

# St. Mary's Parochial School

*Western Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.*

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086-7038121



## Anti-Bullying Policy of St. Mary's Parochial School

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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. Mary's Parochial School** has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

**(a) A positive school culture and climate which**

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

**(b) Effective leadership**

**(c) A school-wide approach**

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

**(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-**

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;

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

**(g) Supports for staff**

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

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## (i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

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

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

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

Additional information on different types of bullying on Appendix 1.

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

Teachers and Principal

All substitute teachers

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

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5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

## Education and Prevention Strategies

### School-wide approach

1. Well-being promotion through Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2019.
2. Adoption of Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying when required.
3. Adoption of a whole-school approach to anti-bullying .
4. A positive school culture and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect.
5. Effective supervision: 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.
6. Involvement of parents: The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all new parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
7. The inclusion of the experiences and insights of children and young people: The implementation of Weekly Circle Time discussing anti-bullying to create a positive climate, pupil questionnaire (appendix 2) and pupil sociogram (appendix 3)
8. The use of encouragement and awards – in-class reward systems e.g. marbles in the jar
9. Enhancement of the physical environment: Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code and slogans for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
10. Whole-school implementation of Social, Personal and Health Education to include RSE, Stay Safe and Friends for Life programmes. [www.tacklebullying.ie](http://www.tacklebullying.ie) [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
11. Engagement of teachers in continuing professional development : School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.

### Links to other Policies

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- Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, School Outings Policy, Acceptable Use policy.

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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

## **6.8.9. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

**The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);**

**The school's procedures is consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as the secretary, SNA, caretaker, cleaner must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

### **Investigating and dealing with incidents:**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;



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- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should 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;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. 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;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;  
It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to **write down** their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should 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 should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil 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 pupil being bullied; The pupils agrees and signs a 'Pupils Behaviour Promise'. (Appendix 2)
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

## **Follow up and recording**

- 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;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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.

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- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **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:

### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

### **Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

- 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.

### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 5**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 5 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.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. The incident records with Appendix 3 template will be kept securely in the school office.

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## Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. See Pupils Behaviour Promise (Appendix 4)
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing

## What can Parents do?

If your child is being bullied, we recommend the following approach:

Take a sensible approach. Listen and investigate but don't interrogate. The child should be told that there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is essential that parents are particularly loving and sympathetic towards their bullied children. Every opportunity should be taken to enhance their self-esteem. Bullied children should not be encouraged to hit back. Children must be encouraged to tell their parents/guardian. The parent/guardian must tell the class teacher. If the children see bullying, the parents should encourage them to tell. By telling they are helping the victim and the bully.

While it is distressing for most parents to discover that their child is a victim of bullying, it can be equally upsetting for the parent to learn that their child is using bullying behaviour.

### If Your Child Is Engaged In Bullying Behaviour

1. Don't Panic. Try to find out why your child is engaged in bullying behaviour. This may be a temporary response to something else in the child's life e.g. a new baby, a death in 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 engaging in bullying behaviour yourself. Set a good example of control of aggression. Hitting and verbal attack will make the situation worse. Talk to your child and try to find out if there is a problem.
3. Explain how the other child felt. Try to get the child to understand this child's point of view to help your child to understand the distress caused to them by his/her behaviour
4. Stress the importance of respecting and tolerating individual difference.
5. Set realistic firm guidelines to help your child control his/ her behaviour.
6. A child who engages in bullying behaviour often suffers from poor self-esteem. Use every opportunity you can to praise good, considerate, helpful behaviour. Don't only look for negatives.
7. Talk to the child's teacher and try to find out more about the child's school behaviour. Enlist the teacher's help in dealing with this. It is important that you both take the same approach.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :



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- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience through S.P.H.E. and programmes mentioned in 5.10.

## 8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

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

## 9. 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.

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

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel and will be published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. 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. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**BERNARD PRENDERGAST,**  
(Interim Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**MAIRÉAD HOGAN (Acting Principal)**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 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?	

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

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## Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal



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## Appendix 1: Examples of bullying behaviours

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li> <li>Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<b>Identity Based Behaviours</b> <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malicious gossip</li> <li>Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>Ignoring</li> <li>Excluding from the group</li> <li>Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>"Bitching"</li> <li>Spreading rumours</li> <li>Breaking confidence</li> <li>Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>The "look"</li> <li>Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>Harassment</li> </ul>

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## Appendix 2: Friendship/Anti-Bullying Questionnaire

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to talk to someone about bullying? Yes No

Do you know anyone who is having a hard time? Yes No



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## Appendix 3: Bullying Sociogram

1. Are you happy with the atmosphere in your classroom? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who are your friends?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you being bullied in any way?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Is there anyone in class having a hard time or being picked on?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Is anyone being left out, or ignored? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages, or e-mails to make others feel bad about themselves?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Is anyone being unfair to others? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Can you give examples?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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11. Who do you think is causing the problem?

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## Appendix 4: Pupil Behaviour Promise

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Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I know that all pupils (me included) should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully. It is wrong to treat anyone any other way. I therefore promise that in future I will treat all my fellow-pupils fairly, equally and respectfully despite our differences and whether I like them or not.

I promise that:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed by:

Pupil \_\_\_\_\_

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

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086-7038121



## Appendix 5: Bullying Recording Template

### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour


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

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

### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

### 6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \*

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Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

**7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

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

**9. Details of actions taken**



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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_