Anti-Bullying Policy in relation to Pupils of Saint Patrick's Infants School

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board), the Board of Management of Saint Patrick's Infants School, Gardiner's Hill has adopted the following anti-bullying policy in relation to pupils within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying in relation to pupils and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. Saint Patrick's Infants School recognizes the need to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour among our very young pupil population with particular sensitivity and thoughtfulness. We recognize that incidents must be managed positively and we must work towards preventing bullying behaviour. Our school is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) **A Positive School Culture and Climate which**:

- o acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment

- o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

- o recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents/guardians informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis;

- o promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

- o promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members; and

- o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;

(b) **Effective Leadership**:
The Board of Management and Principal are committed to ensuring that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

Staff members

- ● share a collegiate responsibility under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying and aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community;
- ● actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school;
- ● foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance;

- develop children's self-esteem (SPHE curriculum)
- actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour;
- model respectful behavior at all times;
- explicitly teach pupils school rules and also what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school;
- catch pupils being good, notice and acknowledge desired respectful behavior by providing positive attention;
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory or derogatory language in the school;
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behavior and respectful language are absent (THINK kind hands, kind feet, kind words); and
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school's code of behaviour and follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules;

(c) **A School-Wide Approach**:

In Saint Patrick's Infants School we wish to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment. We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy learning in a secure and supportive environment. Countering bullying behaviour in all its forms is a necessary prerequisite to ensuring this right. This policy on countering bullying behaviour will support the vision of the school to encourage the holistic development of each child.

A positive school wide holistic approach involving management, staff, pupils and parents is key to the successful implementation of procedures.

Parents have a role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour. The school recognises the need to work in partnership with parents and to keep them informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school wide basis.

(d) **A Shared Understanding of what Bullying is and its Impact**.

All staff is aware that bullying is defined as 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) **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, sexist, racist, homophobic and transphobic bullying and bullying based on a person's membership of a group and those with disabilities or special educational needs.
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

When dealing with incidents of identity-based bullying that are deemed to be outside of the infant curriculum we will refer back to parents/guardians in handling the matter.

(f)   Effective Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils:

The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary. It responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of <u>individual members</u> in a sensitive way.

(g)   Supports for Staff:

The Board of Management ensures that all school staff has sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy and this enables all staff members to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required.

(h)   **Consistent Recording, Investigation and Follow up of Bullying Behaviour.** (including use of established intervention strategies)

- In our school we define the **relevant** teacher as being the class teacher(s). The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template (Appendix 3 *Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) and a copy must be provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal in the following circumstances:
    - o   In cases where he/she considers that bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
    - o   Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.
- Records of bullying behaviour are filed separately from pupils' general files
- In the case of very serious incidents records of bullying behaviour are retained indefinitely

(i)   On-Going Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of this policy and its implementation by the school. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. The standardised notification (Appendix 4 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) will be used.

3. Definition and Background

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:

- o Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying;
- o Cyber –bullying; and
- o Identity-based bullying such as sexist, racist, homophobic and transphobic bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of a group and those with disabilities or special educational needs.
- o Behaviour which can reasonably be perceived as dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening or otherwise likely to evoke fear of emotional stress or physical harm;
- o Name calling which extends to very personal remarks, aimed again and again at the one individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene, socio-economic background or involves references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family. It may take the form of suggestive remarks about a pupil's sexual orientation;
- o Taking of or damage to property;
- o False reporting of bullying behaviour as a bullying behaviour in itself;

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 are 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.

Examples of bullying behaviours	- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. - Physical aggression - Damage to property - Name calling

	• "Slagging" • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The "look" • Inappropriate use of gesture or tone • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	• **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • **Harassment**: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • **Impersonation**: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • **Flaming**: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • **Trickery**: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • **Outing**: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • **Exclusion**: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls

	• Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours **Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
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

	• "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look" • Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• 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

- **Physical Aggression:**

This behaviour includes but is not limited to pushing, hitting, shoving, punching, kicking, pinching, poking, tripping others. 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. The school does not allow this behaviour (see Code of Behaviour).

- **Verbal Behaviours and Intimidation:**

Persistent name calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates. 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.

- **Emotional Behaviours**

Threats of persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Teasing, taunting, threatening, exclusion or extortion. Bullying behaviour thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty and secrecy in which the victim often feels a sense of hopelessness.

