

Ballintubber National School

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Department of Education's "Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools" (September 2013), the Board of Management of **Ballintubber National School** has adopted the following Anti-Bullying Policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour.

2. Rationale and Commitment

The Board of Management recognises the serious impact bullying can have on pupils' wellbeing. The school is fully committed to:

- Promoting a positive school culture
 - Encouraging inclusivity and respect
 - Preventing and effectively responding to bullying behaviour
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3. Key Principles of Best Practice

- A positive school climate that promotes inclusivity and respect
 - Effective leadership from the Principal and staff
 - A whole-school approach involving parents, pupils, and the wider community
 - A clear and shared understanding of what constitutes bullying
 - Implementation of education and prevention strategies
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
 - Ongoing staff training and support
 - Clear procedures for investigating and recording bullying
 - Evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy
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4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as:

"Unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person, which is repeated over time."

This includes:

- Deliberate exclusion
- Malicious gossip
- Cyberbullying
- Identity-based bullying (e.g., homophobic, racist, or disability-related)

One-off incidents or isolated negative behaviours are not considered bullying but are dealt with under the school's Code of Behaviour.

5. Examples of Bullying Behaviour

Types include:

- **General:** Harassment, name-calling, damage to property, "the look", intimidation
 - **Cyber:** Online threats, impersonation, exclusion, abusive texts or posts
 - **Identity-Based:** Homophobic, racial, or disability-related abuse
 - **Relational:** Gossiping, isolating, group exclusion
 - **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual comments or contact
 - **Special Educational Needs:** Taunting or mimicking based on learning or physical differences
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6. Reporting and Responding to Bullying

Relevant Teachers:

- Principal: Karen Serantes
- Deputy Principal: Anne Kerrigan
- Class Teacher

Any teacher may act as the relevant teacher if needed.

Reporting:

- Pupils or parents can report to any staff member
- Anonymous reports will be taken seriously
- All staff are required to report incidents to the relevant teacher

Investigating:

- Focus is on resolution, not blame
- Interviews conducted sensitively
- Group incidents handled individually then collectively
- Parents informed early if bullying is identified

- Actions clearly explained to all parties
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7. Follow-Up and Recording Procedures

- Incidents are recorded objectively
- Ongoing monitoring of affected pupils
- Use of standard templates for formal recording (Appendix 3)
- Records stored securely
- Unresolved cases after 20 school days escalated to Principal/Deputy