Scoil na mBuachaillí Naomh Eoin Baiste

Anti-Bullying

Policy
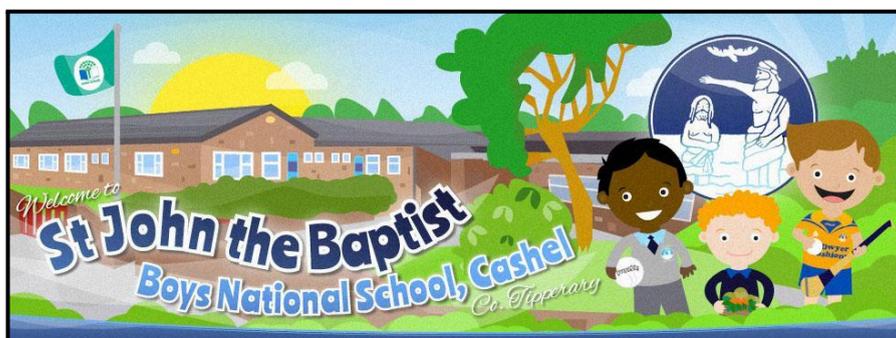
1.   Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB (now part of Túsla – the Child and Family Agency), the Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS 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.

Consultation took place with all relevant stakeholders and the policy was drafted by a committee comprising representative(s) from the BOM, teaching staff and PA.

Copies have been provided to all staff members, to the Parent Association and the policy is published on our website www.cashelbns.ie

2. Key Principles In Preventing and Tacking Bullying Behaviour

 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-
o   is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
o   encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
o   promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
(B) Effective leadership;
(C) A school-wide approach;
(D) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
(E) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
o   build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
o   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. Definition of Bullying

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.

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 • 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

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

4.   Relevant Teachers For Investigating and Dealing With Bullying

The relevant teachers (refer to section 6.8.3. and 6.8.4 in the Procedures for more information) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- All class teachers
- Special Education Teachers

The relevant teacher is usually the class teacher who becomes aware of the bullying behaviour or to whom the bullying is reported. It is important for teaching colleagues to establish at the outset who is the relevant teacher. This does not take away from the fact that all staff has a shared responsibility to ensure our pupils are safe.

N.B. It is the duty of relevant teachers to make a brief note of <u>all</u> bullying-type allegations or incidents that have been reported to (or noticed by) them in the relevant document on our student management system. This document is identical to **_Appendix One below_**.   These incidents can then be discussed at a whole school level as part of our preventative approach to bullying.

5.   Education and Prevention Strategies

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:

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 to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.   ● The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through 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 when requested and/or deemed necessary.
- 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. Support 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.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system (5th class), mentoring, Lunchtime Pals and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- 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 reminded (at least twice yearly) that the Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy is on the school's website.
- The implementation of the following whole school awareness measures:

  ✔ A dedicated noticeboard in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention months:

  <div align="center">

  Friendship Month in September

  Anti-Bullying/RESPECT for ALL Month in November

  Cyber-Bullying Awareness Month in May

  </div>

  ✔ Class Self-evaluation questionnaire to incorporate question in relation to pupil's relationship with others (To be completed during October mid-term, Christmas, Easter and end of year)

- 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.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - A locked private and confidential "worry box" located in a prominent position in the school.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Parents should, in the first instance, make an appointment to see the class teacher if they suspect that their child is being bullied. This protocol has been developed in consultation with parents.
- A review of our 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 **(Appendix Seven)**

Implementation of curricula
- The full implementation of the SPHE, 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 i.e. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Be Safe Be Webwise, Alive O, The Cool School Programme,
- Community Garda visit once a year to junior and senior classes.
- **Respectful Online Communication**: Delivered by community gardai, as part of the Garda Schools Programme, the "Respectful Online Communication" talks are pitched at 5th class students. They cover a range of topics including cyberbullying and general online safety and security.
- 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/procedures
Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Supervision Procedures, Mobile Phone Procedures, Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance, Health & Safety Statement

6. Procedures for Investigation, Follow-Up and Recording of Bullying Behaviour

6.8.9.   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 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), 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 (see section 6.8.9 for further information)

- 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;*
- 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 may be met as a group. At any such group meeting, each member should be asked for his 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/help or as an alternative to group interview(s) 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 (by reference to the school policy). 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;
- Depending on the circumstances and/or the teacher's professional judgement, the relevant teacher may or may not tell the pupil that he/she is going to contact the parents.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him 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 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/phone calls with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately within 10-15 days 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 relevant teachers must input in Aladdin any **(Appendix 1 below)** bullying-type incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. This record will be periodically printed off and discussed by relevant staff as part of our preventative approach to bullying behaviour.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of actual bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must also keep a written/typed record **(Appendix 2 below)** 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 continue to keep appropriate written/typed records **(Appendix 3 below)** which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

A copy of **informal and formal stage 1 records** will be printed out by the principal **at the end of each term**. The principal will keep them in a secure file for the duration of the pupils' time in the school.

