



## St. Senan's National School

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**Principal** - Thomas Lyng

**Deputy Principal** - Colette O'Farrell



## Anti-Bullying Policy

### School Position on Bullying

The St. Senan's school community believes that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation.

The school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the self-esteem and self-confidence of targeted pupil(s). Therefore, it does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Every report of bullying is treated seriously and dealt with, having due regard for the well being of the targeted pupil(s) and the perpetrator(s).

An 'Anti-Bullying Team,' made up of staff members, exists to cultivate an environment free from bullying.

The immediate priority, should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, (thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted) and resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved insofar as is practicable using a "Reform, not Blame" approach.

All pupils are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance a safe environment in the school. On becoming aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community they should notify a trusted responsible adult. Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report.

Pupils' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing school structures. Awareness of bullying, and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the NEWB (Education Welfare Services, Child and Family Agency), the Board of Management of St Senan's National 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) 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;

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

**(g) Supports for staff**

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

**(i) 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 and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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

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

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

*This definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.*

*Appendix 1 gives a list of specific examples of bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.*

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

The Relevant Teachers in this school for the school year 2022-2023 are:

<p><b>Principal:</b> Thomas Lyng  <b>Deputy Principal:</b> Colette O Farrell  <b>All class teachers:</b> Colette O Farrell Junior and Senior Infants          Agnes O Brien First and Second class          Gill O Grady Third and Fourth class          Cian O Sullivan Fifth and Sixth class  <b>SET:</b> Thomas Lyng, Ciara Halligan/Fiona O Halloran</p>	<p>If a substitute teacher witnesses bullying type behaviour in her/his class she/he should note its details in her daily report for the absent teacher and inform the Principal of this.</p>
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**Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant**

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

- The anti-bullying module of the SPHE programme as it applies during each school year, and school wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes e.g. The Walk Tall Programme, Grow in Love Programme
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- 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.
- The school will promote and teach bonding and team building activities through circle time, group activities e.g. science fair.
  
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- 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 Buddy system and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support and help in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. at lunchtime.
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per term) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice window in the school and notices in classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; regular information and awareness notices to be issued to parent(s)/guardian(s) ; regular school announcements by principal, deputy principal.

- 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.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.  
**Links to other policies**
- Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting 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:

#### **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 practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame)**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher 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.
- 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 circle time and other reporting methods such as a note to the teacher that are regularly used in the school.
- Through notices 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"
- The 'Relevant Teacher' investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end. See Appendix 3 for recording bullying behaviour. Please note once off incidents will be recorded in 'blue copies'
- It may be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s). This request will 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' to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour, in the context of and any reasons for that behaviour. In the event that they have been involved in bullying behaviours they are asked, in an age appropriate way, to make a commitment: to discontinue this behaviour(s); treat all pupils fairly, equally and respectfully including the targeted pupil(s); and, to expect this for themselves.
- 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 commitment that it will stop. If that commitment is forthcoming and is 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.
- If a pupil has made such a commitment but then chooses to break that commitment and continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a "mistake." In this event the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed and requested to come and speak with the 'Relevant Teacher'. Breach of this commitment 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).
- 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.
- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school.

### **Sanctions:**

Where a pupil has been found to be engaged in bullying behaviour, has formally made a commitment to discontinue this behaviour and has broken that commitment, any of the following sanctions may be imposed.

- 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 commitment to discontinue the bullying behaviour would be honoured
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be invited to a meeting with the 'Relevant Teacher' and 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

- 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.
  - Principal / Deputy Principal
  - Pastoral care system through the Resource and Learning Support Teachers
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  - Group work such as circle time
  - National Educational Psychological Service/Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services/Limerick Early Intervention Services
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or the pupil 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.

➤ For Pupils involved in Bullying:

making it clear that pupils involved in Bullying behaviour who reform are not blamed or punished and get a "clean sheet",

making it clear that pupils involved in Bullying behaviour 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 (eg. 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.

#### 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.

Staff will be mindful of risks on the field and the Boiler house door area and review these areas regularly.

The Board of Management will also draw parents' attention to risks on the bus as deemed necessary.

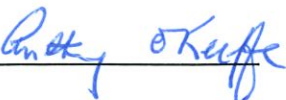
9. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

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


12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. See Appendix 3 for review.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made to school personnel and parents/guardians and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

  
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Chairperson, B.O.M.

28<sup>th</sup> September 2012

  
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Secretary B.O.M.



## Appendix 1

**Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):**

- **Repeated aggressive behaviour / attitude /body language, for example:**  
Shouting and uncontrolled anger,  
Personal insults,  
Verbal abuse,  
Offensive language directed at an individual,  
Continually shouting or dismissing others,  
Public verbal attacks/criticism,  
Domineering behaviour,  
Open aggression,  
Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact
- **Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:**  
Treating in a dictatorial manner,  
Ridicule,  
Persistent slagging,  
Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort.  
Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual.  
Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. personal life/family  
Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork.  
Invasion of personal space
- **Interference with property, for example:**  
Stealing/damaging books or equipment  
Stealing/damaging clothing or other property  
Demanding money with menaces  
Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property  
Marking/defacing property
- **Undermining / Public or Private Humiliation, for example:**

Condescending tone,  
Deliberately withholding significant information and resources,  
Writing of anonymous notes,  
Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments,  
Malicious tricks/derogatory jokes,  
Knowingly spreading rumours,  
Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new ideas,  
Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling),  
Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying),  
Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual  
Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person  
Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian – used in a derogatory manner

- **Ostracising or isolating, for example:**

Deliberately marginalising an individual  
Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group,  
Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational  
Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do.

Taking advantage for example:

- ✓ 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

### **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).

- ✓ Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- ✓ 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

## Appendix 3 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	
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

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**6. 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/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

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**9. Details of 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.

