



## St. Gerard's Senior School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2024

### 1. Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the **Education (Welfare) Act 2000** and the **Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the Natinoal Education Welfare Board (NEWB)**, the Senior Board of Education of St. Gerard's Senior 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 by the Department of Education and Skills.

The Board of Directors of St. Gerard's School adopts the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary Schools*, issued by the Department of Education & Skills (September, 2013), as the basis for the way in which St. Gerard's Senior School community addresses the issues of bullying.

This policy addresses bullying that is either perpetrated by or experienced by students in the school. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the school's **Respect and Dignity Policy**.

- Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993.
- CircularM33/91: Guidelines towards a positive policy for school behaviour and discipline.
- The Education Act, 1998.
- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.
- The Equal Status Act, 2000/2004.
- Circular 0045/13: Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.
- *Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*, DES, HSE, (2013).
- *Parent and Student/Public Perceptions of Schools' Actions to Create a Positive School Culture and to Prevent and Tackle Bullying*, DES, (2017).

This policy fully complies with the requirements of the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** which were published in September 2013 and should be read in conjunction with the school's **Code of Behaviour**, **ICT Acceptable Use Policy** and **SPHE Policy**.

**This policy applies while in school, while travelling to and from school, and while attending any school activity, to include trips, sporting and/or cultural events.**

## **2. Mission Statement**

**Our vision for St. Gerard's School can be summarised as follows:**

- To provide an opportunity for each student to realise his or her potential in all areas: academic, moral, personal, physical, social, spiritual and sporting.
- To promote and sustain a happy, secure and efficient environment in which positive relationships are highly valued and development and growth take place with the co-operation of all members of the school community.
- To instil a sense of mutual respect and care for all members of the school community.
- To foster honesty, integrity, self-discipline, respect, concern for others, self-esteem, maturation, inclusiveness, social awareness and charity.
- To nurture an appreciation of our cultural heritage.
- In short, to develop educated, thinking and caring individuals.

## **3. Commitment to the Key Principles of Best Practice**

The Board of Directors recognises the potential 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;
  - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

*‘Respectful relationships across the school community (including students, teachers, non-teaching staff, school management, parents and visitors to the school) form a solid foundation for such a culture’<sup>1</sup>.*

- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its potential impact;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
  - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and racial 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.

#### **4. Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Mental health is critically important to a young person’s life. Their well-being, sense of connectedness and self-confidence gives them the ability to cope with difficulties. St. Gerard’s School follows a whole-school approach that focuses on promoting positive mental health for all members of the school community. A whole-school approach means that school policies, including the Anti-Bullying Policy, *‘reflect the values of respect, fairness and inclusiveness’<sup>2</sup>*

#### **5. Definition of Bullying**

In accordance with the ***Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)*** bullying is defined as follows:

***Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical behaviour, 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

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<sup>1</sup> *Parent and Student/Public Perceptions of Schools’ Actions to Create a Positive School Culture and to Prevent and Tackle Bullying*, DES, (2017), page 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention*, DES, HSE, (2013), page 8.

- 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 from one person to another, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

**The definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, where physical or social, whether targeting a person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly, or through any electronic or other medium which could harm a student or undermine his or her self-esteem or self-confidence.**

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 is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. See Appendix 1. The list of examples is non-exhaustive and may include any behaviour which makes any student feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.)*

**Those who bully others in a non-physical way often do not realise that their actions may have serious legal consequences for them. The reality, however, is that bullying may constitute a criminal offence. Where it is felt that bullying may amount to a criminal act, St. Gerard's School may seek legal advice which might lead to the Garda Síochána being contacted.**

Many seem to feel that by posting messages or images anonymously on social networking sites, they can guarantee that their identity is protected. This, however, is not the case. Indeed, in many cases the context of messages makes it easy to identify the perpetrator. In any case, where the Gardai have grounds for believing that criminal activity may be occurring, applications may be made to the Courts requiring the internet service provider or others in possession of relevant information to divulge a perpetrator's identity.

## **6. To whom should concerns about a student being bullied be reported to? Who are the relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with alleged bullying?**

Students, parents, non-teaching staff or members of the wider community should feel welcome to report their legitimate concerns to any member of the teaching staff – including the Headmaster and Deputy Principals, Head of Years and the Guidance Counsellor.

