

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

This policy is required to assist the school in devising school-based measures to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to increase awareness of bullying behaviour in the school community as a whole. E.g. school management, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents, as well as those from the local community who interface with the school.

Involving and encouraging all members of the school community in developing, formulating, and reviewing this policy promotes partnership, ownership and implementation of a 'living policy', one which is actively implemented/ promoted in the whole school community.

The climate and atmosphere of the school are created by the actions of everyone in the school. The behaviour of the adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts.

The Department of Education and Skills requires schools to have a written policy on anti-bullying.

Links to the School's Mission Statement

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

The Board of Management of Ratoath Senior National School strives to nurture the full potential of both staff and pupils in a secure, friendly and stimulating environment. In Ratoath Senior National School we aim to create a school which:

- Promotes excellence in teaching and learning
- Values each child as an individual and helps them to develop a sense of their own worth, through developing self-confidence and self-expression.
- Nurtures each child in all aspects of life; spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual, physical and social.
- Creates a sense of responsibility, respect and caring for self, others and the wider community.
- Fosters environmental awareness and care among pupils through the SESE curriculum.
- Encourages involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Parents' Association.
- Promotes professional and personal development of teachers through continuous professional development programmes.

The Board of Management of Ratoath Senior National School recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and staff and is therefore 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 investigation strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

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, when the behaviour is systematic* and ongoing* it is bullying.

**Systematic – is characterised by actions that are planned and methodical and designed to undermine and intimidate the individual.*

**Ongoing – remaining in existence, developing, continually moving forward.*

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.

Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying that can occur amongst pupils. This list is non-exhaustive.

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person’s disability • Setting others up for ridicule

Effects of Bullying

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

Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour

We need to realise that any pupil can be a victim of, or a perpetrator of bullying behaviour.

The Victim/The Target

Any pupil, through no fault of their own may be bullied. It is common in the course of normal play for children to tease or taunt one another. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become bullying behaviour. As children are particularly quick to notice differences in others, children who are perceived as different are more prone to encountering such behaviour. Nevertheless, the pupils who are most at risk of becoming victims are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour is directly related to the pupil’s continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression.

It is of note that some pupils can behave in a manner which attracts bullying behaviour.

The Bully

It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour. Pupils who bully tend to display aggressive attitudes, combined with a low level of self-discipline. They can lack any sense of remorse. Often they convince themselves that the victim deserves the treatment meted out. Pupils who bully can also be attention seeking. They often set out to impress bystanders and enjoy the reaction their behaviour provokes. They tend to lack the ability to empathise. They are unaware of or indifferent to the victim’s feelings. Others seem to enjoy inflicting pain. It is of note that many bullies suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem. It is not uncommon to find that children who engage in bullying behaviour are also bullies. They tend to be easily provoked and frequently provoke others.

The Bystander

Passive bullying includes being a bystander and watching a bullying incident and doing nothing to stop it, or encouraging another to bully. Bullying is a difficult problem that only gets worse when it is ignored. Research clearly demonstrates that bystanders play a significant and pivotal role in the addressing and management of bullying.

- Bystanders are present most of the time (around 85%) where adults are rarely present.
- Most young people feel uncomfortable but very few know what to do to stop it happening.
- When bystanders do intervene, the bullying is more likely to stop quickly most of the time.

Indications of Bullying Behaviour/ Signs and Symptoms

The following signs and symptoms may indicate that a child is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school – requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing the route of travel, 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 (headaches, stomach aches).
- Unexplained change 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, crying, withdrawing, nightmares, vomiting, bed-wetting, difficulty sleeping, and not eating.
- 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 them.

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

Rights and Responsibilities

In the school's daily and routine life, the ways in which people interact with each other significantly affect each person's sense of self-worth, belonging and well-being. The fostering of high quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents and ancillary staff is a responsibility shared by everyone. All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

Responsibilities of the Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The Board of Management is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The Board of Management will ensure that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

Responsibilities of School Staff

- To acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the school

- To implement prevention and intervention strategies which build and maintain a safe learning environment for the whole school community
- To take all reports of bullying seriously and to report them to the Principal if warranted
- To document any serious bullying incidents using the Bullying Incident Report Form

Responsibilities of Pupils

- To show consideration, respect and support towards others
- To be able to identify bullying behaviour
- To not bully others
- To tell if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied
- To engage in responsible reporting when witnessing or experiencing bullying behaviour
- To feel empathy for targeted members of the school community and, as a result, take safe and sensible action as a bystander