- **Damage to Property**

Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's bag or lunch. The contents may be scattered on the floor, items of personal property be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

While every possible anti-bullying measure will be availed of by the school in terms of prevention and creating awareness, it is hoped that this will equip pupils with the skills to recognise bullying behaviour and to report on a related matter to a teacher, parent, visiting teacher or other responsible adult. Pupils are encouraged to tell. Working together, the school will investigate, where appropriate, offer advice, support and provide direction, as necessary.

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

Isolated instances of aggressive behaviour, which would be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour, would not be described as bullying. However when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.

4. **The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: the class teachers, Principal**
- The responsibility of the relevant teachers is to determine whether bullying has occurred.
- This may be done in consultation with the Principal.
- Learning Support/Resource teachers will report incidents observed or reported to the relevant teachers i.e. class teachers

5. **The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):**

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

- Fostering a school culture which is respective of all differences, including children with special educational needs (SEN), will incorporate social inclusion measures to prevent isolation and encourage integration, developing social skills of SEN pupils and reinforce and reward good behaviour in all pupils.

- 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. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school's religion programme Grow in Love; the Social Personal and Health Education Programme incorporating the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes; Visual Arts, Drama and Circle Time. These are intended to develop self-esteem in our pupils and to heighten the awareness among pupils of respecting themselves and others.

  Examples of lessons from these programmes are:

  Grow in Love - Junior Infants → My Family, Lent, Jesus,

  Grow in Love - Senior Infants → We Belong, Lent, Grow in Love

  Walk Tall:

o Junior Infants – Belonging and Co-operating Me and Others, Feelings

o Senior Infants – Developing Self-Esteem, Belonging, Feelings

  Stay Safe

  The following areas are dealt with in all classes over a 12 week period:

o Feeling Safe and Unsafe

o Bullying/Cyberbullying

o Touches

o Secrets and Telling

o   Strangers

Through this programme of positive action the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. It emphasises that bullying is unacceptable while also helping pupils to adopt strategies on how best to deal with bullying if it should occur.

RSE

o   Junior Infants: I can be Safe, We have Feelings, Making Choices, We are Friends

o   Senior Infants: Making Decisions, Others have Feelings too, These are my Friends.

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it- prevention and intervention.

- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources

- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)

- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.

- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff 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.

- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year).

- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; regular school assemblies.

- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:

    o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.

    o Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

    o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.

- The review of the school's Acceptable Use Policy to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. Schools Completion Programme

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.

- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme

- 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.

- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

   Links to other policies

- The following school policies, practices and activities are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance,

Prevention Strategies for Cyber Bullying

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) ensures the following:

- Supervision is always in place when students are online.

- Websites are previewed and evaluated.

- Firewalls and filters are installed through the school's Broadband scheme and these are regularly updated.

- Students' internet usage can be monitored by checking user files, temporary files and history files.

- Students do not have access to social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

- All members of the school community are fully aware of the sanctions that will be imposed for the misuse of school computers to cause hurt and distress to other members. Our school encourages a 'telling' atmosphere, including the reporting of cyber bullying.

The following advice is offered for children to help prevent cyber bullying

- Don't reply to messages that harass or annoy you.

- Keep the message – you don't have to read it, but keep it.

- Tell someone you trust

- Block the Sender.

- Report Problems to the people who can do something about it i.e. Teacher or Parent.

Prevention of Cyber Bullying at Home

- Parents/Guardians must take full responsibility for their children's inappropriate use of the Internet or mobile phone outside school.

- Know your child's internet and phone use. Encourage children to show you websites they like visiting and what they do there.

- Register as a contact on your child's phone. Mobile operators in Ireland provide a 'Dual Access' service. This service allows both parent and child to have access to the account records held by the mobile phone company including account balances, numbers called and the services available on the mobile phone.

- Encourage respect for others. Talk to your child about the harm that can be caused by cyber bullying and ensure that they understand what the consequences might be for everyone involved.

- All incidents of cyber bullying that have their origins in school will be fully investigated,

recorded and dealt with under the procedures laid down in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

- Incidents of cyber bullying that take place outside and affect a student in school will be brought to the attention of parents/guardians.

6. **The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):**

Pupils will be made aware that reporting an incident of bullying is responsible behaviour.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident which has been reported directly them or witnessed by them to any staff member in the school. This will then be reported to the relevant teacher.

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

- The school will work to ensure that there is no lack of clarity and that judgements are in line

with school policy and not subjective;

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;

- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

- 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;

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;

- 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;

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

- 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). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;

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

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

Follow up and recording

- **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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

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

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

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant 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 in the class incident book of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. The class incident book is stored securely in the classroom.

- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records in the class incident book which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- In the case of more serious incidents of bullying behaviour the records will be stored securely in a file in the Principal's office.

Formal Stage 2 - Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed **within 20 school days** after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) In certain circumstances of extreme or exceptional bullying behaviour incidents must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Incidents will be recorded in the class incident book. From Formal Stage 2 records will be stored securely in the Principal's office until the timeframe for the storage of records has passed (see Records and Recordkeeping policy).

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils

- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process

- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions

- No Blame Approach

- Circle Time

- Restorative interviews such as framing behaviour as a failed attempt to solve a problem or to reach a goal, to assist the person who has misbehaved to find a better way to resolve problems or meet goals.

- Restorative conferencing

- Implementing sociogram questionnaires

- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

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

(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

- 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. Group work such as circle time, SPHE and STAY SAFE programme

- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

- In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) should be sought.

- 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 must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan.''

- Any such referrals or consultations with NEPS or the HSE, in the context of this anti-bullying policy will be reported to the Board of Management by the Principal as part of the regular reporting on Child Protection issues, which is on the agenda of each Board of Management meeting.

- For cases of adult bullying the procedures as outlined in the INTO / Management Bodies publication "Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations" should be followed.

- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible. All staff is made aware of the following indicators of bullying behaviour:

Indicators of Bullying Behaviour

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

(i) Anxiety about travelling to and from school

(ii) Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend,

(iii) Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;

(iv) Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;

(v) Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;

(vi) Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;

(vii) Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;

(viii) Possessions missing or damaged;

(ix) Increased requests for money or stealing money;

(x) Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and

(xi) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

The school acknowledges that there are three parties involved in bullying – those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness the bullying. All staff keeps this in mind when dealing with bullying incidents and tries to support and work with all parties involved.

Supports for Pupils Affected by Bullying

- A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied must be put in place. Such pupils may need opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is

needed. The support that is required will depend upon the circumstances of the case. Teachers emotionally support victims, reassuring them that it was right to report the incident. They will be advised on how to prevent re-occurrence. Class lessons will be taught, mainly in SPHE dealing with respect, self-esteem and the issues of bullying.

- A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour must also be part of the school's intervention process.

- Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth.

- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will need support from their teacher to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

- Bystanders will also be supported and will be reassured that reporting an incident of bullying behaviour is responsible behaviour.

- Teachers must ensure the bully recognises the harm caused and does not repeat the behaviour. They must be helped to recognise the consequences of their actions and facilitating change in their attitude and behaviour. Class lessons will be taught, mainly in SPHE, dealing with respect, self-esteem and the issues of bullying.

Supports for parents/guardians

Parents/guardians who wish to discuss their child's difficulties in relation to bullying will be facilitated to meet on a one to one basis with the child's teacher, or with a relevant staff member/s. Any parental suggestions for appropriate supports for their child in the school setting will be considered and implemented, as far as practicable, within the school. Any parent who considers that their child's mental health is being affected by bullying, and is having a seriously detrimental effect on their child, should also contact their own GP for referral, if necessary, to the HSE's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Support and advice for parents and their child may also be available through local professional, accredited counsellors and psychotherapists, specialist organisations and support services. Many websites also provide information for parents to help their child in relation to bullying.

Supports for staff

The Board of Management will ensure that members of the school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. Supports for staff will be appropriate to the individual's role and will enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and, where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases. Staff will be facilitated by the Board of Management to update skills on a regular basis in relation to bullying and its impact on pupils, and where approved in advance by the Board, funding will be made available for members of staff to attend training in specific areas at various centres or as part of whole school training.

9. 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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 24th of June, 2014.

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

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Evaluation of Policy

The level and type of bullying behaviour, if any, that may be happening in the school is assessed regularly and action taken as a result of these findings. The school will make provision for periodic review of the prevention and intervention strategies in place. Surveys of pupils, staff and parents/guardians may be used to provide information and feedback on the effectiveness of the anti-bullying measures in place and to identify any significant behavioural trends that may benefit from early intervention and explicit targeted teaching.

The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be regularly included as an item on staff meeting and management meeting agendas so as to ensure that concerns about the policy and/or the welfare of individual pupils can be addressed.

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

- the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template) since the previous report to the Board and
- 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.*

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any personal details of the pupils involved.

Some of the more practical indicators of the success of the policy will be positive feedback from staff, parents/guardians and pupils and observation of behaviour both within the school and out in the yard.