## 7. Education and Prevention Strategies

*“Memor”, to be mindful of others, reflects the “Spirit of the School”, which permeates throughout the school community and represents the very core of our school ethos.*

- St. Gerard’s School makes it clear to all members of the school community that bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- In this context, all adult members of the school community have a duty to bring to the attention to a relevant teacher (in writing) any incident of bullying that they are aware of.
- Students have a duty to bring to the attention of a teacher any incident of bullying that they are aware of.
- ***“Parents and students are expected to cooperate in 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”.***

(Section 6.8.9 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Post-Primary Schools, 2013)

- The primary focus is on resolving differences and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. The school, nevertheless, reserves the right to take disciplinary action where such is warranted in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour.
- Students reporting incidents of concern on bullying to a relevant teacher do so with a clear understanding that these matters are being reported in confidence. This means that a student who brings a concern to a relevant teacher, will not have his or her identity divulged in any manner.
- **It is important that parents and staff realise that anyone can be a bully and anyone can be a target of bullying. It is also important to realise that disagreements between young people are part and parcel of negotiating the pathway to young adulthood and every disagreement should not be seen as a bullying episode.**
- In investigating a bullying matter, the primary focus is on resolving differences and restoring the relationships of the parties involved. The school reserves the right to take disciplinary action where such is warranted.
- The prevention and awareness of bullying is integral to this policy and students will, through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes, be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to understand Bullying through SPHE, Religious Education, CSPE, RSE and various awareness raising events that will be organised by the school on an ongoing basis.
- It is recognised that there is potential within the teaching of all subjects within the framework of all extra-curricular activities to foster an attitude of respect and dignity.
- Parent Information Evening’s for all parents will take place in August/September annually.
- The school is committed to providing a regular series of prevention and awareness measures specifically focused on Cyber-Bullying on an annual basis.
- The school will host a number Anti-Bullying Awareness Days annually.
- Where necessary the school will seek the assistance of and work with NEPS, the HSE, an Garda Síochana and other State Agencies as appropriate.

- The school will devote time annually through Staff Development to raise the awareness of bullying amongst staff and provide guidance on how best to combat and resolve bullying issues. The review of the Anti-Bullying Procedures and Policy will be integral to staff development.
- St. Gerard's School is committed to working with the student body to build the capacity of the school to work co-operatively to combat bullying.
- All students have specific responsibility for recognising bullying behaviour, for bringing concerns about bullying behaviour to the attention of a teacher.
- The Senior Student Leadership Team will explicitly teach students what respectful behaviour looks like, sounds like, acts like and feels like in all school settings, have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines, explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media and to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. The Prefects and Ambassadors will provide peer-to-peer mentoring and hold assemblies as appropriate on themes associated with bullying, respect and dignity.
- The school will continue to work with the Parents' Association in relation to the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures. The Parents' Association will support the school by organising relevant talks and awareness campaigns for parents.
- The various school policies, that relate in any manner to this policy, are there to support and uphold the values espoused in this the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## 8. Relationships between Teachers and Students.

In order to promote a preventative approach to bullying, *'research indicates that positive relationships between teachers and students are important for the social and emotional well-being of students, and it can be a strong influence on students' engagement with school and learning'*<sup>3</sup>.

## 9. Procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour.

- a. Where a member of the teaching staff has a concern about a student being bullied, she/he should investigate and deal with the matter according to the procedures set out in Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.
- b. In investigating/addressing bullying behaviour teachers are advised to seek the assistance and support of the Deputy Principals, Heads of Year or Guidance Counsellor.
- c. Where a teacher is concerned that a particular bullying episode is causing serious upset to a student, staff member or other person, she/he should bring it to the attention of the Deputy Principals, Head of Year or Guidance Counsellor at the earliest possible opportunity.
- d. In this regard the Guidance Counsellor and the Pastoral Care team have a special responsibility for developing and implementing strategies for reducing the incidents of bullying, for responding to incidents of bullying, for supporting those who have been effected by bullying and for bringing any concerns the team may have regarding bullying to the attention of the Headmaster/Deputy Principals.

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<sup>3</sup> *Parent and Student/Public Perceptions of Schools' Actions to Create a Positive School Culture and to Prevent and Tackle Bullying*, DES, (2017), page 7.

