

Anti-Bullying Policy



St Aidan's Comprehensive School

Approved: _____
Chairman Board of Management

Date: _____

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Anti-bullying policy

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. Aidan's Comprehensive 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. (**Appendix 1**) This policy applies to the whole school community.
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. (**Appendix 2**) The school is actively involved in building a positive school culture and climate (**Appendix 3**).
 - A positive school culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
 - Effective leadership;
 - A school-wide approach;
 - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
 - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - Supports for staff;
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - 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 will 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/indicators/characteristics associated with bullying and examples of bullying behaviours is included in **(Appendix 4)**.

Detection of Bullying

The following means will be used to detect bullying behaviour:

- ❖ Verbal reporting. Students are encouraged to report concerns to a mentor/prefect/staff member.
- ❖ Staff supervision.
- ❖ Video close circuit monitoring on corridors.
- ❖ Observation in/out of the classroom by teaching staff.
- ❖ Random bullying questionnaire. **(Appendix 5)**
- ❖ Class observation using relevant form. **(Appendix 6)**
- ❖ Bully box reporting system
- ❖ Shadowing systems. (Where alleged victims are "shadowed" by another student/mentor/prefect/staff member to detect possible bullying.)
- ❖ Consultation with Parents.
- ❖ Bullying Report Form. **(Appendix 7)**

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

In the first instance the relevant teacher(s) is: whoever the student reports a bullying issue to:

- Class teacher – if reported to them
- Tutor – if reported to them
- Year head – if reported to them

Incidents of Bullying should always be reported to the Tutor even where the class teacher is the relevant teacher and is/has resolved the matter.

All incidents of Bullying must be noted by the relevant Teacher and the Teacher/Tutor/Year Head involved having dealt with the incident/report must check back with student(s) that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily and this must also be noted.

If the matter is ongoing, or of a serious nature, this must be reported to the Year Head and Deputy Principal/ Principal. Parents will be informed and the support services within the school will also be involved.

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

Education and prevention strategies to combat bullying –

- i. St. Aidan's makes it clear to all members of the school community that bullying of any kind is unacceptable, irrespective of whether it is a student, a staff member or any other person that is the subject of such behaviour.
- ii. While when investigating and dealing with bullying the principle focus is on resolving differences and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than apportioning blame), the School nevertheless reserves the right to take disciplinary action, where such is warranted, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour, against those who bully others.
- iii. The prevention and awareness of bullying is integral to this policy and students will, through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes, be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth/self-respect.

- iv. The focus of the school's prevention strategy will be to build empathy, respect and resilience in students.
- v. Students will be provided with opportunities to understand the causes and effects of bullying, the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and trans-phobic bullying. Including the display of LGBT posters and discussions with parents about statements of welcome and respect for LGBT members of the school community, teaching the Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE) resource, *Growing Up LGBT* and participating in LGBT awareness events.
 - a) St. Aidan's recognises that 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, relationships and reflection. Also, that the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme provides opportunities to explore and discuss areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying. **(Appendix 8)** The School will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the full potential of these programmes to combat bullying is exploited.
 - b) St. Aidan's is committed to exploring the potential of the [Schools for Health in Ireland Framework](#) **(Appendix 9)** to assist it in ensuring that the school is inclusive, welcoming of diversity and addresses these issues effectively in the interests of all members of the school community.
 - c) Furthermore, it is recognised that there is potential within the teaching of all subjects and within extracurricular activities to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- vi. Prevention and awareness raising measures will also deal explicitly with cyber-bullying through educating students about appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also through developing a culture of reporting any concerns about or incidents of bullying to a member of the teaching staff.
- vii. St. Aidan's will, in all its communications with students and their parents, commencing with the induction of the student into St. Aidan's, make every effort to highlight the importance of students reporting incidents of or concerns about bullying to a member of the teaching staff on the clear understanding that these matters are being reported in confidence. More than anything else, the combating of bullying will depend on the extent to which students note and report bullying. In this context, the happiness of students is very much dependent on the vigilance of their fellow students and their preparedness to report concerns about bullying to the teaching staff and/or school management. All teaching staff will reinforce this point to students on an on-going basis.
- viii. St. Aidan's will adopt a school-wide approach (involving management, staff, parents students and members of the wider community with a connection to St. Aidan's) to prevent and combat bullying. In this context, the school is committed to engaging with parents. Firstly, the school will involve them in the development of policies and practices to combat bullying. Including an Internet Acceptable Use Policy **(Appendix 10)**. Secondly the school will hold information evenings for parents to ensure that they understand the way St. Aidan's

deals with bullying, and to provide them with reliable information on how they may contribute towards combating bullying (**Appendix 11**). In this regard, it is important that parents realise that anyone can be a bully and anyone can be a target of bullying. It is not just other people's sons and daughters that can bully. In this regard, it is important to realise that disagreements between young people are part and parcel of negotiating the road to adulthood and that every youthful disagreement should not be treated as a full-blown bullying episode. The Parents' Association will work in partnership with the school in the organisation of events.

