St Louis Senior Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

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 Louis Senior Primary 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. The school community believes strongly that respect for all at all times must be promoted and become intrinsic in the ethos of society. The pupils are taught that society is made up of a variety of different people, all of whom deserve our respect, all of whom have the right to be treated equally and to have the fundamental right to be allowed to exist in society and be content in their lives. All pupils are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe environment in the school. On becoming aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community they should notify a trusted responsible adult. Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report.

Pupils' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing structures. Awareness of bullying and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

The Board of Management and the staff of St Louis SPS are 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 school-wide 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 including in particular, homophobic and transphobic 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.

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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.

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

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 A of this policy

4. Who will deal with accusations of bullying:

("*At primary level the relevant teacher will normally be the class teacher*" Procedures 6.8.3)

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher (or the teacher on break/lunchtime supervision duty, if the incident occurs on yard). He /she will deal with the incident and investigate it in the first instance. The teacher on yard will discuss the incident with the child(ren)`s class teacher. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

If there is an acceptance that the behaviour constituted bullying, or the behaviour is repeated, the matter is brought to the attention of the principal/ deputy principal. The principal/ deputy principal will speak to all the children involved and the incident will be recorded on the "Template for recording bullying behaviour (Appendix B).

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school.

The principal/deputy principal will also contact the parents of all parties involved and address the issue with them and the class teacher.

Sanctions will be imposed in line with the school's behaviour policy but there may be some variation on the sanctions imposed depending on where the incident took place and if the pupil involved has severe special education needs.

Stage 1: Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve

Stage 2: On the third reprimand the child should be separated from peers using a "time out" zone. The time period will depend on class level. The following is suggested:
- 2nd – not more than 5 minutes
- 3rd/4th – not more than 7 minutes
- 5th/6th – not more than 10 minutes

* In the case of more serious misbehaviour stages 1 & 2 may be skipped.

Stage 3: Loss of privileges e.g. Golden Time, Activities, yard time, curricular areas under certain circumstances.
For a short period of time the child may be removed from their classroom and supervised by a neighbouring teacher during which time, written work may be given.

However, as bullying is considered a very serious offence in this school, time may also be spent in the principal's office.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) **that will be used by the school are**:
- The Stay Safe Programme
- The anti-bullying module of the SPHE programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Circle of Friends (NEPs programme)
- Friends for Life
- Posters and books addressing cyber-bullying
- Webwise: Primary Teachers' Handbook
- My Selfie and the Wider World (Anti-cyber bullying)
- https://www.webwise.ie/
- http://www.saferinternetday.ie/
- Different Families, Same Love: Poster and lesson plans specifically aimed at preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying: http://www.into.ie/lgbt/EducationalResources/
- All Together Now: Lesson Plans from BelongTo specifically aimed at preventing homophobic /transphobic bullying: http://www.belongto.org/campaign.aspx?contentid=13586

Through reports in school newsletters and other communications as well as at meetings with parent/guardian groups, all school personnel are regularly informed of the activities implemented by the school to foster friendships-

- An annual Friendship Fortnight takes place. This event can help give the parents of a pupil who is being bullied the confidence to approach the school and also helps to send a clear message to the parents of a pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a major responsibility in addressing their child's behaviour.
- E-Safety talk/ presentation arranged for parents, staff and pupils in the school.

Effective practice includes prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. As self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour, *schools should,* through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes, provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

Initiatives and programmes focused on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects, should deal explicitly with the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and trans phobic bullying. These might include for example, the inclusion of LGBT posters on notice boards, discussions with parents about specific statements of welcome and respect for LGBT members of the school community and in particular; teaching the Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE) resource *Different Families Same Love* or *All Together Now* are just *some of the ways in which a school* may address homophobic and trans- phobic bullying. We agreed at a staff meeting in January 2015 to teach the Different Families Same Love lesson/lessons in December every year under the strand unit Myself and My Family. We recognise, as a staff, the importance of ensuring that the word 'gay' is not synonymous with the negative.

