



Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Ballyoughter 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* 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 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;
 - Effective leadership;
 - A school-wide approach;
 - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
 - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - Supports for staff;
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - 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*.

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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"• Invasion of personal space• A combination of any of the types listed.
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<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/ You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Relational</p>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Use of terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

Class Teacher

Principal

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including) 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 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.
- The school will encourage and facilitate attendance and participation in Anti-bullying training and relevant CPD offered to staff.
- 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 extracurricular 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 information 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) are given a copy when their child is enrolled.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders/up-standers. 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.
- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying that involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
- Teachers will aim to create an anti-bullying climate that focuses on respect for each individual where pupils are encouraged to tell if they feel they are being bullied
- Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth and self-esteem.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying, by communicating concerns to the school.
- If a pupil is behaving in a manner that, should it continue, may be defined as bullying we will advise the pupil on how to improve his/ her behaviour and we also may make the parents aware of this, in order that they too, may assist/support.
- The school will ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Parent makes a phone call/sends an email to the teacher
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders/up-standers understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Implementation of Curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme (every second year during the summer term), The Walk Tall Programme.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Cyber Bullying (Web wise Primary teachers' resources),
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of Special Educational Needs pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

The following school policies, practices and activities are particularly relevant to bullying: Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

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:

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 report 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.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), 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;
- 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.
- Where possible, incidents are best 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 useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to Restorative Practice Questions:

What happened?; What were you thinking at the time?; What have your thoughts been since? How have you been affected by what happened? or Who has been affected by what you did? What has been the hardest thing for you? or How have they been affected by what you did? What do you think needs to happen next?

- 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. Then 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;
- 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.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred:

- the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing 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 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 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.
- The principal may assist in this process.

Follow up and recording

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must meet with the victim and bully/bullies and 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 relevant teachers.
- 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 of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- Records at this stage will be stored securely by the teacher.
- Teachers can use the Is it bullying checklist to support the process at this stage – **Appendix 2**
- 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, she/he must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. The relevant teacher will use the Informal Report Form – **Appendix 1**.
- Records will be stored securely in the store room secured filing cabinet by the principal.

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:

- 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,
- in cases of cyberbullying,
- in cases of escalation in bullying incidences or where no conscious effort is being made by the bully to improve behaviour.

This will be reported immediately to the principal or deputy principal.

The recording template is used, it must be stored and retained in the secured filing cabinet.

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”.

Follow up/intervention strategies

Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or through a more structured process e.g. Circle Time, Mediation, Implementing sociogram questionnaires.

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

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

Bullied pupils:

- Indicate clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the awareness-raising programme.
- Indicate clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations.
- Help bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Bullying pupils:

- Make it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this.
- Help those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- Use learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
- 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.
 - Drama activities
 - Group work such as Circle Time
- 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. (HSE, NEPS)

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.

The school's Acceptable Use policy outlines the procedures for supervision and monitoring when pupils are accessing the internet in school.

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 originally ratified by the Board of Management on 24th November 2021

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils 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, readily accessible to parents and pupils on request 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: Rev. Tomás Kehoe

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Padraig O'Connor

(Principal)

Reviewed & Approved: 27/09/23

Policy will be reviewed yearly during the first term

1. Appendix 1 - Informal Report Form

Behaviour Report Form

INFORMAL STAGE

Filled in by: _____

Date: _____

Name(s) of person(s) reporting **alleged bullying** concern: _____
 _____ (may be anonymous)

Relation to person being bullied, **allegedly**: _____

Location of Alleged Incident: _____

Name of pupil being bullied, **allegedly**: _____

Class: _____ Class Teacher: _____

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour:

Type of alleged bullying behaviour being reported. Tick as appropriate:

Is this alleged bullying Identity Based? Yes No

		Cyber Bullying	
Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation / Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

If YES, tick appropriate box.

Disability/SEN	Racist	Member of Travelling /Roma Community	Homophobic	Other (Please Specify)

Brief description of alleged bullying behaviour and its impact:

Action check list:

Who will be relevant teacher? _____

Has the Principal been informed yet? Yes No

Who else needs to be informed? _____

Is parental meeting / contact required? Yes No

RE: Meeting Children Involved:

When? _____ Where? _____

With whom present? _____

List of actions taken:

Does this require an APPENDIX 3: YES No

If not please specify reasons _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2 Is it bullying? Checklist

2.

Consider	Yes/No
Is the behaviour repeated? Only repeated incidents can be regarded as bullying. Once off incidents fall under the Code of Behaviour. However see below.	
Have there been any offensive or hurtful public messages or images placed on a social networking site or other public forum? Can the bullying image, statement or message be viewed or repeated by other people? One such incident qualifies as cyber bullying.	
Is the behaviour planned?	
Is there unwanted negative behaviour inflicted on the victim?	
Is the unwanted negative behaviour of a physical, verbal or Psychological character?	
Is the behaviour inflicted by one person, or is there a group involved? 7 Is the victim deliberately targeted?	
Do the behaviours involve deliberate exclusion, isolation, malicious gossip or other forms of relational aggression?	
Are the behaviours targeting an aspect of the victim's identity? For example physical, verbal or psychological aggression which is directed at their sexual orientation, their race, religion, ethnicity or traveller background.	
Are the behaviours targeting the victim because they have Special Educational Needs?	

3. Appendix 3 Template for recording 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

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

4. 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?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal

5. Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Ballyoughter NS 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 _____ [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 _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal