Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16

Anti-Bullying Policy

St. Attracta's Senior National School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16.

The following policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management of St. Attracta's Senior National School in accordance with the Education Act 1998, Section 15, (1), (2), Section 21, (1), (3), (4), Section 23, (2), (3), and in accordance with Circular 20/90 of the Department of Education and Science, and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools.

We thank you for reading this very important policy. We want to prevent and tackle bullying behaviour and therefore we encourage everyone to become very familiar with this policy.

The Contents page will make it easier for you to read this policy and to direct you to whatever part you are most interested in.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the **Board of Management of St. Attracta's Senior National School** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Good Behaviour & Discipline. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the ***Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*** which were published in September 2013.

In St. Attracta's Senior School - in keeping with our mission statement - we aim to provide a happy, caring and secure learning environment in which the individual student is enabled to achieve his/her full potential. We try to create a welcoming, safe, respectful and inclusive atmosphere in school.

The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions of everyone in the school. The behaviour of the adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers has a significant influence on how a child acts.

Respect for one another is central to our dealings with all school personnel. All members of the school community are expected to show respect to one another in all that they say and in all that they do.

In St. Attracta's Senior School we believe that our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment free from all kinds of intimidation and without fear of being bullied. As our school is well disciplined, well organised and well supervised, this minimises the occurrence of bullying.

We have a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. We make every effort to promote and foster positive self-esteem, self-discipline, respect for self and others and an awareness of the rights and responsibilities we each have as part of any group.

In dealing with bullying, we distinguish between the child and the behaviour. However, bullying is WRONG and will not be tolerated.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

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 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 whole school 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
- 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. WHAT IS 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, damage to personal property, physical harm, abusive language, non-verbal intimidation, manipulation 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 traveling community, bullying based on age, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs and values, language/accent, family or social circumstances and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off hurtful or offensive 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 Good Behaviour & Discipline.
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.
Bullying is <u>not</u> an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.

This policy applies to activities that take place

- during school time (including break times)
- on school tours, excursions and outings
- at extra-curricular activities

St. Attracta's Senior National School reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

Appendix 1 outlines some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils.

4. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

St. Attracta's Senior School is a TELLING SCHOOL, in that children are encouraged to tell if they feel they are being bullied by another child or group of children. Children are also strongly encouraged to tell a teacher or parent if they feel another child is being victimised in any way.

St. Attracta's Senior School is also a LISTENING SCHOOL. Teachers and other adults will listen to you and will do their best to deal with bullies in a way that will hopefully end the bullying and will not make things worse for you. If the bullying continues, you must not be afraid to tell again and not to hide the bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just those who are bullied and who bully. It affects other children who watch and less aggressive pupils who can be drawn in by group pressure. It can also affect the class dynamic and can be upsetting for children in the class who fear they may also be bullied.

The following advice is given to <u>children</u> who are being bullied.

Remember! Tell! Silence is the bully's greatest weapon.

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that bullying is wrong.
- Tell others that you do not deserve to be bullied and that bullying is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual. You are unique!
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully enjoys someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive. Shout, "NO, GO AWAY"! Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff or parent or trusted friend
- Fighting back may make things worse.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will be listened to and will get immediate support.

The following advice is given to all <u>parents</u>.

How might you know when a child is being bullied?

Look for unusual behaviour. For example a child may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, act out of character or not complete work to his/her usual standard. Be aware of any of the following:

- Requests for parents to take a child to school or to collect him/her, even though they may have walked to school independently in the past.
- Unexplained changes of mood. This will often occur before he/she returns to school, e.g. at the end of the weekend or at the end of holidays.
- Frequent minor illnesses, especially headache, tummy aches and bed-wetting. These often accompany the mood changes mentioned above.
- Damage to personal property, (e.g. books, clothes) or loss of same.
- An increase in requests for money. If refused this may provoke angry outbursts.
- Unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Pupils alone in yard.

