



# **Portlaoise College**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**May 2021**

## *We Are a Listening School*

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 Portlaoise College has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of conduct. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools that were published in September 2013.

### **2. School Philosophy**

Students who attend Portlaoise College will be encouraged to reach their full potential mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially, in an atmosphere and environment in which they feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is the norm. The Staff of our school, conscious of the need for a positive working environment, will encourage the involvement of the wider school community in the achievement of these aims through a 'whole school' approach in consultation with staff, students, parents, the Board of Management and other relevant agencies as appropriate.

### **3. Mission Statement**

Portlaoise College is committed to providing all students with a high-quality holistic education that enables them to achieve their maximum potential in an engaging, challenging and student-centred environment that celebrates diversity in partnership with all stakeholders.

### **4. Statement of Commitment**

The Board of Management of Portlaoise College regards any form of harassment or bullying of staff students or parents, as totally unacceptable. It will respond seriously to any complaint by investigating thoroughly and taking appropriate action as outlined in this policy. Portlaoise College acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment. To achieve this, the school will endeavour to promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding and habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and community.

### **5. Principles of Best Practice**

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students 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 students to seek help from an adult to resolve friendship or relationship issues.
- encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
  - Implementation of education and prevention strategies that build empathy, respect and resilience in students.
- 
- Effective leadership;
  - A school-wide approach;
  - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
  - Effective supervision and monitoring of students;
  - 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.

## 6. Definition of Bullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools(2013) bullying is defined as follows: *“Bullying is an unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.”*

## 7. Types of Bullying

- **Deliberate Exclusion:** This includes malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying.
- **Identity-Based Bullying:** This includes 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.
  - Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation.
  - Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian, trans...used in a derogatory manner.
  - Physical intimidation or attacks.
  - Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation.
  - Threats.

- **Race, nationality, ethnic background, and membership of the Traveller community**
  - Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background.
  - Exclusion on the basis of any of the above.
  
- **Cyber Bullying:** Using mobile phones (text messages, WhatsApp groups etc.), e-mail or picture messages, social networking sites, e.g. (Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook etc.) as follows:
  - **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's Reputation.
  - **Harassment:** Continually sending vicious, mean, or disturbing messages to an individual.
  - **Impersonation:** Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name.
  - **Flaming:** Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight.
  - **Trickery:** Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online.
  - **Outing:** Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or Images.
  - **Exclusion:** Purposefully excluding someone from an online group.
  - **Cyber stalking:** Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety.
    - Silent telephone/mobile phone call.
    - Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls.
    - Abusive text messages.
    - Abusive emails.
    - Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Ask.fm/Twitter/YouTube, TikTok or on games consoles.
    - Abusive comments on another student's blog and /or pictures.
    - Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.

If an incident of cyber bullying is being investigated, Portlaoise College reserves the right to ask a student to show their phone/electronic devices to the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal. If the student refuses to co-operate with this request, sanctions as per the Code of Conduct will be imposed.

- **Physical Aggression:** This includes pushing, shoving, and punching, kicking, poking or tripping people up.
- **Damage to Property:** This may result in damage to clothing, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student's locker or bicycle etc. Items of personal property may be effaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, victims' lunches or lunch money taken. Victims may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to the bully. Sometimes, this tactic is used with the sole purpose of incriminating the victim.
- **Intimidation:** This is based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon.
- **Abusive Phone Calls and Text Messages:** These are a form of verbal intimidation, and the anonymous phone call is often used where teachers are the victims of bullying.
- **Isolation:** A particular person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group. This practice is usually started by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and is more common among girls than boys. Passing notes, whispering insults, drawing on white boards may also form part of this bullying behaviour.
- **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, e.g. 'dummy', 'dope', 'retard', 'swot', 'lick', 'teacher's pet', etc.
- **Slagging:** This behaviour usually refers to the good-natured banter which goes on as part of the normal social interchange between people. However, when it extends to very personal remarks aimed repeatedly at one individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene etc., then it assumes the form of bullying. It may take the form of suggestive remarks about a student's sexual orientation.
- **Invasion of personal space:**
- **Sexual:**
  - Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
  - Harassment
- **Special Educational Needs, Disability:**
  - Name calling.
  - Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs.
  - Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying.
  - Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.
  - Mimicking a person's disability.

- **Bullying of School Personnel:** by means of physical assault, damage to property, verbal abuse, threats to people's families etc...
- **A combination of any of the types listed:**

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, 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 Conduct. Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct. Where it is felt that bullying may amount to a criminal act, the Portlaoise College will seek legal advice and the matter will be reported to the Gardaí.

## 8. The Role of Staff

Portlaoise College adopts a whole school approach to prevent bullying. All teachers have a responsibility to report any concerns in relation to bullying.

The Relevant Teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: Year Heads, Deputy Principal, and Principal. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it. (See section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, as above). All communication will be recorded in line with the school procedures and records of communications will be documented.

