

**Burrow National School**  
**Sutton, Dublin 13**

**Roll No. 09642P**

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W.K.M. Ryan', written over a horizontal line.

Revised: June 2019

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**PLEASE NOTE: The anti-bullying policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour.**

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 for the Burrow 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 by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). This policy complies with The Burrow School's GDPR policy.

The Burrow School has a central role in your child's social, moral and academic development. In school, both staff and pupils work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. The individuality of each child needs to be accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to education in a safe, disruption free environment.

All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in "telling". This confidence factor is of vital importance.

The primary aim for the relevant 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).

Child to child bullying, teacher to child, child to teacher, parent/guardian to staff and parent/guardian to child bullying (including a child other than their own) are examples of areas where bullying may occur.

Parents/guardians are expected to model the standards that pupils are asked to respect. In order to do this, they need to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting pupils to behave according to these standards. The ways in which parents/guardians and teachers interact will provide pupils with a model of good working relationships.

Where an incident has occurred, the cooperation of parents/guardians is expected as part of a preventative and/or remedial strategy.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES IN PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

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

- A positive school culture and climate which:
  - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and at the earliest possible opportunity; and
  - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that:
  - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

## **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 and 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.

In addition, 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.

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 this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in schools under equality legislation. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

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 behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

- **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in “mess fights”, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. A facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike can be particularly upsetting.
- **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: “Do this or I won't be your friend anymore” (implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person; non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the “silent treatment”.
- **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.
- **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name-calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically and there

are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

- **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, technological devices, school books and other learning material. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

### **Bullying as part of a “Continuum of Behaviour”:**

It is also important to note that bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue. In some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. To ensure that any such cases are dealt with appropriately, the school’s anti-bullying policy provides for appropriate linkages with the overall code of behaviour. It provides for referral to be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate. In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) and other appropriate agencies may be sought.

## **INDICATORS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents/guardians to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, 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 e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- Reluctance and/or refusal or say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

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### **RELEVANT TEACHER**

THE RELEVANT TEACHER FOR INVESTIGATING AND DEALING WITH  
BULLYING IS THE CLASS TEACHER, THE PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY  
PRINCIPAL OR A SENIOR MEMBER OF STAFF

## **STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE**

- The Code of Behaviour provides a framework for the expected level of good behaviour within the school;
- Explicitly teach pupils how to respond immediately to negative behaviour and to develop the assertiveness to say “STOP”;
- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times:
- Explicitly teach pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying, however minor, to their class teacher and/or their parents/guardians and that these disclosures should be made at the earliest possible opportunity;
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school;
- The SPHE Programme in the Curriculum encompasses class based discussions and learning situations to explore the nature of bullying;
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas;
- Class Rules for promoting good behaviour and creating a positive environment are drawn up in conjunction with pupils at the beginning of each new school year (see Code of Behaviour).
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines;
- 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, transphobic and racist language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or special educational needs;
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent;
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.

- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phones and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules;
- Actively involve parents/guardians and the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media;
- All staff actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour;
- All pupils are closely monitored and supervised at all times during normal school hours;
- At all break times there are staff members on duty with well established monitoring strategies in place;
- 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 playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision;
  - **Hot times** again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

## PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

In the school Code of Behaviour, there is a clearly defined escalating procedure for unacceptable behaviour, based on:

- Class teacher
- Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or Senior member of Staff
- Parental/guardian involvement
- Board of Management

The school would strongly encourage that all suspected bullying should be reported to the class teacher in the first instance.

What is of **paramount importance** is that

- ⇒the bullying is **always reported**
- ⇒to a responsible adult **within the school system** and
- ⇒at the **earliest possible opportunity**

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. The Anti-Bullying Policy is formulated by the Principal and teaching staff. The Principal has overall responsibility for the execution of this Policy within the school community.

As per the Code of Behaviour, if necessary, the Board of Management will become involved and sanctions of suspension or expulsion will be considered.

**Reported incidents of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, will be dealt with in the following manner:**

▪ **Where an incident is first reported to the class teacher:**

- The incident is discussed with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff;
- The staff will monitor the situation;
- Where bullying is observed a verbal warning will be given to stop the inappropriate behaviour;
- The pupil will be informed that they are in breach of the Code of Behaviour;
- The pupil will be encouraged to see the situation from the other person's point of view;
- Parents/guardians may be contacted, if deemed appropriate;
- The incident will be noted and a typed record put into child's file;
- Should the unacceptable behaviour cease, that will be the end of the matter.

▪ **If the behaviour is persistent:**

The Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff will contact the parents/guardians of the pupils affected by bullying;

- They will be given the opportunity of discussing the matter;
- They will be asked to support their children in reforming the behaviour;
- Appropriate actions will be taken;
- The incident will be recorded and filed.

▪ **If there is a serious incident:**

- The matter must be urgently reported to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff;
- Parents/guardians will be involved;
- Appropriate actions will be taken;
- The incident will be recorded and filed.

## **METHODS OF INTERVENTION**

**The primary aim for the relevant 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).**

**The teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved using any of the following methods:**

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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;
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;
- Parents/guardians and pupils must 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;
- It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents/guardians) understand the above approach from the outset;
- Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians;
- Incidents are generally best 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 also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.

- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
- 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 teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/guardians of the parties involved may 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 will give parents/guardians an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them how they are in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get them 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 parents/guardians) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, their parents/guardians and the school;
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;

- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after they have determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 1;
  
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher 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; and
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved.

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- Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents/guardians must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;
  
- In the event that a parent/guardian has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents/guardians of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING INCIDENT**

- All reports, including reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same;
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, 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 use the recording template at Appendix 1 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 according to the school anti-bullying policy the behaviour must be reported immediately to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at Appendix 1 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal and /or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 1 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal and /or Deputy Principal and/or Senior Member of Staff at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

## **SUPPORTS FOR PUPILS AFFECTED BY BULLYING**

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied is in place. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour is part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.

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 and Walk Tall programmes at primary level, are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Where appropriate the school also uses workshops, role play, drama and other intervention strategies.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

# **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT COMMITMENTS**

## **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.

## **Formal Declarations:**

- This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.
- This policy has been made available to school personnel, the Parents' Association and published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
- 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, the Parents' Association and published on the school website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1: Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

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	
Parent/Guardian	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents:  
(tick relevant box(es))\*

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
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. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact:


9. Details of actions taken:


Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal/Senior Member of Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ 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 set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department’s *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date \_\_\_\_\_