




Anti-Bullying Policy

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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 St Raphael's Special School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

Anti-bullying Policy

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 seek assistance if incidents of bullying behaviour occurs 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 through emphasis of our school rules;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that
 - build empathy, respect and;
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
 - All computer/iPad use by pupils is fully supervised and Wi-Fi access to the internet is not available in school.
- 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.

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.

In any case where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred-

- the parents 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); and
- the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template at [Appendix 1](#) (and a copy must be provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal) in the following circumstances:

- In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The procedures include oversight arrangements which require that, at least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported to the Principal or Deputy Principal since the previous report to the Board and;
- confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

As part of the oversight arrangements, the Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

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.

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Principal
or
Deputy Principal

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

- Only supervised use of computers/iPads is allowed in the school
- Only restricted sites are available to pupils
- Each pupil is seen as an individual and their individuality is encouraged and celebrated.

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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- Reported to Principal by staff
- Behaviour incident forms are completed
- Adverse incident forms are completed where necessary
- Parents are informed
- Positive behaviour management strategies are reviewed
- Risk assessments are completed/reviewed

- Strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour as contained on pages 7 and 8 of Code of Behaviour policy are implemented.

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):

- The clinical team/Community Network Team will be informed by the Principal/Deputy Principal working with class staff and as necessary support will be provided to pupil and family

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.

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.

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

Review of this policy

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, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the patron and the Department if requested.

Appendix 1 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name	Class
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2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant boxes)

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant boxes)

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

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 2 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?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the School Parents' Association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____ Date _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____
Principal

Appendix 3 Notification of the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Anti-bullying policy

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

To: _____

The Board of Management of St Raphael's Special School wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date]
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist in Appendix 2 of this policy as set out in Appendix 4 of the Department for Education and Skills' Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____
Principal