

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

To: School Community

The Board of Management of Straffan N.S. wishes to inform you that:

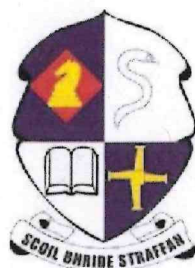
- o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 11/9/23 [date].
- o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed [Signature]
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 11th Sept '23

Signed [Signature]
Principal

Date 11/9/23



Scoil Bhríde Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Scoil Bhríde, Straffan 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.

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 positive school culture and climate which is** welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity; encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; **and** promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- (b) Effective leadership**
- (c) A school-wide approach which enhances care, empathy and compassion**
- (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; effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- (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..

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,

cyber-bullying and

identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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

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

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

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

The list of examples below is non exhaustive, and schools may wish to add behaviours which reflect their own circumstances.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression,
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- Taunting
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed.

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
- See Appendix 2 for supports advice

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 Traveller the 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 bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation & exclusion Ignoring
- Excluding from the group
- Taking someone's friends
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- Use or terminology / name calling *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

4. The Relevant Teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in this school are All Class Teachers, **Deputy Principal:** Ms. Mc Auliffe and **Principal:** Mrs. Colleran. (***Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it).***

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

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

- The ABI Care School programme is used when required in all classes at whole school level.
- From Spring 2023, there will be a phased transitioning of Restorative Practice (RP) Circle Plan in 6th class. In September 2023, this RP Circle Plan will include 4th/ 5th and 6th classes(see Addendum attached)
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all **our** pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils **will** be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- 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 behaviours, 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 included in student journals and 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) 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** school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; ABI Care schools Programme, annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; annual student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal and other teaching staff.
- 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 behaviours they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they **suspect** that their child is being bullied in line with the ABI Care School programme
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school 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

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE Curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes in line with school policy.
- Continuous Professional Development for **staff** in delivering these programmes.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community **Gardai**, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- 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.

Links to other policies

List school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.

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:

6.1 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.

6.2 Reporting bullying behaviour

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

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher in line with the school ABI Care schools Programme.

Parents will be encouraged to complete a Care form (if a formal report is being made) which will be distributed through the office along with a copy of the parent's Care School Booklet which guides them to complete their report.

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;

6.3 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 ABI Care School Light Intervention procedure***

will be used as a resource if the teacher judges it necessary. This is recorded and the Principal is alerted to the investigation if they are not the relevant teacher.

- In making the process of making this judgement, the teacher involved should conduct an investigation sensitively 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 using Restorative Questioning. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner. Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved (Special Education Room, Deputy Principal or Principal Office)
- 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;
- Upon a **formal complaint** by a parent of bullying behaviours, the **ABI Deep Intervention Strategy** will be implemented. Steps of which are; the completion of Care Forms, Awareness Raising Lesson and Bullying Behaviour Class/Group Worksheets and Care Discussion Sheet. Parents **will** be provided with the ABI Parents Information Booklet so that the message and discussion at both home and school is uniform
- If a group is involved, each member should be spoken with using restorative practice (RP) questioning 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 individual RP questioning by the teacher;

It should **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;

6.4 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) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

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 Parental 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.

6.5 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. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. 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 of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions **with** those involved regarding same

- 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 to include Care Forms and Worksheets which will assist **his/her** efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage

of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

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 (this is separate to the Care form for the Parents):

(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) 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.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. See Data Retention Policy regarding the retention of paperwork.

Established intervention strategies

Teacher speaks with all pupils using restorative questioning

ABI Initiative (Light and Deep interventions)

Code of Behaviour

From Sept 2023, Restorative Circle Programme with 4th, 5th and 6th classes. This was piloted from Spring 2023 with 6th Class in Scoil Bhríde.

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) to support school interventions

- o No Blame Approach through the ABI Care schools programme
- o RP Circle Time
- o Restorative questioning
- o Restorative conferencing
- o Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- o 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:

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.

- Pastoral care system
- Buddy / Peer mentoring system
- Participation in the ABI Care Programme
- Care team / Student Support Team
- Group work such as RP circle time

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

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. This practice is complemented by the schools Code of Behaviour.

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

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

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 

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Caroline Sullivan

(Principal)

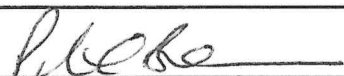
Date: 11th Sept '23

Date of next review: n/a/23


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

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

| | Yes /No |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ? | ✓ |
| Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association? | ✓ |
| Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)? | ✓ |
| Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work? | ✓ |
| Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils? | ✓ |
| Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies? | ✓ |
| Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented? | ✓ |
| Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined? | ✓ |
| Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? | ✓ |
| Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal? | ✓ |
| Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board? | ✓ |
| Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents? | ✓ |
| Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation? | ✓ |
| Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? | 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? | ✓ |
| 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 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 11th Sept '23

Signed 
Principal

Date 11/9/23