



CARLOW VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

KILKENNY ROAD
CARLOW

Anti-Bullying Policy

Scope

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 Carlow Vocational School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's Pastoral Care policy.

This Anti-Bullying policy complies with the requirements of the 'Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools', published by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), September 2013.

Relationship to School's Mission Statement

This policy works within the mission statement of Carlow Vocational School and is directly linked to its aim to treat every person equally and to help all students to achieve their full potential at the school. The school's mission statement states:

Administration, staff and parents at Carlow Vocational School seek to promote a secure and caring community environment and a well-balanced curriculum, which is student centred, with parents recognised as the first educators and teachers as facilitators of the learning process. In partnership, we hope to provide an atmosphere, which encourages respect, responsibility and commitment, drawing forth the positive potential of each individual, thus equipping all students to take their place in life and work in the future.

Rationale

Carlow Vocational School is committed, through its mission statement, to promote a secure and caring community. As a caring school community, we hold that all bullying behaviour, which is persistent and pervasive, is unacceptable. In the knowledge that no school is immune from bullying it has been identified as a priority by staff, parents and students that strategies for the prevention and management of bullying behaviour be devised.

Key Principles

Carlow Vocational School recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of any member of the school community and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- a) A positive school ethos and climate which
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
 - encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment
 - 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, intervention and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying
- f) Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- g) Supports for staff
- h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)
- i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

Definition of Bullying

In accordance with guidance provided from 'Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools' (DES, September 2013) 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
- 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 do not fall within the definition of bullying. These will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

However, in the context of this anti-bullying policy, an abuse of power or 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 is regarded as bullying behaviour.

A non-exhaustive list of bullying behaviours is shown in Appendix A.

Roles and Responsibilities

Carlow Vocational School adopts a whole school approach to dealing with the problem of bullying behaviour, involving school management, staff, parents and students. The relevant roles and responsibilities within the school are as follows:

All staff

- All staff are responsible for dealing with the behaviour of students within sight or sound of them and they shall respond appropriately to any instance of bullying behaviour
- All staff must report all incidents of bullying behaviour they become aware of to the appropriate Year Head (use *Incident/Concern Report* form, Appendix C)
- All staff work as a team to implement appropriate actions and interventions as recommended by the Year Head in accordance with the anti-bullying policy

Subject Teacher/Class Tutor

- The subject teacher/class tutor promotes the school ethos and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect through their classroom teaching and interactions with students
- All teachers must be vigilant at all times for any bullying behaviour with the students under their care
- The subject teacher/class tutor is responsible for intervening with the behaviour of students within sight or sound of them and they shall respond appropriately to any instance of bullying behaviour
- The subject teacher/class tutor must report all incidents of bullying behaviour they become aware of, which might occur inside or outside of their classroom, to the appropriate Year Head (use *Incident/Concern Report* form, Appendix C)
- The subject teacher/class tutor works as part of the team that implements appropriate actions and interventions as recommended by the Year Head in accordance with the anti-bullying policy

Year Heads

- Promote a positive school ethos and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect by initiating positive interventions

and strategies for bullying behaviours through assemblies and general advice for students

- Record, investigate and intervene with any instance of bullying behaviour, and resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved
- Contact the parents of the parties involved in bullying behaviours at an early stage and inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken
- Brief the Pastoral Care Committee and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator on bullying behaviour concerns and issues and make appropriate referrals through this forum
- Report to the Deputy Principal/Principal when in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

- Complete a *Record of Bullying Behaviour* form (Appendix D) as and when cases of bullying occur
- Keep a record of all *Record of Bullying Behaviour* forms and provide advice and guidance to Pastoral Care Committee and Deputy Principal/Principal on the occurrence and nature of bullying behaviours in the school
- Report to the Deputy Principal when the instance of bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days of the incident occurring
- Report to the Deputy Principal/Principal when in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately

Principal

- The Principal must provide a report to the Board of Management at each meeting that describes:
 - The overall number of bullying cases investigated since the previous report to the Board
 - Confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures

Board of Management

- The Board of Management must formally adopt and implement an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the 'Anti-Bullying procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools' (DES, September 2013)
- The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's 'anti-bullying policy and its implementation' (Appendix E). Written notification that the review has been completed must be made available to school personnel and provided to the Parents Association

Parent/Guardian

- The parent/guardian has responsibility for supporting and upholding the policies of the school
- Where incidents of bullying are occurring to their child, the parent/guardian has the responsibility of reporting this to the school
- Where their child is the perpetrator of incidents of bullying, the parent/guardian has the responsibility of reporting this to the school

Student

- The student has the responsibility of complying with the anti-bullying policy, and participating actively in anti-bullying initiatives
- The student also has the responsibility of reporting incidents of bullying that they are subject to, or have witnessed

Education and Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that are used by the school are described below.