Bullying is regularly addressed as a standalone issue in school and the following education and prevention strategies are employed by teachers throughout the school:

- The school's policy on Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) addresses the issue of bullying as an entity in itself but bullying is also addressed on a regular and ongoing basis and as the need arises.
- Regular **Circle Time** features strongly in our SPHE programme. This allows children ample opportunity to talk about their concerns in a safe environment.
- The Stay Safe programme is an integral part of the SPHE curriculum and is taught at all class levels.
- Children may prefer to remain anonymous when reporting a bullying incident. A **Worry Box** is kept in each classroom and outside the principal's office to allow children the opportunity to report in confidence any incidents of bullying, which they may have witnessed.
- Anti-Bullying Week takes place in school in November each year during which various activities take place, e.g. drama, media presentations, poster competitions
- The **Student Council** proposes ideas that promote inclusion, e.g, International Day in which children of different nationalities share their cultural and religious views with others.
- At our **Carol Service**, candles are lit for all the nationalities in our school and we regularly pray for one another at school assemblies and in class.
- **Anti-bullying slogans** are displayed around the school and the content of these posters is discussed at class level.
- **T**he topic is regularly addressed at **school assemblies** and children are reminded that this a 'telling school'.
- **Class questionnaires** are distributed if a teacher feels there may be bullying taking place in class. This is usually done anonymously to give the whole class a chance to say if they think anyone is bullied. Confidentiality is respected during class discussions.
- **Cyber-bullying** is dealt with on a regular basis – particularly in senior classes. External speakers may also be invited to the school to address this issue.
- **School newsletters** are used to raise parents' awareness of cyberbullying and of the supports available to help parents deal with these issues
- **Internet Safety Day** is an important feature of our school year and talks on cyberbullying are arranged for parents and pupils.
- Websites such as www.esafety.ie and www.webwise.ie are brought to the attention of parents for use at home. Parents are regularly advised on the possibility of bullying on Facebook and other media sites.
- **Local Gardaí** talk to 5th class pupils about bullying and cyber-bullying as part of An Garda Síochána's Schools Programmes.
- Advice may be sought from Rory Tierney - the NEPS **psychologist** attached to our school - about bullying issues and about the effects of bullying on children.
- All school personnel expected to abide by the **Dignity in the Workplace Charter** and to show good example to children in their dealings with all school personnel. In this way, we try to promote respectful relationships across the school community, by being aware of voice, tone, abruptness, body language, sarcasm, etc.
- Appendix 2 outlines advice which is given to parents in relation to supporting their child.

5. WHO INVESTIGATES AND DEALS WITH BULLYING?

Our school has a consistent and clear approach to investigating and dealing with bullying when it occurs. It is very important that all involved understand the approach from the outset.

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to **any** teacher in the school. However, it is common practice that the relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher who deals with bullying incidents which affect any child/children in his/her own class. It is school policy that the class teacher is the first point of contact. The principal and deputy principal are always on hand to assist or advise the teacher if needed.

What should you do if you think your child is being bullied or bullying others?

1. Do not approach the child that you suspect may be involved in a bullying incident.
2. Arrange for a private meeting with your child's class teacher and then discuss your concerns with them.
3. The teacher will investigate all reported incidents, with the ultimate aim of restoring – as far as is practical - the relationship of the parties involved

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. In that way pupils gain confidence in "telling". It will be made clear, by all teachers and regularly at whole school assemblies, that when children report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

It is very important that all involved understand the approach from the outset.

Non-teaching staff, special needs assistants, secretaries or any other ancillary staff will report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

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 relationship of the parties involved as quickly as possible. The support and co-operation of parents is paramount in dealing with and resolving bullying issues.

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents. In so far as possible, incidents will be investigated in such a way as to ensure the privacy of all involved.

All interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. In this way, pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the class teacher will seek answers of **what, where, who** and **why**. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

6. OUR PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

In cases where it has been determined by the teacher that bullying has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken, according to school policy. The school will give the parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided for their pupils.

Where the 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.

If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will 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 the group will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after being interviewed by the teacher. In some cases it may also be appropriate and helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

It will be made clear to all involved (pupils and their 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. (See sanctions listed in the Code of Good Behaviour & Discipline.)

Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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 class 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, this must be recorded by the teacher in the recording template and the Principal and Deputy Principal will be informed.

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.

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 through the Principal and the Board of Management.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. INVESTIGATION, FOLLOW-UP AND RECORDING OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR.

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

St. Attracta's Senior School has formal noting and recording of bullying behaviour (Appendix 3). All records are maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the 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 the teacher is in any doubt, he/she will consult with the Principal or Deputy Principal.

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, a written record must be kept and passed on to the Principal or Deputy Principal. These records will be kept in a secure place in the school. All incidents of bullying behaviour will also be recorded in the school's Discipline Book, which is updated weekly by the Deputy Principal.

8. BULLYING AS PART OF A CONTINUUM OF BEHAVIOUR

In St. Attracta's Senior School it is important to note that bullying behaviour is 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 assault or harassment. To ensure that any such cases are dealt with appropriately, the school's anti-bullying policy will provide for appropriate linkages with the overall Code of Good Behaviour & Discipline and provide for referral to be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate.

In cases where this school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

9. REFERRAL OF SERIOUS CASES TO THE HSE

Where the Principal and Deputy Principal deem that the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school will consult with the HSE Children and Family Social Services and/or the Gardaí as appropriate (in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

Where teachers have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

10. SUPPORTS FOR PUPILS AFFECTED BY BULLYING

A programme of support for **pupils who have been bullied** is in place in St. Attracta's Senior School and is set out in the SPHE plan. In addition to this, such pupils may need counselling (a list of counsellors is available to parents) 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 pastoral care and social skills programme is available in the school.

A programme of support for those **pupils involved in bullying behaviour** is also part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an on-going basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Learning strategies will be applied within the school to allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may also need professional counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers. An opportunity to do this is during regular Circle Time activities or as part of the SPHE/RSE programme in every class.

11. SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF PUPILS

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place both to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

12. ONGOING EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be evaluated and reviewed in May each year. Teachers, parents and pupils will be surveyed periodically to ensure that they are satisfied that this Anti-Bullying Policy is meeting their needs. The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be included as an agenda item at staff meetings to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

The Deputy Principal, working with the Principal and teaching staff will examine data gathered from the recording template. Recording templates for bullying behaviour will be stored separately from discipline notes, in a secure area in the principal's office. This data will be collated and analysed once in every school year 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. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

13. PERIODIC SUMMARY REPORTS TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Principal will provide regular reports to the Board of Management setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template) since the previous report to the Board of Management and
- confirmation that all cases recorded have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the ***Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools***.

The teachers' representative on the Board of Management may also have a role to play in informing the Board of Management about bullying issues in the school.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

14. 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.

15. MONITORING, EVALUATION & REVIEW

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. A standard checklist will be used in undertaking the review. (Appendix 4) The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association. (Appendix 5).

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department. This school's Anti-Bullying Policy and its procedures to support the pupil's well-being will be part of whole school and other evaluations by the Department inspectorate.

16. CONCLUSION

All members of the teaching staff along with the Board of Management were involved in the preparation of this policy and views of parents and pupils were sought.

This anti-bullying policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. All parents are asked to study the policy and are expected to agree with its terms prior to their child's enrolment in the school.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and as deemed necessary. The views and opinions of the partners in education are welcome at all times.

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. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.
- **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 (girl or boy); 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. At the other extreme 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, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. 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.

HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT THEIR CHILD

1. **Support re Bullying other than cyber bullying**

- Teaching a child to say "NO" in a good assertive tone of voice will help deal with many situations. A child's self-image and body language may send out messages to potential bullies.
- Parents should approach their child's teacher by appointment if the bullying is school related. It is important for you to understand that bullying in school can be difficult for teachers to detect because of the large numbers of children involved. Teachers will appreciate bullying being brought to light. School bullying requires that parents and teachers work together for a resolution.
- Sometimes parental advice to a child is to "hit back" at the bully if the abuse is physical. This is not always realistic as it requires a huge amount of courage and indeed sometimes makes the situation worse.
- Children should not be encouraged to engage in violent behaviour. Teaching children to be more assertive and to tell is far more positive and effective.
- It is important to be realistic; it will not be possible for a single child to assert his/her rights if attacked by a group. Children should be advised to get away and tell in situations such as this.
- Keep an account of incidents to help you assess how serious the problem is. Many children with a little help overcome this problem very quickly.

2. **Support re Cyber Bullying:**

Take precautions now when your child is young; don't wait for a crisis!

We endorse the advice given from the Irish 'Sticks and Stones' Anti-Bullying Programme. A representative, Patricia Kennedy, wrote the following words in the Irish Daily Mail on October 31, 2012: "Cyberbullying is NOT 24/7; it's only 24/7 if a child is allowed access to their phone or the internet.

- Don't let your own ignorance get in the way of common sense. A simple rule is 'no phones after bedtime.' Have a drawer in the kitchen that all phones are left in.
- Try turning off the WIFI when you are going to bed to make sure there are no 3 a.m. online arguments. The anti-bullying initiative I represent, Sticks and Stones, work with children from all backgrounds, from designated disadvantaged schools to fee-paying schools, and we are constantly surprised at the level of innocence that most children have in relation to the 'friends' they make online.
- They don't think there are any dangers involved in chatting with strangers online, and they don't think there are any repercussions involved for them regarding what they post.
- In our anti-bullying workshops, children tell us one of the reasons they don't 'tell' about bullying is that parents 'overreact'. Don't be that parent.

