



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: January
2024

Ennis National School

Document Control	
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Chairperson: Dan O'Connell	Date: _____
Principal: Ray McInerney	Date: _____



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, the Board of Management of Ennis 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 and is informed by the Cinealtas Action plan:

The Cinealtas plan has a vision "centred on an Action Plan on Bullying that is practical, inclusive and contains a broad range of actions which help us all to work together towards a diverse, inclusive Irish society free from bullying in all its forms and where individual difference is valued and celebrated".

Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child¹ in September 1992. In doing this we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children. Bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education (Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

The aim of Ennis National School's Anti-Bullying policy is

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

2) Statement on Bullying:

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) Definition:

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.

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.

4) Investigating and dealing with bullying

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6 of this Policy for more detailed information)

- A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in our school
- In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has initial responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher"
- At primary school level, the relevant teacher will normally be the pupil's respective class teacher
- If bullying persists / re-occurs involving the same children, the Principal then investigates the bullying incidents.

5) Education and Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as

follows (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy. The SPHE curriculum provides opportunities for role playing bullying incidents and conflict resolution.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by 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 are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- 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
- Professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community – In September 2023 we conducted a survey and gathered the student voice to use student and parent input to inform policy making – making a new Child Friendly Anti-Bullying policy which was distributed to parents and pupils with wording suitable for children in our school and with direct quotes from our pupils. Appendix 2
- 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 communication technology within the school
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. friendship week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils
- Events to promote friendship and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, post holders, etc
- 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
 - 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.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. www.tacklebullying.ie, www.antibullyingcentre.ie>fuse, www.webwise.ie

Implementation of Curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum, the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes – The Friends for Life programme: training is also being provided to several staff for this initiative.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme and The Walk Tall Programme
- 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)
- Positive promotion of cultural diversity through the curriculum links to other policies

Maintaining awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour

Ennis National School emphasises and reinforces the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by

- Using both 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, slogan or rhyme for display in classrooms and other prominent locations
- Hosting an “Anti-Bullying Week” in each school year to raise pupils’ awareness and understanding about the nature and unacceptability of bullying in our school. This aims to enable the children to **Recognise**, **Reject** and **Report** bullying when they see it.

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 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:

- a. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)', the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- b. If it is established by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' that bullying has occurred, the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- c. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must record the bullying incident on the school information management system (Aladdin) by adding a Bullying Report Template to the relevant pupil's file which will be visible on files on all other pupils named. The 'Relevant Teacher' must inform the Principal.

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). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)'. 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 instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the Class Teacher.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents



might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- Where the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' has/have 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 perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- The "Relevant Teacher" does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the "Relevant Teacher" will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This may be recorded on Aladdin.
- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some or all of Level 2 Supportive Interventions will be utilized (See School Code of Behaviour)
- Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in



accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.

7) Supporting Pupils affected by Bullying:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

- Supporting Bullied pupils:
 - Ending the bullying behaviour,
 - Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
 - Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
 - Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes,
 - Indicating 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,
 - Making adequate counselling facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
 - Helping 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).
- Supporting Bullying pupils:
 - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet,'
 - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this,
 - Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,
 - Helping 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),
 - Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
 - In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
 - In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with



a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

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.

9) Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10) This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21st November 2022. It has been reviewed and adapted in January 2024.

11) This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents 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.

12) This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents 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.



