



Anti-Bullying Policy

St. Fintan's High School

1. 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. Fintan's High 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.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives and wellbeing of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) A positive school culture and climate which

- 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.

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that:

- 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, by surveying Junior students each year (coordinated by Tutors and Year Head)

3. 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 conduct, 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, transphobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Examples of bullying behaviours (please note: this list is not exhaustive and is reviewed each year)

General behaviours which apply to all	<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 ● Extortion ● Intimidation ● Insulting or offensive gestures ● The “look” ● Invasion of personal space ● A combination of any of the types listed. ● Spreading rumours
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Denigration: Spreading rumours, 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Snapchat/TikTok/ Twitter/YouTube etc. or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p>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).</p>	
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 • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Additional Educational Needs (including gifted students), 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

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Head

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, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

(a) School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and 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.
- Ongoing whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it - prevention and intervention.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying.
- 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.
- Involvement of the prefects in contributing to a safe school environment.
- Annual review of the Anti-Bullying code for the school which is included in student journals.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and a copy of the policy is shared with all parent(s)/guardian(s) on the school app.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures, including periodic surveys, assemblies, lessons presented through SPHE/RSE classes, Friendship Week
- 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.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell:
 - Direct approach to a teacher, year head, or tutor at an appropriate time, for example after class
 - Hand a note up with homework
 - Get a parent/guardian or friend to inform a teacher on your behalf
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

(b) Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programme.
 - First Year – SPHE lessons on bullying

- Second Year - FUSE anti-bullying campaign, On My Own Two Feet
- Third Year – Fuse anti-bullying campaign
- senior RSE - incorporated into 'Health and Wellbeing', 'Relationships and Sexuality' and 'Into Adulthood' elements of the curriculum, as per draft NCCA guidelines
- Stand Up and Be You week
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes.
- Use of anti-bullying resources on sphe.ie and pdst.ie
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of AEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- Links to other policies
Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, Acceptable Use Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, SPHE Policy, Social Media Policy.

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:

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

(a) Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to their year head, tutor, teacher, principal or deputy principals or any trusted adult in the school.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as Secretaries, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), Caretaker, etc., must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

(b) Investigation of an allegation of bullying behaviour

- All reports of suspected bullying behaviour will be investigated and dealt with by a team made up of the Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal.
- It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents is carried out in an objective and factual manner.
- The Year Head is required to complete an official Incident Report Form (document available via hyperlink [here](#)) This form must detail the nature of the bullying behaviour, the parties involved and any relevant context. These forms must be stored in the Principal's office.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the Year Head will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- The Year Head should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

- Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the Year Head should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant Year Head that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support provided to the pupils.
- Where the Year Head has 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 situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

(c) Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Year Head must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable
 - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the Deputy Principal/Principal/Board of Management as appropriate.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

(d) Established intervention strategies may include:

- 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 interventions
- Other intervention strategies as deemed suitable e.g. Ken Rigby Strategies
<http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf>

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

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g. sports, clubs, societies, and other extracurricular activities.
- Pastoral care system including:
 - Guidance Counselling services within the school
 - Prefect system
 - Tutor/Year Head system
 - Care Team
 - Prefect system
 - Supervision team
 - Group work/circle time such as is available in SPHE, Personal Development and RSE classes
- If pupils require counselling or further support, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher or other relevant person.

8. Reporting to Board of Management

The following outlines the reporting requirements for the Board of Management:

Any bullying incident that has been investigated and resolved within 20 working days will be included in the principal's report at Board of Management meetings. These closed cases will form a regular part of the agenda, ensuring the Board is kept fully informed of actions taken and the overall effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

In cases where a bullying incident remains unresolved after 20 working days, the principal will provide the Board of Management with a detailed explanation as to the reasons why the incident is still open, the actions taken to date, and provide the board with an action plan detailing the steps that will be taken to resolve the incident. The Principal will ensure that strict confidentiality is maintained at all times. Only essential information necessary for decision-making will be shared. This ensures that privacy is respected while maintaining a clear focus on resolving the issues.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 9th December 2024 and will be reviewed annually.

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

13. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Council . A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.



Signed:

Pat Reilly
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 16th December 2024



Signed:

Kathy Mullen
Principal

Date: 16th December 2024



Notification regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

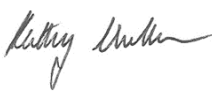
To: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the Parents' Association of St. Fintan's High School

The Board of Management of St. Fintan's High School wishes to inform you that:

- o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 16th December 2024.
- o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.


Signed
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 16th December 2024


Signed
Principal

Date 16th December 2024

Appendix 2 Bullying Incident Report Form

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

Date of Incident: _____

Date of Investigation: _____

Date Investigation Closed: _____

Number of working days open: _____

2. Other students involved

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Location of incidents (tick

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/A EN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
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8. Outline of Incident:

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9. Main Findings of Investigation

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10. Outcome of Investigation: (What conclusion was reached based on the evidence provided from the investigation?)

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11. Parental Involvement: (dates, means of communication and information discussed)

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12. Actions taken:

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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.