Formal Stage 2- Template For Recording Bullying Behaviour
The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 4 below** 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) 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.

- Severe physical violence
- Severe property damage
- Cyber Bullying
- Fraping
- Intimidation
- Sexualised behaviour

When the recording template (**Appendix 4**) is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy given to the principal teacher **immediately**. The principal will keep them in a secure file for the duration of the pupils' time in the school.

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
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires (samples in the HSE Cool School Programme – www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/Children/Investigating%20and%20resolving%20bullying%20in%20schools.pdf
- Peer mediation when suitable training has been given

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

7. **Support Programme**

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 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.
  - Pastoral care system
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  - Group work such as circle time
  - Drama
  - Art
  - Individual contact with class teacher
- 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.

- 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.

- St. John the Baptist BNS ensures that good supervisory and monitoring measures are in place both to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal draws up Supervision Rotas to ensure that pupils are adequately supervised during break-times. Problem areas and times are identified and monitored closely.
- All pupils, and in particular senior pupils, are a resource to assist in countering bullying. Our Student Council plays an active role in monitoring and reporting.
- Non-teaching staff also contribute and are an essential part of the process to counter bullying behaviour in our 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. Dissemination

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

11. Review

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

Signed: T M Shannon   Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: 12 November 2020

Most recent review	**9 May 2023**

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APPENDIX ONE

Recording in Aladdin

Bullying-type incidents refer to potential bullying incidents/concerns that a staff member/other child/parent/member of school community report to class teacher <u>but</u> they are not making a formal bullying complaint. These are noted as a Bullying-Type Incident in Aladdin and can help us as a school to build up a picture of possible bullying that can occur over time.

The bullying incident note will be used for:

Making notes concerning any information or extra information in relation to the formal stages of the formal bullying procedures (Pre-Determination, Stage 1, Stage 2).

St John the Baptist BNS

Bullying Investigation Template (Pre-Determination Stage)

All recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

1. Who is allegedly being bullied?

Pupil	Class

2. Who made the bullying complaint? Please name if known.

Parent of pupil	
Other parent	
Pupil allegedly being bullied	
Other pupil	
Teacher	
Anonymous	

3. How, when and to whom was the complaint made? (e.g. telephone call, meeting, worry box, child disclosure etc)

4. Against which pupil or group of pupils was the allegation made?

5. Name of the relevant teacher carrying out investigation

6. Has the principal been informed of the investigation?

7. Actions taken (refer to section 6 of anti-bullying policy for procedures for investigating bulling)

8. Outcome of Investigation (e.g. no bullying, inconclusive proof of bullying, bullying has occurred, situation needs further monitoring etc)

[empty box]

9. Where it has been determined that bullying has occurred, formal stage 1 template will now be used.

10. Where it has been determined to the best of your professional judgement that NO bullying has taken place, have the parents of all parties involved been informed of the outcome of the investigation?

[empty box]

Name:

Date:

APPENDIX THREE

St John the Baptist BNS

Bullying Investigation Template (Formal Stage 1)

All recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

1. Name of relevant teacher

2. Date that is was determined bullying has occurred

3. Have the parents of all the parties involved being contacted to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken? If yes, how and when?

4. What actions have been taken to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved? Please list.

5. 20 school days from the date that you determined that bullying has occurred, in your professional opinion and to the best of your knowledge, has the bullying behaviour been adequately and appropriately addressed and is the issue resolved? {Take the factors outlined in section 6 of our policy ("Follow up and recording") into account}. If no, briefly explain why.

6. Where it has been determined that the issue has not been adequately and appropriately addressed, formal stage 2 template (Appendix 3 from DES Procedures) will now be used.

Name:

Date:

APPENDIX FOUR

Template for recording bullying behavior (Formal Stage 2)

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	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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 _____

* Note: The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

APPENDIX FIVE

IMPACTS, INDICATORS, AND CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH BULLYING

1. Impacts of Bullying:

The following are some of the effects that bullying behaviour can have on victims, witnesses and those who engage in bullying:

- Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying may result in suicide. It is, therefore, essential to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention can be very effective.

- Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. For example, pupils who witness identity-based bullying and share that identity can experience anxiety and feel under threat themselves. Pupils can also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.

- There are also consequences for individuals who engage in bullying behaviour. Pupils who become involved in such behaviour can be at higher risk of depression. Other possible long-term consequences may include an increased risk of developing an anti-social personality, anxiety disorders, a likelihood of substance abuse, law-breaking behaviour in adulthood and decreased educational and occupational attainment.

2. Indicators of Bullying:

The following are some of the signs that may indicate that bullying behaviour is occurring:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy;
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;

- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his 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.