School-wide approach

- Carlow Vocational School adopts a school wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community and promotes the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour
- Each subject teacher/class tutor promotes a positive school culture and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect through their classroom teaching and interactions with students
- As a school we strive to enhance the self-esteem of all our students through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students are provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions
- The school provides awareness training about bullying, to ensure that we develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on students' lives and the need to respond to it - prevention and intervention
- The school provides regular whole school bullying awareness measures through its pastoral care of students and regular assemblies
- Carlow Vocational School has developed an anti-bullying code that is included in the student journal and is displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school
- The school has clear protocols and channels of communication to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect their child is being bullied

Implementation through the curriculum

The anti-bullying policy of the school is implemented through various curricula, including SPHE, CSPE. SPHE holds a particular role in delivering awareness and understanding of issues involving bullying. However, other subjects also address anti-bullying topics as a matter of course.

The school implements SPHE and CSPE programmes and provides CPD for staff delivering these programmes.

During each year of the Junior and Senior Cycle, issues related to bullying (directly and indirectly) are part of the SPHE syllabus. Topics include:

- Belonging and integrating
- Communication Skills
- Friendship
- Influences and decisions
- Personal safety

Content is based on evidence based programmes, including but is not limited to:

- My Own Two Feet
- Cyber Training for Parents, amended for students
- The Trust Pack
- Webwise
- Minding Me Series 1-3
- Grow Up- Junior Cycle SPHE 1-3
- Growing up with LGBT

The school specifically considers the additional needs of Special Education Needs pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately.

Links to other policies

In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 and the guidelines issued by the NEWB, the school's anti-bullying policy fits within the Pastoral Care and Code of Conduct policy. The anti-bullying policy should not be viewed in isolation of other school policies, practices and activities.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

- Any student or parent/guardian is encouraged to bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school
- All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant Year Head, or member of staff as appropriate
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as administrators, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the relevant Year Head

Recording of Bullying Behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows (refer to Appendix B – *Overview of Procedure of Recording Bullying Behaviour*):

- All school staff must report all incidents of bullying behaviour they become aware of, which might occur inside or outside of the classroom, to the appropriate Year Head, by completing an *Incident/Concern report*
- The Year Head will investigate all reports, and inform the parents as appropriate
- If bullying has occurred, the Year Head will report to the Pastoral Care Committee and the Pastoral Care Coordinator
- A strategy for the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) of bullying will be developed between the Year Head and Pastoral Care Coordinator
- The Pastoral Care Coordinator completes a *Record of Bullying* form
- The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator informs the Principal of all incidents being investigated

When the *Incident/Concern report* and *Record of Bullying* form are completed a copy will be placed on the relevant students' files

Procedures for Investigation

The school's procedures for investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows.

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to address the bullying behaviour, resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

Best practice in investigating and dealing with incidents

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the school to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved
- Parents/guardians and students 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
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the school should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why
- If a group is involved, each student should be interviewed individually, and notes taken by the member of staff
- In cases where it has been determined by the school that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents / guardians of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken

- Where the school has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents/guardians) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his or her parents / guardians and the school

Follow up of incidents

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - 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
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the school Principal, Deputy Principal, or relevant member of staff
- Follow-up meetings with the Guidance Counsellor and relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable
- Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents/guardians may refer to the school's complaints procedures

Programme of Support

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

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience
- If students require counselling or further supports the school will make the appropriate referrals to the Guidance Counsellor, and if necessary the relevant agencies. This may be for the student affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour
- Parents and students are expected to comply with the anti-bullying policy, and participating actively in the school's anti-bullying initiatives

Evaluation

All staff, parents, students, Board of Management members will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year and any changes incorporated into the amended policy.

Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Timeframe

This policy was reviewed during the academic year of 2013 - 2014.
Modifications were made and ratified to this copy by Board of Management on 27 May 2014.
Published and circulated 28 May 2014.

The above Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Carlow Vocational School / Carlow Institute of Education at a meeting

In: _____ (venue) On: _____ (date)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Secretary, Board of Management)

Appendix A

Examples of Bullying Behaviours

The list of examples shown below is non exhaustive.

General behaviours which apply to all

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber bullying

- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight
- Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages
- Abusive email
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

Appendix A

Identity Based Bullying 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).