Responsibilities of Parents

- To support the school in the implementation of the policy
- To watch out for signs that their child may be being bullied
- To speak to the class teacher if their child is being bullied or if they have seen other pupils being bullied
- To instruct their children to tell if they are being bullied or if they have seen other pupils being bullied
- To notify the school if they think that their child is displaying bullying behaviour and to work with the school in addressing the problem.
- To never directly approach a pupil or the parent of a pupil at the school to intervene in behavioural issues

Raising Awareness of Bullying Behaviour

Ratoath Senior National School will promote a preventative approach to bullying by implementing the following:

- Developing a whole school Anti-Bullying Policy in collaboration with the whole school community of all staff, pupils, parents and The Board of Management
- All teachers will implement the school's Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in full
- A copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the Code of Behaviour will be made available to all parents in our Parents' Booklet. New parents/guardians will be required to sign an undertaking on our enrolment form which supports these policies. The revised policy will be available to all parents on the school's website and an undertaking of their support for the policy will be sought.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy and the Code of Behaviour will be available on the school website – www.ratoathsns.ie
- A hard copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the Code of Behaviour will be available in the school office. A copy will be made available to parents and others on request from the school office.

Prevention of Bullying Behaviour

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is first and foremost the class teacher. 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:

- Each class will devise classroom rules at the beginning of each school year which will promote inclusion, acceptance of difference and respect for one another. Children will sign their acceptance of the Class Code.
- Throughout the teaching of all subjects, across the curriculum, an attitude of respect will be fostered; diversity will be promoted and valued; prejudice and stereotyping will be addressed and it will be highlighted that bullying behaviour is unacceptable;
- The curriculum provides children with the opportunity to consider their attitudes and their safety when online and make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development in this context.
- The school develops self-esteem in our pupils through curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions
- Additional lessons which deal specifically with bullying will be undertaken in each class with an emphasis on openness and discussion in this area. Areas covered may include
 - What is bullying?
 - Forms of bullying
 - Cyber bullying
 - Why do people bully?
 - Bystander bullies
 - Silent witnesses
 - Effects of bullying
 - How does bullying make me feel?
 - What can we do?
 - Preventing bullying
 - Coping with bullying
- There will be a school-wide approach (involving school management, staff, parents and pupils) to dealing with the problem of bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved. It can affect everyone in the classroom, in the school and, ultimately, in the wider community.
- There will be a positive school-wide attitude and involvement which will assist in countering bullying in the school. In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils have a role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying that occurs elsewhere. It is important that parents recognise that a school that openly discusses bullying is acting positively and that they need to work with their school to ensure there is a coherent, school-wide approach to tackling the issue.
- The school will have a high degree of vigilance and openness in ensuring that bullying behaviour can be adequately tackled.
- The school will promote positive home/school/community links in regard to countering bullying behaviour. For example, bullying behaviour can often occur on the journey to and/ or from school. Our anti-bullying policy will embrace, as appropriate, those members of the wider community who come directly in daily contact with our school pupils. Bus drivers, the school traffic warden and local shopkeepers will be encouraged to counter bullying behaviour by reporting such behaviour to parents and/or the school as appropriate.
- In certain cases, the school will seek the assistance of other local persons and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE social workers, community workers and the Gardai;

- Within the school, every effort will be made to ensure that cyber-bullying will not occur as a result of access to technology.
- To help and support our students with disabilities and SEN, the school will focus on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as the transition from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.
- The school's prevention and awareness raising measures will be appropriate to the type of bullying and take into account the age and gender of the pupils involved. The school will work to raise awareness of bullying so that all members of the school community understand what bullying is and how the school deals with bullying behaviour.
- Staff, parents and pupils will be reminded regularly of the importance of dealing with the area of bullying. This will develop confidence in the parents of pupils who are being bullied to approach the school and it will also send a clear message to the parents of a pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a major responsibility in addressing their child's behaviour.
- The teachers will endeavour to influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusion. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Primary School Health Education Programme, Circle Time and the Listening and Speaking programme are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. The Webwise Primary Programme and Anti – Bullying Campaign Tools are designed to educate children about the internet and raise awareness of online safety and good practice. The Friends for Life Programme can also be used as a teaching and learning tool to raise awareness of bullying behaviour.
- Within the curriculum and in the teaching of all subjects, there is space to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Co-operative learning activities, group work and sporting activities can provide opportunities for channelling and learning to control aggression.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular 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.
- 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 to be considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell,
 - 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.
 - Anti-bully box, Things That Worry Me box
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness bullying behaviour

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an Incident of Bullying Behaviour