The School will seek to work with the Students, Staff and Parents to maintain a Bully-Free environment by asking all members of the community to sign up to an Anti-Bullying Charter. (**Appendix 12**)

- ix. In accordance with 6.8.9 of the [DES Procedures](#) 'parents and students are expected 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'.
- x. St. Aidan's will establish links with school bus drivers and others who come in daily contact with its students in order to enlist them in countering bullying behaviour by reporting it to parents and/or the School. Transport prefects will be appointed on school buses.
- xi. Where necessary the school will seek the assistance of NEPS, the HSE and the Gardaí, as appropriate, to combat bullying.
- xii. In combating bullying, St. Aidan's will take particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. This will involve supporting inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying particular attention to student induction and cultivating a school culture that respects everyone and values helping one another.
- xiii. St. Aidan's will on an on-going basis have staff development sessions (for teaching and non-teaching staff – as appropriate) to raise the awareness of bullying among staff, building an understanding of what bullying is and providing guidance on how it is best combated – prevented, detected, investigated, documented (as appropriate) and resolved. This session will also provide opportunities for exploring the potential that exists within the teaching of all subjects and within extracurricular activities to foster an attitude of respect for all, to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- xiv. A clear focus of all staff development around combating bullying will be the enablement of all staff to implement this policy and the [Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#) consistently and effectively.
- xv. The school is committed to devoting continuous professional development sessions to build the capacity of the School to combat bullying on an on-going basis.

- xvi. The school is committed to surveying the student body during the school year to identify the extent of bullying and, in so far as is possible, the students that are affected by it.
- xvii. St. Aidan's RSE and SPHE programmes will specifically address the issue of bullying with each year group each year. Teachers may use the Reflection paper – Am I a Bully? with classes. **(Appendix 13)**
- xviii. The school will, endeavour to create awareness amongst all students with regard to Internet safety and security and the whole issue of bullying and staying safe using modern technology. **(Appendix 14)**
- xix. St. Aidan's senior students will have a specific responsibility for recognising bullying behaviour, for bringing concerns about bullying behaviour to the attention of a teacher and for supporting vulnerable students in relation to bullying.
- xx. 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.
- xxi. 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.
- xxii. Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Lunchtime Pals and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- xxiii. Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and posters displayed in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- xxiv. The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- xxv. The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; annual or term or monthly student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, year heads etc.
- xxvi. 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.

- xxvii. Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Anti-bully box?
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- xxviii. Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- xxix. The school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, include the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Acceptable Use policy and Attendance policy.

Anyone who reports bullying will be listened to.

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:

Established intervention strategies

6.1 The *Action Plan on Bullying* published by the Department highlights the importance of the school identifying and consistently implementing established evidence-based intervention strategies for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour and preventing its continuation.

6.2 There are various approaches and intervention strategies that might be used by the school. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour it is generally acknowledged that that no one intervention works in all situations. International and national research also continues to evolve in this area and the effectiveness of particular approaches continues to be reviewed.

6.3 *St. Aidan's* will decide on the intervention method(s) that are best suited to its own circumstances.

Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying

6.4 St. Aidan's has clear procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying and these are set out in the school's anti-bullying policy. The school's procedures are consistent with the following:

- 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);
 - Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) understand this approach from the outset.
- (i) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
 - (ii) 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 will 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;
 - (iii) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;
 - (iv) Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
 - (v) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;
 - (vi) The approach to dealing with incidents of alleged bullying will be a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach;
 - (vii) Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
 - (viii) Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved may also provide very useful information in this way.
 - (ix) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will 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. All those allegedly involved will be asked to write an account of the incident(s).

- (x) If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group if deemed appropriate. 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;
- (xi) 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;
- (xii) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, and depending on the seriousness of the incident the parents/guardians of the parties involved will 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 provide parents/guardians with an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their son/daughter;
- (xiii) Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. The student(s) may be referred to one of the support services in the school, i.e. Guidance Counsellor/Chaplain;
- (xiv) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school;
- (xv) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately. Students may be brought together if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- (xvi) In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at (**Appendix 7**) (See Section 6.8 (iii));
- (xvii) 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, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;
- (xviii) Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures. **(Appendix 15)**
- (xix) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children. **(Appendix 21)**
- In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) should be sought.

Serious Incident Protocol.

This will apply in any case where there is a cause for concern about the safety of an individual or group **(Appendix 16)**. This can trigger Child Protection Procedures **(Appendix 17)**.

Referral of serious cases to the HSE

6.5 In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First)* and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school will consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.

6.6 Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the *Children First* and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

6.7 *The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person (the Principal) will seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

6.8 The Board of Management must ensure that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these must be documented in the school's anti-bullying policy. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour must adhere to the following:

- (i) While all reports, including anonymous 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;

All reports from the relevant Teacher must include the report date, parties involved, the issue, action taken, whether parents contacted, date checked and referral on to Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principal/ Principal.

- (ii) 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.

