

Rathbarry National School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed 05/10/2023



1. 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 Rathbarry school has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
 - a) A positive school culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - encourages respect, trust, care, consideration and support for others;
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

 - b) Effective leadership which makes explicit the values and standards expected from all stakeholders within the school community;

 - c) A school-wide approach which prioritises vigilance and openness;

 - d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;

 - 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, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

 - f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

 - g) Supports for staff;

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

 - i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

3. 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.

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

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

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

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

Relevant class teacher

Principal teacher

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it

Teacher on yard supervision will normally report to the relevant class teacher

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

- The implementation of the SPHE programme including Walk Tall, Stay Safe and the RSE programme
- Grow In Love Programmes
- Webwise Programme
- Adequate supervision in the yard and at all school activities
- Talks about Bullying including Cyber-Bullying arranged for both pupils and parents
- The involvement of pupils in promoting a safe school environment i.e. buddy system
- Talks given by the local Community Garda on bullying, personal safety and cyberbullying
- A proactive approach to preventing incidents of bullying at an early stage ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell e.g.
 - i. Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, e.g. after class.
 - ii. Hand up note with homework.
 - iii. Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - iv. Get a parent / guardian to tell on your behalf.
 - v. Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
 - vi. Identify clear protocols to encourage parents / guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.

- vii. AUP policy
- viii. Mobile phone policy
- Fostering a culture of respect and empathy throughout the school community
- Links to other Policies
 - i. Other school policies that are particularly relevant to bullying include:
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Acceptable Use Policy

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

The school's procedures for reporting, investigating, 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:

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.

Investigating and dealing with incidents

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher. Discretion is important.
- Parents and pupils are encouraged 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;
- Follow up investigation into the bullying incidents should take place as soon as possible after the incident has taken place.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- Children will be encouraged to see the situation from the perspective of being Bullied and develop empathy
- 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 they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- Where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent/guardians of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage and to inform them of the matter. Discuss ways they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports being 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 and 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 parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school;

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 parents 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 is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;
 - In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Established Intervention Strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils involved
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be formal / informal.

- Working with parents / guardians to support school interventions.
- No blame approach
- Circle time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Other intervention strategies include, but are not limited to:
 - The traditional disciplinary approach
 - Strengthening the victim
 - Mediation
 - Restorative practice
 - The support group method
 - The method of shared concern (<https://www.kenrigby.net/11a-Nine-strategies>)

7. The school's approach to support pupils affected by bullying.

- Circle time, Oral language classes, Teaching of SPHE, and Stay Safe programmes.
- Restorative interviews
- Buddy system in playground
- Culture of telling
- Friendship week
- Opportunities to increase pupils self-esteem and self worth.
- Opportunities to help children develop social skills e.g. how to deal with anger, hurt etc.
- Pupils who observe incident of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.
- Ongoing evaluation on the effectiveness of the policy in the light of any incidents that occur.

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.
- Other pupils will be encouraged to be vigilant and not be passive observers thus preventing or reporting on bullying incidents that may occur.
- Records of bullying incidents will be recorded on a bullying incident sheet.
- The policy and update will be distributed to all parents/guardians.
- At staff meetings incidents of bullying will be discussed, preventative methods will be examined and awareness will be raised so that any issues are fresh on the minds of all staff.

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 5/10/23 [date].
- 11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is accessible to parents/guardians and pupils (on request). 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.

Signed: Michael J Crowley
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Catherine Foley
(Principal)

Date: 5/10/23

Date: 5/10/23

Date of next review: September 2024.

Form 1: Investigating Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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6. Type of Bullying 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"/>

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Form 2: Reporting Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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6. Type of Bullying 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"/>

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

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 <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	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 are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	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 to the Board?	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?	N/A
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 Michael M Crowley
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 5/10/23

Signed Catherine Foley
Principal

Date 5/10/23

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: Chairperson of the Parents' Association

The Board of Management of Rothbarry 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 5/10/23 [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed Michael McCrowley
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 5/10/23

Signed Catherine Foley
Principal

Date 5/10/23