- e. The school reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying where bullying is perpetrated by a member of the school community and where it impinges on the work or well-being of a student or member of staff in the school, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the school.
- f. The school reserves the right to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE and An Garda Síochána where it deems such assistance is necessary. Where the school deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive, it will consult with the HSE's Children & Family Services and/or make a formal Child Protection Report to the HSE or An Garda Síochána.
- g. **Concern about, or allegations of, bullying will be investigated and addressed as follows:**
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the focus will be on resolving the interpersonal issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved – rather than apportioning blame.
  - In investigating and dealing with bullying, teachers will exercise their professional judgement to determine if bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
  - All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with either by the teacher who first becomes aware of the allegations or the Head of Year/Deputy Principals, liaising with the Headmaster.
  - It will be made clear to all students that when they report bullying behaviour they are behaving responsibly and that the well-being of other students is dependent on them reporting such behaviour to a teacher or other member of the school community.
  - Those involved in investigating and resolving bullying behaviour will keep written records and use the *Recording Template* (Appendix 2). The Recording Template must be completed in full, retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Deputy Principal, Head of Year and Headmaster, as applicable.
  - Incidents of bullying will be investigated outside the classroom situation, so far as is possible, to ensure the privacy of all involved.
  - Where a group is allegedly involved in bullying behaviour each student will be interviewed individually in the first instance.
  - Where deemed appropriate, those being interviewed may be asked to write down their account of what happened.
  - Where it is determined that a bullying incident has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school's policies).
  - The school will give the parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school.
  - Where it is determined that a student 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 every reasonable effort will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student(s) being bullied.
  - Where the school deems it necessary to impose disciplinary sanctions it will do so within the remit of the school's Code of Behaviour and other related school policies.



- As a follow up to a bullying issue being resolved, the Pastoral Care team of the school will meet separately with the relevant parties.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved, the teacher/Head of Year/Deputy Principal involved will complete a report to include the findings of its investigation, strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.
- Students may be requested to sign a letter that they will promise not to be involved in a bullying situation again.
- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution will be retained securely in the school.
- Where a parent/guardian or a student more than 18 years old is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, she/he will be advised of his/her right to make an appeal to the school's Senior Board of Education.
- Where a parent/guardian, having exercised his/her appeal to the Senior Board of Education, is still not satisfied he/she will be advised of his/her right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

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

**(See Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*)**

The school will put in place a programme of support for students who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements

- Students who have been bullied will be offered appropriate counselling, through the Guidance Counsellor, the Pastoral Care team and/or provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed, where appropriate, to raise self-esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
- Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be provided with counselling, through the Guidance Counsellor or the Pastoral Care team, to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. They will be provided with appropriate opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.

#### **11. Supervision and Monitoring of Students**

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

The Headmaster will provide a report to the Senior Board of Education at the end of each term setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the *Bullying Recording Template*) since the previous report to the Board. Confirmation will be provided that all cases referred 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 Headmaster will present in the Autumn term annually the "Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation". (See Appendix 3)



## 12. Prevention of Harassment

The Senior Board of Education 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 students or staff or the harassment of students 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.

## 13. Senior Board of Education – policy review and implementation

The Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Senior Board of Education once in every school year in accordance with procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the *DES Anti-Bullying Procedures*, using the checklist included at Appendix 3 of those Procedures.

The Anti-Bullying Policy has been updated and ratified by the Senior Board of Education as dated.

The Checklist for the Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation will take place in September/October 2022.

## 14. Policy Circulation and publication

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

Signed:   
(Chairperson of Senior Board of Education)

Signed:   
(Headmaster)

Date: , 27.5.2024

Date: 27.5.2024

## Appendix 1

### 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
- 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.

#### Examples of bullying behaviours

<b>General behaviours which apply to all</b>	<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>• 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>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<b>Cyber</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, 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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> </ul>
<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, etc.</li> <li>•Physical intimidation or attacks / Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background</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>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <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>•Spreading rumours</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>• Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>•Harassment</li> </ul>

**St. Gerard's School**  
**Appendix 2**  
**Template for recording 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/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))\***

School Grounds	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<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	Other (specify)

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


**9. Details of actions taken**


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

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



## St. Gerard's School

### Anti-Bullying Procedures for Post Primary Schools - Appendix 3

#### Checklist for annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation

The Board of Directors (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 Headmaster?	
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 Headmaster'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 Headmaster (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, Senior Board of Education**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Headmaster**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Notification regarding the Senior Board of Education's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

The Senior Board of Education of St. Gerard's School wishes to inform you that:

- The Senior Board of Education'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 3** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson, Senior Board of Education**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Headmaster**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**St. Gerard's School**  
**Appendix 4**  
**Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate**

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
  - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
  - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.