- (iii) The relevant teacher must use the Bullying Behaviour recording template at (**Appendix 7**) 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. the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. These circumstances include matters of a serious nature including:
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Assault
 - Physical Aggression
 - Cyberbullying of a serious nature
 - Long term exclusion
 - Persistent Homophobic Bullying

This list is not exhaustive. If the relevant Teacher is unsure whether to use the Recording form they should consult with the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at (**Appendix 7**) must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Year Head/Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at (**Appendix 7**) does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour

6.9 It is also important to note that bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and 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 and provides for referral to be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate.

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

On-going Support:

- Student

The victim of Bullying will be given on-going support in St Aidan's from Staff, Support Personnel, Tutor, Year Head, Chaplain and Guidance Counsellor. Communication with parents/guardian will be maintained to ensure the student is getting the support they need both within school and outside.

- Parent – On-going communication/support to ensure issues resolved.
- Friends of the Victim –Where the Bullying has affected friends of the Victim they will be provided with on-going support by their Teachers, Tutor, Year Head, Chaplain and Guidance Counsellor. Friends will also have a support role in helping the 'victim' to cope and move on after bullying has taken place.

The Perpetrator of Bullying:

- The Student

The perpetrator of Bullying will be given on-going support in St Aidan's from Staff, Support Personnel, Tutor, Year Head, Chaplain and Guidance Counsellor. Communication with parents/guardian will be maintained to ensure the student is provided with the support they need both within school and outside.

- The Parent

On-going communication and support will be provided for the parents of the perpetrator ie. Bully, acceptance of the behaviour will be the initial focus. Following this acceptance, Parents will be asked to co-operate with the school in working with the student to change attitudes and behaviours and to seek their support in encouraging and monitoring the changed behaviour.

Counselling will be offered through the school Chaplaincy or Guidance Counsellor where possible and information will be provided on request for external agencies providing private or free counselling services.

- Friends of the Perpetrator ie. Bully

On-going support will be provided through class work in SPHE, Religious Education, School Assemblies and the support services etc. The emphasis of this support will be on the effects of this type of behaviour on a person and that it is unacceptable in St Aidan's.

RESOLVING ISSUES – SANCTIONS

The resolution and possible sanctioning in relation to issues arising shall be dealt with in the following manner:

A) Minor Incidents Where Guilt Is Admitted.

These issues to be dealt with through Tutor / Year Head System and be quickly resolved by agreement between alleged victim and alleged perpetrator of the act.

B) Major Incidents Where Guilt Is Admitted:

Consultation with Parents / Deputy Principal / Principal also to possibly include support from out of school agency e.g. services of Behavioural Therapist working with the HSE.

C) Major /Minor Incidents Where There is Denial:

Cases will arise from time to time where there is complete denial of involvement.

Whether or not there is an admission of involvement it is critically important that an agreement and undertaking be reached regarding immediate and future behaviour of all parties.

D) In extreme cases of Bullying, permanent exclusion may be the appropriate sanction.

It shall be made clear that:

- ❖ The specific behaviour shall cease immediately and students involved be made aware of the school policy on bullying and a definition of bullying
- ❖ There may be disciplinary implications involved.
- ❖ Agreement shall be sought about not taking revenge against persons who may have reported alleged bullying incidents.
- ❖ Measures shall be taken to ensure safety of alleged victim and to supervise the behaviour of others as shall be deemed necessary. A case discussion involving school management and other relevant personnel shall decide on possible sanctions.
- ❖ If bullying behaviour continues management may have to choose between suspension or referral of offender for clinical / psychological assessment or apply both. An assessment will point to whether the young person has psychological difficulties contributing to the behaviours, and whether anger management training might be a useful next step.
- ❖ The possibility of counselling for the student shall be discussed with parents.
- ❖ The provision of support for alleged perpetrator by counselling in school by Chaplain /Guidance councillor and/or outside agencies (as listed above) as appropriate.

Bullying of another student:

Following resolution of initial incident/ if alleged bully targets another student sanctions imposed should reflect lack of alleged bully's reform.

Supports for pupils affected by bullying

7.1 A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will provide 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.

There are many supports in place within the school including

- The Pastoral Care System of Year Head and Tutor.
- Mentoring
- Big Brother/Big Sister
- Support Services
- Workshops

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

7.3 Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers. Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of Bullying should be reported to a Teacher.

Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti- bullying policy

7.4 The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. The school will make provision for periodic examination of the prevention and intervention strategies in place using surveys of pupils, staff and parents.

7.5 Data gathered from the Reporting Templates (**Appendix 7**) will be regularly (at least once in every school year) collated and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and be made available to the Board of Management annually. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

7.6 The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be included as an agenda item for staff meetings to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

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.

Prevention and Monitoring of Pupils

9 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. **(Appendix 18)**.

10. St.Aidan's reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or programme that is school related if in the opinion of the Principal/Deputy Principal and/or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

11.This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

12. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and/or 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 and the Patron if requested.

13. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. **(Appendix 19)** Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. **(Appendix 20)** A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

14. Contact details for external agencies are attached. **(Appendix 21)**.

15. Retention of Records

- Litigation in relation to a school's duty of care may be initiated some years after a student has left the school.
- As a result, files on very serious incidents will be retained indefinitely.
- Records will be stored in a safe and secure place.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____