## 9. Education and Prevention Strategies

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 as follows:

- **SPHE/RSE Programme:** Anti-Bullying curricular requirements are met within these classes. These classes aim to help students to build empathy, respect and resilience and enable students to develop a sense of self-worth. These classes provide initiatives and programmes focused on developing understanding and awareness of bullying and address identity-based bullying. Bystanders or "Silent Witnesses" are encouraged and supported through the programme to report incidents of bullying.

- **Digital Citizenship Programme:** First year students are taught “Netiquette” which focuses on responsibility and safety when using the internet.
- **The “Meitheal” Mentoring Programme and the Prefect System:** Help to foster mutual respect among students. Students who are successful in gaining a place on either of these programs will typically model respect in their dealings with fellow students.
- **Anti-Bullying workshops:** Workshops delivered by the Pastoral Care team and other outside agencies dependent on funding being available
- **Anti-Bullying Week:** An assigned week dedicated to the promotion of our Anti-Bullying policy and the promotion of good friendships. The expectation is that this is a cross-curricular initiative and involves all students and all teachers. Typically, awareness around the issue of bullying is raised, and the message that “We Are a Listening School” is reinforced throughout the week. The aim is that students will be more aware of what bullying is and that it is not acceptable.
- **LGBT+, Stand Up Week:** An assigned week dedicated to the promotion of inclusivity and the promotion of good friendships. The expectation is that this is a cross-curricular initiative and involves all students and all teachers. Typically, awareness around the issue of LGBT+ is raised, and the message that “We Are a Listening School” is reinforced throughout the week.
- **Anti-Bullying Policy:** Our policy is published in our school journal and on our website. Attention is drawn to this section of our website at Parent Information nights. The Anti-Bullying Policy is included on the agenda for start of year staff meetings. Time is allowed to discuss any specific aspects of bullying if and when needed or in the course of the annual review.
- **Year Head Assemblies:** At the start of each school year and during the year the Year Head emphasises the need for mutual respect at student assemblies. The attention of students is drawn to the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy. This message is reinforced by Management, Year Head, Tutor, and Class Teachers throughout the year.
- **Promoting Self Esteem:** All teachers endeavor to build up the self-esteem of each student in their care. A student with high self-esteem is less likely to be bullied and if bullied will be better equipped to deal appropriately with the issue.
- **Promoting wellness and good friendship:** Ideas and initiatives to promote wellness and good friendships are promoted and encouraged during the year.
- **Agreed Classroom Rules:** Discussion and agreement of the Classroom Rules involving teachers and students in the classroom at the beginning of the school year reinforces the importance of mutual respect between all members of the school community.

- **Students with Additional Education Needs:** With reference to students identified with Additional Needs, it is the responsibility of each teacher to differentiate and to make information on Anti-Bullying accessible. If a teacher is concerned that a student with a diagnosed SEN needs further help in accessing such information, they must make a referral in writing to the Resource Dept, briefly outlining the areas of difficulty for the student.

## **10. School Procedures**

It is vital that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously. Incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid embarrassment to either victim or bully. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. A low-key approach is recommended.

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:

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:

Students or other individuals shall report incidents to any teacher. This teacher will use his/her professional judgement to determine where it is potentially a bullying incident in which case, he/she will pass the concern to the relevant teacher. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

The relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved. The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying will be to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). This will be done using the School's Restorative Practices Process (see Appendix 2).

During and following the Restorative Practices Process, the relevant teacher will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff, or Parent(s)/Guardian(s). Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how she is in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts will be made to try to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

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 will be contacted as soon as is practicable, to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. If required, the school will give Parent(s)/Guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions being taken by the school and inform them of the supports available for their sons or daughters.

It will be made clear to all involved (each set of students and Parent(s)/Guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his or her Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the school.

In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed by the parties involved within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the school's official recording sheet (Appendix 1).

The relevant teacher needs to make a professional judgement whether the bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, 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 Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

Bullying behavior that is deemed to be very serious or bullying behaviour, which persists, will be referred to the Principal who will take any necessary action, which may include suspension and/or referral to the Board of Management as per the school's Code of Conduct. The Board may impose further sanctions up to and including expulsion. In certain circumstances where it is deemed appropriate referral will be made to relevant external agencies and authorities.

Serious instances of bullying behaviour (*“where the behavior is regarded as potentially abusive”*) will, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate through the Portlaoise College Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Repeated instances of bullying by the same student will be referred by the Principal to the BOM for final decision.

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

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **11. Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

While all reports including anonymous reports of bullying will 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, the relevant teacher will keep appropriate written records that 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 will use the school's official recording sheet (Appendix 1) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

i. in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed by the parties involved within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred;

and

ii. Where an incident is deemed by the teacher to be significantly serious to warrant immediate recording and reporting to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

In each of the circumstances at (i) and (ii) above, the school's official recording sheet (Appendix 1) 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 school's official recording sheet (Appendix 1) 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.

