St. Anne's Loreto Primary School
Anti-Bullying Policy

1. **In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of St. Anne's Loreto Primary 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 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-

     o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

     o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;

     o 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-

- o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils;

- o 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; e.g. Employee Assist Service / Spectrum Life

- • Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies);

- • On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

3.   In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is 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
  - o **PERSONAL INTIMIDATION:** This behaviour includes receiving threatening SMS messages, posting abusive and threatening comments on the victim's profile or other websites, or sending threatening messages via instant messaging
  - o **IMPERSONATION** : This behaviour involves setting up fake profiles and web pages that are attributed to the victim and it can also involve gaining access to someone's profile or instant messaging account and using it to contact others while impersonating the account or profile owner
  - o **EXCLUSION**: This behaviour involves blocking an individual from a popular group or community such as a school or class group on Instagram, deleting them from friendship lists, and/or using 'ignore functions'
  - o **PERSONAL HUMILIATION**: This behaviour involves posting images or videos intended to embarrass someone, it can involve users sharing and posting images or videos of victims being abused or humiliated offline / online, or users sharing personal communications such as e-mails, text messages,
    iMessages etc., with a wider audience than was intended by the sender
  - o **FALSE REPORTING**: This behaviour involves making false reports to the service provider or reporting other users for a range of behaviours with a view to having the user's account or website deleted
- • 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*.

4. As with all instances of misbehaviour in school, if there is an accusation of bullying in school the class teacher or the teacher on the yard, if the incident occurs on yard, will investigate the issue in the first incidence, The teacher on yard will discuss the incident with the child(ren)'s class teacher. The principal is then informed of the incident and the school's agreed procedures are followed.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:
   • The Stay Safe Programme
   • RSE Programme
   • Internet Safety / Cyber Bullying Workshop – "Don't Be Mean Behind your Screen" Programme an annual workshop for 3rd – 6th classes in Term 1 and 'Stop the Bully' workshops for 5th and 6th classes in term 2/3 initiated in March 2022.
   • Walk Tall programme.
   • Zippy's Friends – 1st & 2nd Classes (subject to teacher training).
   • Friends for Life Programme (subject to teacher training)
   • A number of awareness-raising exercises per school year for each class group are covered (*e.g. from the 'Awareness-Raising' strand of the Anti-Bullying Campaign, via its website*), pro-actively explaining the nature and variety, causes, consequences and unacceptability of bullying.
      - Pupils are helped to examine the issue of bullying in a calm rational way, outside of the tense context of particular bullying incidents. In the process they are made more aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms that it can take.
      - Pupils are made aware that the consequences of bullying behaviour are always bad for those who are targeted, even if this is not always obvious at the time.
      - Pupils are encouraged to recognise, reject and report bullying behaviour, either spontaneously or through questionnaires that are regularly used in the school.
      - Through presentations or other exercises, the school staff and parents/guardians are made aware of the nature of bullying and the signs that might indicate that a pupil is being bullied. They are encouraged to be vigilant in watching out for signs of bullying and to report any suspicion of bullying they may have to the 'Relevant Teacher' (in the case of staff members) or any staff member (in the case of parents/guardians).
      - Through regular communications, as well as at meetings with parent/guardian groups, parents/guardians are informed of the activities of the school in relation to our anti bullying activities.

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 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, whether these take place within the school or outside it, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end.
   • The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right (where age appropriate) to ask any pupil to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.

- Pupils who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour are interviewed by the 'Relevant Teacher/s' to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour and any reasons for it

- The 'Relevant Teacher' does not apportion blame but rather treats bullying behaviour as a 'mistake' that can and must be remedied. 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. In the event that they have been involved in bullying behaviour they are asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all pupils fairly, equally and respectfully going forward including the targeted pupil(s).

- If that promise is forthcoming and honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Pupils who report bullying therefore are not getting others 'in trouble' so much as enabling them to get out of trouble into which they may ultimately get if the bullying continued.

- 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.

- If a pupil has signed such a promise but then chooses to break that promise and continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a 'mistake.' In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed and requested to countersign their daughter/son's promise. Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a very grave matter and a serious sanction may be imposed by the school authorities (See sanctions below).

- While the principle focus is on the restorative approach, the school nevertheless reserves the right to take disciplinary action, where such is warranted, in accordance with the school's code of behavior, against those who bully others.
  The school also reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where bullying is perpetrated by a member of the school community and it impinges on the work or happiness of a pupil in the school, even when the bullying acts are committed outside of the school.

- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school in the possession of the class teacher/support teacher.

- Sanctions:
  - Where a pupil has been found to be engaged in bullying behaviour, has formally promised to stop and has broken that promise, any of the following sanctions may be imposed:
  - S/he may be required to sign another promise, this time countersigned by a parent/guardian;
  - Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be contacted by the 'Relevant Teacher' and informed of the nature and extent of the bullying behaviour with a view to agreeing a strategy whereby a promise to end the bullying behaviour would be honoured;
  - Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be invited to a meeting with the 'Relevant Teacher and or the Principal and the pupil may be suspended from school.
  - The case may be referred to the Board of Management and the pupil may be expelled from the school.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
   - Bullied pupils:
     - Ending the bullying behaviour.
     - Further developing the school's culture to foster telling when an incident happens.
     - Further developing the school's culture to foster more respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,

- Further developing the school's culture to foster greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the awareness-raising programme,
- 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,
- 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).

- Bullying pupils:
  - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this,
  - 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 behaviour 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.

Break time Rules

1. Remain in your seat at break times.

2. Bring home lunch wrappers / leftovers in your lunch box.

3. Whilst on recreation breaks children must not leave the school yard.

4. If an issue arises children must approach and speak to a member of staff.

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 or other 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 initially adopted by the Board of Management on 11th February 2016

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

Signed: *Máire O' Donoghue*   **Signed:** *Clíodhna O'Bric.*

    Chairperson of Board of Management   **Principal**

Date: **5ᵗʰ May 2022**   **Date: 5ᵗʰ May 2022**

Date of next review: May 2023

DES 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.

1	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*?	Yes
2	Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
3	Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
4	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?	Yes
5	Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
6	Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
7	Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
8	Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
9	Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
10	Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
11	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?	Yes
12	Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
13	Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
14	Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
15	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?	Yes
16	Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
17	Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	Yes: Cyber Bullying Workshop

Signed: *Máire O'Donoghue*   **Signed:**   *Clíodhna O'Bric.*

Chairperson of Board of Management   **Principal**

Date: 5th May 2022   **Date:**   5th May 2022

Scoil Áine Naofa
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An Uaimh,
Co. na Mhí.

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Notification regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review of the

Anti-Bullying Policy

To the: St. Anne's Loreto Primary School Community

The Board of Management of St. Anne's Loreto Primary 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 of Management meeting on 7TH April, 2022.

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 *Máire O' Donoghue* **Date 5th May 2022**

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *Clíodhna O'Bric.* **Date 5th May 2022**

Principal