Homophobic and transgender

- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation
- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner
- Physical intimidation or attacks
- Threats

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community

- 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

Relational

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation & exclusion
- Ignoring
- Excluding from the group
- Taking someone's friends away
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear

Sexual

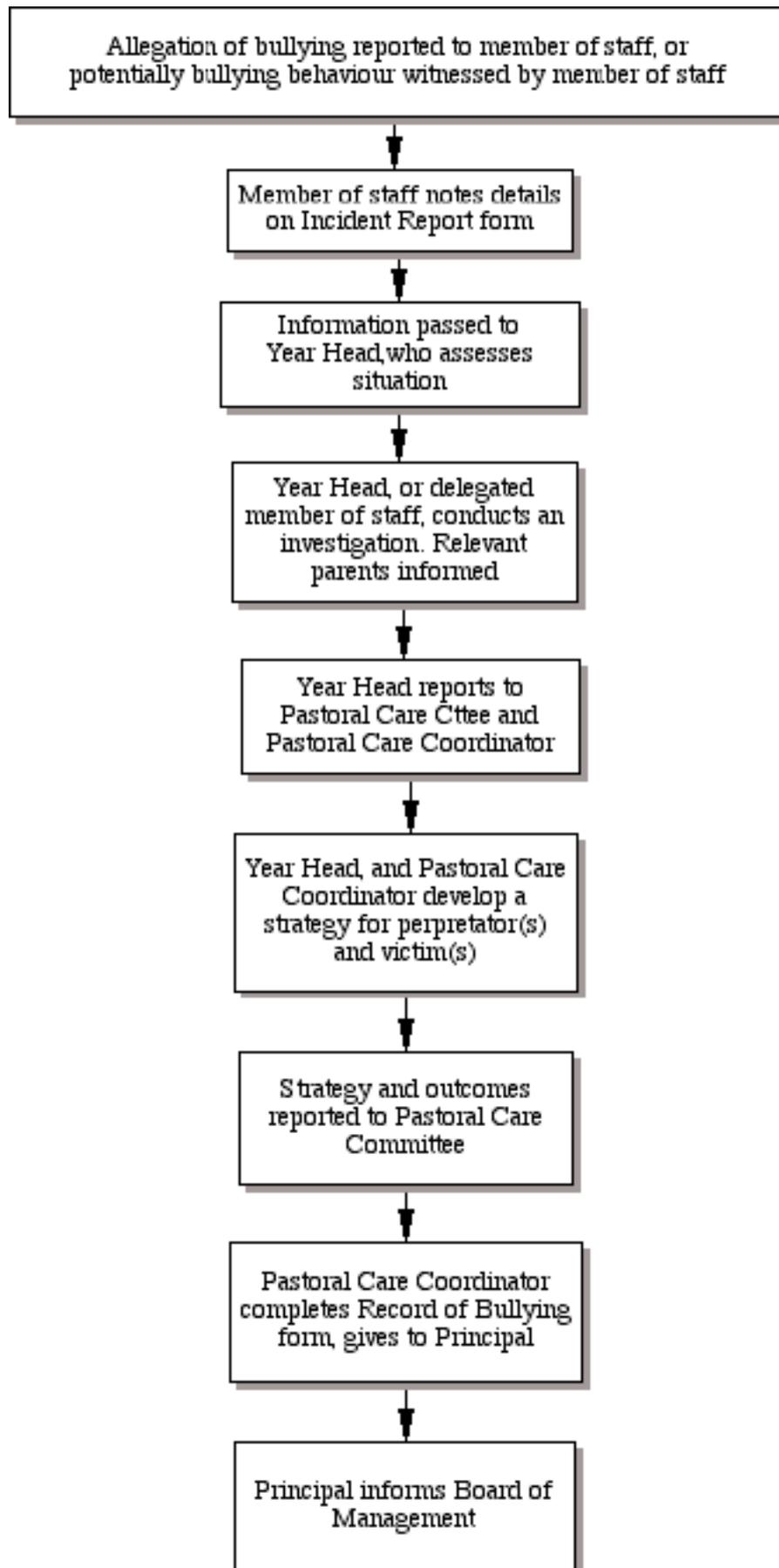
- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

Special Educational Needs, Disability

- Name calling
- 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

Appendix B

Overview of Procedure of Recording Bullying Behaviour



Appendix C

Incident/Concern Report Form

Carlow Vocational School – Incident/Concern Report			
Teacher		Date	
Student		Time	
Year			
Incident/Concern Report			
<i>please give a succinct and specific report of the student concern</i>			
Actions/intervention undertaken			
For filing <input type="checkbox"/>	Further action <input type="checkbox"/>	Reported to:	Date
Student Support Team Actions		Lead:	
For filing <input type="checkbox"/>	Further action <input type="checkbox"/>	Reported to:	Date

Appendix D

Record of 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

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3. Source of bullying concern /report
(tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant
box(es))

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locker room	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 _____

Date _____

Appendix E

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 _____