Prevention and awareness raising measures must also deal explicitly with cyber- bullying. The best way to address cyber-bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. According to school policy, all pupils' mobile phones must be switched off within the school and its environs. Mobile phones/digital media is not to be brought by pupils on tours or outings. Prevention and any awareness raising measures should focus on educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying. The school-wide approach and the role of parents as outlined in Section 6.3 is of importance in this regard. The prevention and awareness raising measures also takes into account the scope for cyber-bullying to occur as a result of access to technology from within the school. Pupils in the Senior Classes have workshops on Cyber Bullying on an annual basis. Pupils in Fourth Classes have received an e-safety talk. Staff and parents received an e-safety seminar. Internet safety talks from the National Parents Council and Webwise will be arranged annually. See Appendix C for Contract which pupils may sign.

Our school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN, and joins up with other relevant school policies and supports and should ensure that all the services that provide for such pupils work together. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

Our school's prevention and awareness raising measures is appropriate to the type of bullying and take into account the age and gender of the pupils involved. The school will work to raise the awareness of bullying so that all members of the school community understand what bullying is and how the school deals with bullying behaviour. Our teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe programme at primary level is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour. For example, the *Schools for Health in Ireland* framework provides guidance on developing a health promoting school.

There is space within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. In English, there is a wide range of literature available which could be used to stimulate discussion. As part of the SPHE Programme, the interdependence of people in communities at local, national and international levels is stressed. In Geography and History references to colonisation, exploitation and dictatorships could be used to illustrate the negative aspect of power. The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.

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:**

While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant 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 it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, s/he 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.
The relevant teacher must use the recording template 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; and

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b) where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case. See Appendix D

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

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 may need assistance on an on-going basis. Such pupils may need counselling 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.

For those with low self-esteem, opportunities are developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management 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.

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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association. 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 website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Jake Byrne

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: __September 2017__

The BOM completed its checklist for the annual review of the antibullying policy and its implementation (Appendix4) in February 2021.

APPENDIX A:

Types of bullying
The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

o **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.

o **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.

o **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".

o **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.

Prejudice/Identity based bullying: Prejudice, or identity based bullying targets children and young people because of who they are or who they are perceived to be. This can be on the grounds of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, membership of the travelling community, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Children and young people can also be bullied for being perceived to belong to one or more of these groups, or for being associated with a member of one or more of these groups. It includes Racist, Transphobic and Homophobic Bullying.

o **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.

o **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.

o **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.

Appendix B 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))*		4. **Location** of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned		Playground	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
		Other	

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

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

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

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

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

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date
_____

Date submitted to Principal _____

St Louis SPS Online Code of Conduct Contract

I will:

Talk with my parents to learn the rules for Internet use, which includes where I can go, what I can do, when I can go online, and how long I can be online (___ minutes or ___ hours).

Never give out personal information such as my home address, telephone number, my parents' work address or telephone number, credit card numbers, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.

Always tell my parents immediately if I see or receive anything on the Internet that makes me feel uncomfortable or threatened; this includes e-mail messages, Web sites, or even anything in the regular mail from Internet friends.

Never agree to meet anyone in person that I have met online, without my parents' permission.

Never send pictures of myself or other family members to other people through the Internet or regular mail without my parents' permission.

Never give out my Internet passwords to anyone (even my best friends) other than my parents.

Be good while online and not do anything that could hurt or anger other people or that is against the law.

Never download, install, or copy anything from disks or the Internet without proper permission.

Never do anything on the Internet that costs money without my parents' permission.

Name (Child) _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian_____ Date _____

APPENDIX D PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

6.8.9 School authorities must ensure that the school has clear procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying and that these are set out in the school's anti-bullying policy. The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach:

(i) The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);

(ii) 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;

(iii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly;

(iv) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

(v) 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 relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;

(vi) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;

(vii) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;

(viii) Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

(ix) 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; 32

(x) 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;

(xi) 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;

(xii) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;

(xiii) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s);

(xiv) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents 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 parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;

(xv) 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;

(xvi) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and 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;

(xvii) 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;

(xviii) In cases where the relevant 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, it must be 33

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(xviii) In cases where the relevant 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, it must be 33

recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at **Appendix 3** (See Section 6.8.10 (iii));

(xix) 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;

(xx) 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;

(xxi) 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