Appendix 1

Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- **Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:**
 - Shouting and uncontrolled anger
 - Personal insults
 - Verbal abuse
 - Offensive language directed at an individual, Continually shouting or dismissing others
 - Public verbal attacks/criticism
 - Domineering behaviour
 - Open aggression
 - Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact
- **Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:**
 - Treating in a dictatorial manner
 - Ridicule
 - Persistent slugging
 - Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort
 - Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual
 - Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. personal life/family
 - Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork
- **Interference with property, for example:** Stealing/damaging books or equipment
 - Stealing/damaging clothing or other property
 - Demanding money with menaces
 - Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property
 - Marking/defacing property
- **Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:**
 - Condescending tone
 - Deliberately withholding significant information and resources
 - Writing of anonymous notes
 - Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments
 - Malicious tricks/derogatory joke,
 - Knowingly spreading rumours, Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new idea,
 - Derogatory or offensive nickname (name- calling)
 - Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying, Disrespectfully mimicking a particular



individual in his/her absence Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person

- **Ostracising or isolating, for example:**

Deliberately marginalising an individual

Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group

Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do

This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment"

- **Cyber-bullying:**

Use of information and communication technologies such as text, social networking sites, e- mail, apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies to bully others eg:

Snapchat messages -can be threatening or cause discomfort. Picture/Video-clips via mobile phone cameras-eg Snapchat images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.

Mobile phone calls-silent calls, abusive messages or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.

Emails-threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.Chat room bullying-menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat-room.

Creation or use of social media group chats/accounts where images of pupils are added without consent with the purpose of spreading rumours, teasing, or causing upset.

Bullying via Social Media apps such as Send-it, Tiktok, Snapchat.



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Appendix 2 : Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy

If you feel that you are being bullied:

1. Say NO.



- ✓ Ask them to STOP.

2. Move away.



- ✓ Walk away and ignore them.

3. Tell.

- ✓ Tell SOMEONE
- ✓ Talk to a friend.
- ✓ Tell a teacher.

What should I do if I see someone else is being bullied:



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- ✓ Tell an adult straight away.



- ✓ This can be your teacher – after class or write a note.



- ✓ This can be a parent – ask them to let the school know quietly if you don't want to say it. Our email is: info@ennisns.ie
- ✓ Don't stay silent. Saying nothing means the bullying can keep happening.



Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy

- ✓ We want our school to be a place where everyone can feel safe and happy.
- ✓ That means that no bullying is allowed.
- ✓ In this policy we want the school, the staff, and the students to work together to keep our school a welcoming, happy place for everyone.
- ✓ This policy was made for our students, and with their input.



✓ Tell a parent.



The school can get involved and help to **STOP** the bullying **IF** we know it is happening.

Every
has
right
be



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What is Bullying?

BULLYING IS WHEN SOMEONE HURTS YOU...



SEVERAL TIMES ON PURPOSE

Bullying is a behaviour that can hurt you on the inside or on the outside and is **repeated** over time. It can be:

- **Verbal:** name calling, teasing, spreading rumours.
- **Emotional:** leaving you out, saying nasty things about you to others, hurting your feelings, making threats.
- **Physical:** punching, kicking, hitting, pushing, spitting.
- **Cyber:** Saying unkind things online, via text, groupchat.
- **Prejudice** : Calling you names because of the colour of your skin, religion,

Remember

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- Speak up – tell a parent or a teacher or a friend.
- Screenshot evidence of online bullying and show an adult you trust.
- Don't share personal information with anyone online.
- Tell if you see someone is being treated badly. Help others.
- Treat others kindly.
- If you hurt someone, think about how it would feel if it happened to you or someone you care about.

Students in our school have this to say:

- *Bullying can: make someone "feel low or sad."*
- *Bullying can be "excluding someone or making fun of them repeatedly."*

If you see someone being bullied :

Useful websites for parents to talk to you at home about bullying:

<https://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie/>
<https://www.webwise.ie/>
<https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/parent-hub/>
<https://tacklebullying.ie/>

What you can do:



Start Telling Other People



ethnicity, sexuality, gender, special educational need or disability.

- *“Tell them to stop. Or tell a teacher. Or help them to tell. But whatever you do, don’t fight back.”*
- *“Include them in your game or conversation.”*
- *“Help them and support them.”*
- *“Tell them the bully is wrong and be a good friend to them”. “Tell the bully to stop and if they don’t then tell.”*





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