- If your child tells you that they are being bullied — don't lose your temper; above all don't threaten to take their phone or internet access away — you're just guaranteeing they'll never tell you anything again.
- Remain calm and ask questions — who, what, why, where, when. Get the facts, write them down, keep the text/phone messages or take a screen shot from the computer so you are informed when you approach the school, internet or phone provider, or Gardaí.
- Talk to your children; let them know they can talk to you; keep the channels of communication open."

The following advice is given by the USA's Federal Department of Health:

Be Aware of What Your Kids are doing On-line

- Talk with your kids about cyber bullying and other online issues regularly.
- Know the sites your kids visit and their online activities. Ask where they're going, what they're doing, and who they're doing it with.
- Tell your kids that as a responsible parent you may review their online communications if you think there is reason for concern. Installing parental control filtering software or monitoring programs are one option for monitoring your child's online behaviour, but do not rely solely on these tools.
- Have a sense of what they do online and in texts. Learn about the sites they like. Try out the devices they use.
- Ask for their passwords, but tell them you'll only use them in case of emergency.
- Ask to "friend" or "follow" your kids on social media sites or ask another trusted adult to do so.
- Encourage your kids to tell you immediately if they, or someone they know, is being cyber bullied. Explain that you will not take away their computers or mobile phones if they confide in you about a problem they are having.

Establish Rules about Technology Use

- Establish rules about appropriate use of computers, mobile phones, and other technology. For example, be clear about what sites they can visit and what they are permitted to do when they're online. Show them how to be safe online.
- Help them be smart about what they post or say. Tell them not to share anything that could hurt or embarrass themselves or others. Once something is posted, it is out of their control whether someone else will forward it.
- Encourage kids to think about who they want to see the information and pictures they post online. Should complete strangers see it? Real friends only? Friends of friends? Think about how people who aren't friends could use it.

- Tell kids to keep their passwords safe and not share them with friends. Sharing passwords can compromise their control over their online identities and activities."

What If Your Child Is Bullying?

1. ***Don't panic***. This may be a temporary response to something else in the child's life e.g. a new baby, a death in the family, a difficult home problem etc. Give your child an opportunity to talk about anything that could be upsetting him/her.
2. ***Don't punish bullying by being a bully yourself***. Hitting and verbal attack will make the situation worse. Talk to your child and try to find out if there is a problem. Explain how the victim felt. Try to get the child to understand the victim's point of view. This would need to be done over time.
3. Bullies often suffer low self-esteem. Use every opportunity you can to praise good, considerate, helpful behaviour. Don't only look for negatives.
4. Talk to your child's teacher and find out more about your child's school behaviour. Enlist the teacher's help in dealing with this. It is important that you both take the same approach.
5. If the situation is serious you may need to ask the school or G.P. to refer your child to the child guidance clinic for help.

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

3. **SOURCE OF BULLYING CONCERN** **LOCATION OF INCIDENT(S)**

Pupil concerned		Yard	
Other pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
		Home	
		Other	

4. **TYPE OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR (PLEASE TICK RELEVANT BOX(ES))**

Physical Aggression		Cyber-Bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Racist Remarks	
Homophobic/Transphobic		Other (please specify)	

5. **NAME OF PERSON(S) WHO REPORTED THE BULLYING CONCERN**

6. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR AND ITS IMPACT**

7. **DETAILS OF ACTION TAKEN**

8. **ANY OTHER RELEVANT DETAILS WHICH NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS RECORD**

Signed _____ (Teacher) Date_____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

		YES	NO
1	Has St. Attracta's Senior School Board of Management adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?		
2	Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the Parent's Association?		
3	Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?		
4	Is the Board satisfied that school staff is sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them effectively and consistently to apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?		
5	Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?		
6	Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?		
7	Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?		
8	Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?		
9	Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?		
10	Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?		
11	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?		
12	Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?		
13	Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?		
14	Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?		
15	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?		
16	Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?		
17	Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?		

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

3. **SOURCE OF BULLYING CONCERN** **LOCATION OF INCIDENT(S)**

Pupil concerned		Yard	
Other pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
		Home	
		Other	

4. **TYPE OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR (PLEASE TICK RELEVANT BOX(ES))**

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8. ANY OTHER RELEVANT DETAILS WHICH NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS RECORD

Signed _____ (Teacher) Date_____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____