Characteristics Associated with Bullying:

It is important to recognise that any pupil can be bullied or can engage in bullying behaviour.

The pupil who engages in bullying behaviour

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

The pupil who is bullied

Any pupil through no fault of their own may be a target of bullying. It is common in the course of normal interaction for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour. As pupils can be particularly quick to notice differences in others, pupils who are perceived as different in some way can be more prone to encounter such behaviour. However, the pupils who are most at risk of being bullied are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour can be related to the pupil's continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression.

Pupils who are bullied often experience difficulties in speaking up about bullying. The difficulties include:
- Fear of reprisals;
- Concerns about being perceived as a "tell-tale'' for reporting bullying;
- Concerns about "getting into trouble" with the principal or teacher for reporting bullying;
- Not having evidence to back up a bullying allegation;
- Not knowing how the matter will be dealt with by the school; and

- Not feeling fully confident of being believed.

More vulnerable pupils

- While bullying can happen to any pupil, it is known that some may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying. Such vulnerable groups include pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, those from ethnic minority and migrant groups, pupils from the Traveller community, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) pupils and those perceived to be LGBT and pupils of minority religious faiths.
- There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying amongst pupils with special educational needs and particularly those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some pupils with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such pupils may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour. Research suggests that children with disabilities and with special educational needs (SEN) are more likely to be bullied than others. Bullying can also have a more severe impact on such children. For example, some studies which compare the impact of bullying on children with and without certain disabilities, such as a speech and language difficulty, show that bullying has a greater impact on self-esteem for those with a disability. Homophobic and transphobic bullying (bullying targeted at those who are or who are perceived to be LGBT) has also been found to be prevalent with evidence that such pupils have particular difficulty in speaking up or reporting the bullying behaviour.

APPENDIX SIX

WHERE DOES BULLYING HAPPEN?

Bullying can happen anywhere at any time but there are certain times and places which particularly facilitate bullying.

Cyber-bullying: Access to technology means that cyber-bullying can happen around the clock and the pupil's home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Pupils are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyber bullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

Areas of unstructured activity: Bullying in schools frequently takes place in the playground/schoolyard. School grounds with hidden or obscured parts may provide an environment conducive to bullying. Many common playground/schoolyard games present opportunities for bullying because of their physical nature. It is relatively easy to single out and bully another pupil. The noise level masks much of what is going on. The playground/schoolyard may provide the opportunity for older pupils to pick on younger pupils. It can also be the setting for bullying by groups. Continuing provocation may eventually lead to a physical fight and ironically in some cases the person being bullied may appear to be the aggressor because he/she finally gives vent to his/her frustration.
Toilets, corridors, cloakrooms, locker areas, changing rooms, and assembly hall may be the scene of verbal, psychological and physical bullying. The behaviour of pupils in those areas needs careful monitoring.

Bullying in the classroom: Bullying may also take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks and sniggers but may take the more overt form of physical intimidation. It may also be exacerbated if a classroom atmosphere prevails whereby pupils are allowed to make derogatory comments about their classmates or other teachers. However, teachers need to be alert to the underlying reasons for such comments in case pupils are trying to disclose something which is disturbing them and thus needs further investigation. Bullying may also occur between class periods irrespective of whether the class or the teacher moves.

Coming to and from school: The area immediately outside the school, the local shops and local neighbourhood are often the scenes of bullying. Bullying can also take place at the bus-stop or on the journey to and from school whether the individuals are walking, cycling or on school buse

APPENDIX SEVEN

 ROLES AND RESPONSIBLITIES OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

Pupil who is being bullied:

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullying in a way, which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

Pupil who sees or knows someone is being bullied:

- TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your own son there is nothing wrong with him. It is not his fault that he is being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Anti-Bullying Policy concerning bullying, so that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- Try not to over-emphasise negative incidents that occur to your child at school. You may over-sensitise your child to experiences that are part of socialisation and impair his ability to develop interpersonal skills and coping mechanisms. A certain amount of negative experience is a normal part of growing up and in ordinary everyday school life, all children will experience some fallings out with their fellow pupils. It is important not to label such events as bullying to your child until the

school can establish this conclusively. Your child may develop a victim mentality and see even the most trivial incidents as bullying and this may have a damaging impact on their integration and social interactions with friends and schoolmates. Premature labelling of behaviour as 'bullying' can also have a far-reaching impact on those children who are unfairly labelled as 'bullies'. In the vast majority of cases, a quiet word to the class teacher from a concerned parent will result in the issue being resolved promptly and fairly to everybody's benefit.

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 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff 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?	**Yes**
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	**No**
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	**No**

Signed: T M Shannan

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed:

Principal

Date: 9 May 2023

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

To: St John the Baptist BNS School Community

The Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS 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 12 November 2020].**

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: ⌐M Shannan

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed:

Principal

Date: 9 May 2023