 - written reprimand
 - written warning
 - final written warning
 - suspension
 - dismissal

6. As part of any resolution, the board of management should monitor the situation and should put systems in place to ensure that it is kept informed that resolutions are being implemented. The board of management should keep matters under review.

O. Communication of this policy

This policy has been made available to school personnel, the Parents' Association, is published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request, A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

P. Implementation, Review & Communication

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management on 9th of November 2021, 28th of November 2022, 28th of November 2023 and the 28th of November 2024. It has been made available to school personnel, the Parents' Association and has been published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the patron if requested.

At least once in every school term, the principal must 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 **Appendix 7**) since the previous report to the Board
2. Confirmation that all cases referred to 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*'.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year (**Appendix 8**). Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school staff (via email & staffroom noticeboard) and to parents through the school website & Parents' Association (**Appendix 9**).

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Principal: *Seán Lyons*

Chairperson: *Kieran Hastings*

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be measured against its success in minimising and preventing bullying behaviour in the school. Feedback from pupils, parents and staff will inform this decision.

This revised policy was adopted by the Board of Management on November 28th 2024.

Date of next review: June 2025

This Anti-Bullying Policy must be reviewed in line with the new BÍ Cineálta Action Procedures and Action Plan. Information and training will be provided during the 2024/2025 school year and an up to date Anti-Bullying Policy with the BÍ Cineálta Procedures will be in place prior to September 2025.



Appendix 1: Types of Bullying

The following are types of bullying behaviour that may 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 related bullying:** This occurs when an individual 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 a 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; 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 (night or day). 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.

In addition, in the context of Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools, 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.

- **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. 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 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.
- **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 one individual about appearance, clothing, person 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 take the form of suggestive remarks about a pupil’s sexual orientation.
- **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.
- **Identity-based bullying:** This includes 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.



Appendix 2: Children's Advice Sheet

WHAT TO TELL CHILDREN IF THEY ARE BEING BULLIED



- **What to do:**

Act as confidently as you can. Face them and tell them clearly to stop. Try and be calm and move away from them.

- **Don't hit out.**

If someone is bullying you, don't try to hit/kick them. You may get badly hurt in a fight and even if you don't, the bully can sometimes use how you hit them against you, and make it seem like you are the bully

- **If they call you names.**

If they tease you or slag you off, try and laugh it off. Don't let them see that they have hurt you. Bullies like to get a reaction, if they don't get one there is no point in them bullying you.

- **Remember, it's not about you.**

Often people who bully other people do it to make themselves feel better, because they are unhappy, at school or at home. Remember that they have the problem, not you. Don't believe what they say to you, and don't blame yourself.

- **Tell your friends/people you can trust in class**

Tell them what is going on and how you feel. Ask them to come with you to tell a teacher if you are afraid. Ask them to stand up with you against the bully.

- **Tell an adult you trust-** If you're being bullied, tell an adult about it.

- **Talk to:** Your parents - Someone in your family - Your teacher - A Helpline

- **Don't hit back with violence.**

Getting into a physical fight with someone can be dangerous. If you are afraid to tell because it might make things worse, tell this to the person you talk to and ask them to find a way to help you.

- **What To Say When You Tell** - Tell them what has happened; Who is doing it; How often it has happened; Did anyone see or hear what went on? What have you tried to do about it?



Appendix 3: Incident Report
St. Anthony's Boy's National School, Ballinlough

(Report of an isolated Incident or concerns about behaviour(s) that are being monitored but not yet determined as bullying behaviour)

1. Name(s) of pupils involved & class group

NAME	CLASS

2. Name of person(s) who reported the concern/incident and to whom it was reported:

3. Location that incident(s) occurred:

4. Type of Negative Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Brief description of behaviour/incident and its impact:

6. Details of Action taken:

Signed: _____ **(Relevant Teacher)** **Date:** _____

(This report should be kept in the teacher's own file and should only be submitted to the Principal, attached to Appendix 4: Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour, in the event of repeated incidents or if the teacher has determined that bullying behaviour has been engaged in.)

Date submitted to Principal (if submitted) _____



Appendix 4: Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

St. Anthony's Boys National School, Ballinlough

Name of pupil being bullied: _____ Class: _____

1. Name(s) & Class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

Name	Class

2. Source of bullying concern/report & Location

SOURCE	LOCATION
Pupil concerned	Yard
Other Pupil	Classroom
Parent	Corridor
Teacher	Toilets
Staff member	Other

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

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4. Type of Bullying Behaviour:

Physical Aggression	Slagging
Intimidation	Damage to property
Isolation/Exclusion	Extortion
Cyber-bullying	Identity-based bullying
Name Calling	Other (specify)

5. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, please indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Member of Traveller Community	Other (specify)

6. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

--

7. Details of Actions Taken:

--

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal: _____ Principal: _____

Appendix 5: Restorative Questions



1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about it since?
4. Who has been affected and in what way?
5. How could things have been done differently?
6. What do you think needs to happen next?

Appendix 6: Pupil Behaviour Contract



Pupil's Name: _____ Class: _____

I know that all my fellow pupils are different from each other and from me in many ways. *(These differences may include hair colour, skin colour, what we wear, height, weight, size, accent, religion, nationality, where we live or have lived, whether we are loud or quiet, find learning difficult or easy, good at sports etc.)*

I would not like to be treated unfairly and made to feel bad by any of my fellow pupils because of any of these differences or just because they did not like me. I know that I have a right to be different from other pupils and this does not give anyone the right to treat me unfairly or be mean to me. I know that I should be treated fairly, equally, and respectfully in school because of the school's Code of Behaviour. I know I should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully outside of school too.

I also know that all other **pupils, teachers, and staff** should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully. It is wrong to treat anyone any other way. I promise that, in future, I will treat all my fellow pupils, fairly, equally and respectfully, despite our differences and whether or not I like them.

In particular:

Signed: _____

Pupil

Parent

Teacher

Date: _____



Appendix 7: Oversight Report Template for Board of Management

A. Allegations of abuse against members of school personnel

State the number of Reports / Cases since the last BoM Meeting in each category – (See 9.5 DES Procedures*)

	Category	No
a	Reports made to Tusla	
b	Cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla and the matter was not reported by the DLP based on the advice of Tusla	
c	Cases where the DLP has not sought any advice from Tusla and has not reported the matter to Tusla	
d	Cases where the DLP did not report the matter to Tusla in circumstances where Tusla has advised the DLP that it should be reported	
e	No cases in a to d above – put an X in the box →	

B. Child protection concerns in respect of pupils in the school

State the number of Reports / Cases since the last BoM Meeting in each category – (See 9.6 DES Procedures*)

	Category	No
a	Cases where a mandated report was sent by DLP to Tusla following advice from Tusla	
b	Cases where a member of school personnel has submitted a report to Tusla in circumstances where the DLP has decided that the matter did not warrant reporting	
c	Cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla and Tusla has advised that the matter should not be reported	
d	Cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla and Tusla has advised that the matter should be reported but the DLP has not reported the matter in question	
	No cases in a to d above – put an X in the box →	

C. CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS ARISING FROM ALLEGED BULLYING BEHAVIOUR AMONGST PUPILS

State the number of Reports / Cases since the last BoM Meeting in each category – (See 9.7 DES Procedures*)

	Category	No
a	Cases where the DLP has reported a concern	
b	Cases where the DLP has sought Tusla advice as to whether to report a concern	
c	No cases in a to b above – put an X in the box →	

D. SUMMARY DATA

State the number of Reports / Cases since the last BoM Meeting in each category – (See 9.8 DES Procedures*)

	Category	No
a	Total reports made to Tusla by DLP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of those total reports which were mandated • No of those total reports concerning members of school personnel 	
b	No of cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla and, as a result of the advice, no report was made by the DLP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of those total reports concerning members of school personnel 	
c	No of cases where a member of school personnel provided the DLP with a copy of a report submitted by that person to Tusla in relation to a matter that the DLP had considered did not require reporting or did not require reporting as a mandated report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of those total reports concerning members of school personnel 	
	No cases in a to c above – put an X in the box →	



Appendix 8

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?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff is 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?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
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?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any 'Ombudsman for Children Investigations' into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
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?	Yes
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N/A

Signed: Kieran Hastings
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 28/11/2024

Signed: Seán Lyons
Principal

Date: 28/11/2024



Appendix 9

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

To the staff, parents & wider school community of St. Anthony's B.N.S.

The Board of Management of St. Anthony's B.N.S. wishes to inform you that

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the board meeting of November 28th 2024.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (*Appendix 8 of the Anti-Bullying Policy*).

Signed: Kieran Hastings
Chairperson

Seán Lyons
Principal

Date: 28/11/2024

Date: 28/11/2024