

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Following the requirement of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **Ballymacelligott 1 NS**, Flemy 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* 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 the 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

See DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, September 2013

- See Table A (6.1.5.): Key elements of a positive school culture and climate, and also
- Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a school culture and climate.

- 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 an unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. **

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

**** NOTE: However, in the context of this policy, posting 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 per the school's code of behaviour.

Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provides additional information on different types of bullying.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:
Any repeat of the following behaviour is considered bullying:

- **Deliberate exclusion**, i.e. forming cliques, favouritism and isolation
- **Malicious gossip** and other forms of relational bullying
- **Cyber-bullying** **
- **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.
- **Humiliation**, including name-calling, reference to academic ability, physical characteristics, accent or distinctive voice, sexual innuendo, etc.
- **Intimidation** includes aggressive use of body language, dirty looks, and mimicking.
- **Verbal abuse**, showing disrespect, anonymous or otherwise.
- **Physical abuse** or threatened abuse. (pushing, punching, kicking, tripping, assaulting)
- **Being mean**
- **Aggressive or obscene language.**
- **Offensive** joke, whether spoken or by email, text messaging, etc.
- **Victimisation**, including very personal remarks about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene, school work, family circumstances, and ability at games.
- **Interfering/breaking/hiding/defacing/stealing personal possessions. (property, damage to clothing, school books, learning materials)**
- **Unreasonable assignment** to unfavourable duties.
- **Unreasonable deadlines** or tasks.
- **Threats**, including demands for money or other belongings.
- **Writing derogatory comments** on books, copies, desks, etc

4. As detailed in Section 6.8.3 and Section 6.8.4 in the 2013 DES Anti-Bullying Procedures, the relevant teacher for monitoring/restoring class behaviour is the class teacher. Adult supervisors in the yard use restorative questioning when dealing with minor once-off incidences and record significant negative behaviours on incident report forms for school monitoring purposes. The incident reports are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office. The principal will monitor these reports on an ongoing basis. These reports will be kept for reference should further serious incidents arise.

The class teacher, deputy principal, and principal will investigate repeated negative behaviour. If dealing with a repeated incident, the parent is informed.

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 and identity-based bullying, including, in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) used in Ballymacelligott 1 NS, Flemby are as follows:**

- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, acknowledging good behaviour, and providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff is particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's bullying policy and actively promote it repeatedly among staff, parents, and pupils.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour at home and school, being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, and communicating concerns to the school.
- Using school assemblies to remind pupils of the school's anti-bullying policy
- Using the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable: visual arts activities, posters, drama, role-play, SPHE, cooperative games.
- Devising a school anti-bullying charter for display in classrooms and other prominent locations
- Model respectful behaviour to all school community members at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and behaviour look, act, sound, and feel like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good – notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with school phone and internet use rules.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness-raising campaigns around social media.

- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil-friendly language in the classroom and common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/schoolyard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help identify bullying 'hot spots' and 'hot times' for bullying in the school.
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/schoolyard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - Hot times again tend to be when there is less structured supervision, such as when pupils are in the playground/schoolyard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Types of cyber-bullying – SEE APPENDIX 2

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:

Records

A standardised record system will track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed and the reasons they were imposed

Both parents/guardians and pupils will be told when a record is being made about a child's behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept following the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

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

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

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, develop friendships and social skills and build resilience
- If pupils require counselling or further support, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise it. 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 prevent and address bullying behaviour and facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, following its obligation 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 of 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 has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents/guardians and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested.

11. 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents/guardians and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

APPENDIX 1

Indications of Bullying:

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

- anxiety about travelling to and from school - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, 'mitching', 'ditching';
- 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; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- visible signs of anxiety or distress - 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;
- reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

Disclosure:

Children will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. They will be helped to differentiate between incidents of a minor nature and those that constitute bullying. They will also be taught the difference between 'telling tales' and asking for help.

APPENDIX 2

Types of cyber-bullying

Flaming: Online fights, usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.

Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms or websites set up to make fun someone.

Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites or other online group activities

Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures and videos.

Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.

Impersonation/Masquerading: Pretending to be someone else when posting mean or false messages online using fake email address or instant messaging name.

Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online, sometimes at odd times of the day and night.

Cyberstalking: Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm. Messages are normally sent through personal communication such as email or text messages.

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))

4. Location of incident (tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned		Playground	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		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 it's 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 4 – INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Flemby N.S wishes to give its students limited access to the Internet, which has potential benefits as a learning tool.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore if this policy is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and the appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

PROCEDURES

1. a teacher will always supervise Internet sessions.
2. Filtering software—Cyber Patrol will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
3. Pupils Internet usage will be monitored.
4. Students and teachers will be made aware of Internet safety guidelines as outlined by The National Centre for Technology and Education.
5. Uploading or downloading of non-approved material will not be permitted.
6. Virus protection software will be used.
7. The use of personal CD-ROMs in school is forbidden.
8. Only teachers have access to the Internet password.
9. Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not take any action that may bring the school into disrepute.
10. Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
11. No personal e-mail accounts to be used by the pupils. If the need occurs, students will use approved e-mail accounts under the supervision of the class teacher, e.g., sixthclass@flemby.ie.
12. Students will not reveal their own or other people's details, e.g. telephone numbers.
13. No chat rooms will be accessed.
14. The school reserves the right to discipline students for actions taken off campus if they are intended to affect a student or adversely affect the safety and well-being of a student while in school.

SANCTIONS

Misuse of the Internet will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the school Code of Discipline.

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations dealing with illegal material or harmful Internet use. Parents will be provided with the addresses of the relevant websites.

CONCLUSION

The AUP is envisaged to be revised annually by the school and parent representatives. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

APPENDIX 5

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 aids in conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. 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?	✓
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	N/A
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	✓
Is the Board satisfied that the school staff is 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 address 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?	x
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	x
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	x
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?	x
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	x
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	x

Signed: Bridget McDonnell
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 29/04/2024

Signed: Deirdre Hartz
Principal

Date: 29/04/2024

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

To: St. Senans

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

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____.
- 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: Bridget McDonnell
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 29/04/2024

Signed: Deirdre Hartz
Principal

Date: 29/04/2024