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. 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 will be consistent and clear in its approach to dealing with bullying when it occurs. There will be consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour;
- A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy:
- The class teacher has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying in the first instance:
- All cases of bullying behaviour should be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal:
- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment;
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility amongst all of its members;
- The school disapproves of vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members;
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning;
- The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs;
- The school identifies aspects of the curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values;
- The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring system to provide early intervention when/if necessary and responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner;
- The school recognises the need to co-operate with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community;
- The school recognises the right of parents to share in the task of equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills;
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying;
- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in a group and a community;
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his or her worth as a human being;
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school:
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal teacher, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school:
- The primary aim of the class teacher 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);
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher. In that way, pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. It will be made clear to all pupils that

when they report incidences of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly;

- Non-teaching staff such as special needs assistants (SNAs), the secretary, bus drivers, the caretaker, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant class teacher;
- Parents 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 as quickly as possible;
- All pupils and parents need to understand the approach taken to deal with anti-bullying from the outset;
- Parents/guardians are invited to discuss their concerns with a member of staff if they feel their child is being bullied.
- Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can provide very useful information in this way also;
- Where a case relating to a pupil remains unresolved at school level, it will be referred to the school's Board of Management.

Implementation of Curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, #UP2US, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), **Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack) **Diversity and Interculturalism**, Yellow Flag Programme.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. The lessons, delivered by our Community Garda, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.
- 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).

Links to Other Policies

School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying are the school's Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance policy and the school's practices with regard to sporting activities.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

- i. The teacher of the class of the child who is alleged to have engaged in bullying behaviour shall investigate the allegation unless the alleged perpetrator and the victim belong to different classes in which case both class teachers will investigate the complaint.

- ii. Teachers are best advised to take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/ guardians.
- iii. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom to avoid public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in the bullying behaviour, in an attempt to get both sides of the story.
- iv. 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 provide very useful information in this way.
- v. Teachers who are investigating bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussions with those involved.
- vi. The school's template for bullying behaviour should be used for on-going and persistent bullying behaviour. Blank templates are available from the secretary's office and on the r. drive and appear as Appendix 2 at the end of this policy. These templates will be kept in a folder and filed securely in the Principal's office.
- vii. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident. The assistance of another staff member with the investigation may be required.
- viii. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour one should seek answers to questions of what, who, when and why. This should be done in a calm manner setting an example of dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- ix. The Principal will speak to the investigating teacher and will review the written information provided and will hold further investigations if necessary, with the assistance of another teacher.
- x. If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually and then the group should be met as a whole. Each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- xi. If it is concluded that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour it should be made clear to the pupil that he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour. The pupil should be encouraged to see his/her behaviour from the perspective of the victim.
- xii. Each member of the group should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from the other members after interview by the teacher.
- xiii. If the Principal determines that bullying behaviour has not occurred, the parties will be notified of the result of the investigation and the reasons for the decision. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are unhappy with that decision, they may appeal it in writing to the Board of Management within ten school days of receiving the decision.
- xiv. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the Principal will meet separately with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the two parties involved as appropriate, in the presence of another teacher. The Principal will outline the results of the investigation and will explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy.
- xv. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.
- xvi. Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- xvii. An additional follow-up meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily.

Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal - pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Teachers will treat all of these records as confidential. All incidents must be reported to the class teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher, the class teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The class teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the class teacher that bullying has occurred, the class 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.
- All records retained by the relevant teacher should be stored in a safe place and filed appropriately.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 2 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 2** 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.

The following list of behaviours must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal:

- Intimidation or harassment
- Verbal abuse
- Humiliation
- Threatening
- Undermining
- Exclusion or isolation
- Damage to property
- Extortion
- Assault/Aggression – e.g. fighting, kicking, hitting, pushing, spitting, biting

These are in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. The records will be kept in the Principal's office. Copies of these records will need to be forwarded to next year's class teacher.

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) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing

A. Support for Pupils affected by Bullying Behaviour

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying behaviour involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention or support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals to appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families.

B. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management of Ratoath Senior National School 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.

Appendix 1

Practical Tips for Building a Positive School Culture

The following are some tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour:

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, 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
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with advice given on mobile phone and internet use
- Follow-up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules
- Actively involve parents and the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe in the school community
- Highlight and specifically teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and around the school
- All staff can actively look out for signs of bullying behaviour
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying 'hot spots' and 'hot times' for bullying in the school
 - Hot spots tend to be in the school/yard/outdoor areas/corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision
 - Hot time tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when the pupils are in the school yard or moving from one area of the school to another e.g. P.E., computer studies
- Support the work of the school government

Appendix 2

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied, class and teacher's name

Name: _____ Class: _____ Teacher's Name: _____

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(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents. Tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher 1)

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher 2)

Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____