All records will be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

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

**Restorative Practice Model:** the relevant teacher will engage with those involved using this support structure (See Appendix 2).

**Year Head/ Tutor** may engage with students involved in bullying incidents in a supportive role and also encourage students who observe bullying behaviour to report it. The relevant teacher will also check that the bullying behaviour has discontinued.

**SPHE programme:** gives students an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the topic of bullying through several SPHE modules including Belonging and Integrating, Communication Skills, Friendship, Emotional Health and Influences and Decisions. These topics help students to learn coping strategies for dealing with bullying. The coping strategies applied give students an opportunity to develop their self-esteem, friendship and social skills along with feelings of self-worth. A student involved in bullying behaviour has an opportunity to reflect on their communication skills and how their behaviour affects other students.

**Meitheal leaders/ Prefect system:** the Meitheal programme offers peer support by older to younger students. Meitheal leaders check in regularly with their assigned classes giving younger students an opportunity to seek advice or help. The prefect acts as a class representative. If students are unhappy with a class situation, they can report this to the prefect, who in turn can discuss the situation with a teacher.

**Pastoral Care Team:** the relevant teacher, student or parent can refer to the Guidance Counsellor or School Counsellor. It is recognised that students affected by bullying or who engage in bullying behavior may need counselling to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. Students who engage in bullying behaviour may also need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. These students may need ongoing assistance and may be referred to outside agencies/services as appropriate. Outside referrals may be made to relevant professionals, when deemed appropriate, in consultation with Parents.

**The Parents' Council** may also be a means of support by running workshops for parents to offer support and advice.

**Websites:** links for support documentation are available on the school Website [www.portlaoisecollege.ie](http://www.portlaoisecollege.ie).

#### For students

<http://www.barnardos.ie/resources-advice/young-people/teen-help/bullying.html>

<https://www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395>

[http://www.letsomeoneknow.ie/common\\_problems/bullying/](http://www.letsomeoneknow.ie/common_problems/bullying/)

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Children/Cool%20School%20Bullying%20Project%20Tips%20for%20Teens.pdf>

#### For parents

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Children/whatparentsneedtoknow.pdf>

<http://www.webwise.ie>

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

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.

### **14. Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of 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 Traveler community.

### **15. Oversight**

At least once in every school term, the Principal must provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

(i) The overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at (Appendix 1) since the previous report to the Board and

(ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above 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 minutes of the Board of Management meeting must record the above but in doing so must not include any identifying details of the students involved

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

Written notification that the review has been completed must be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

## 16. Policy Availability

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 students on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education & Skills and the Laois Offaly Education Training Board (LOETB) if requested.

## 17. Review of Policy

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

### Note:

1. The school reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or programme that is not school related if in the opinion of the Principal and /or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at the school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.
2. This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Portlaoise College on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Date of next review: May 2022

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Damian Bowe  
Chairperson of BOM

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Noel Daly  
Principal/Secretary to the BOM

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

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

## Appendix 1: Template for recording Bullying Behaviour

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

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

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

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3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))		4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))	
Student concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<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))

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/AEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact.

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### 9. Details of actions taken.

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

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

## **Appendix 2: Restorative Practice Process:**

Restorative Practices is a process to restore and build relationships. The Restorative Practices (RP) concept focuses on repairing the harm done to people and relationships. RP involves bringing parties together in a circle with the aim of resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved rather than apportioning blame (although restorative practices does not preclude the applying of sanctions when and where appropriate). Restorative Practices makes use of two sets of restorative questions: one for addressing challenging behaviour, the other for addressing someone who has been harmed by another. Where two parties have mutually hurt each other, both sets of questions may be drawn on interchangeably. Restorative questions separate people's behaviour from their intrinsic worth as a person, allowing them to admit their mistakes, take responsibility for righting their wrongs and be given an opportunity to change.

The use of restorative practices to address bullying behaviour serves the function of restoring and building relationships. It helps an offender to come to an understanding of the effect of the bullying behaviour and in promoting the expression of positive emotions, encourages him or her to make positive changes and to make up for any harm done. Similarly, RP gives the person harmed an opportunity to express their feelings and to indicate their need for bullying behaviour to stop. It supports them to express positive emotions and to request that bullying behaviour be stopped, thus empowering him or her and building self-esteem.

Restorative Practices makes a crucial distinction between punishment and natural consequences. A punishment is a response to wrong doing that is intended to inflict some kind of suffering or inconvenience and is done to someone in the hope of changing behaviour. A natural consequence, on the other hand, is a response to wrongdoing that follows logically from what has occurred and works with students who may come up with the natural consequence themselves. Natural consequences may also come from teachers or management. The difference is that students are helped to understand why it follows logically from the behaviour to which it is a response.

### **Appendix 3: Advice for Students on Bullying including cyber Bullying**

- It is essential to tell a teacher and your parents of any bullying. It is the only way it will be stopped.
- Always be aware of your online behavior and how to protect yourself from cyber bullying.
- Save messages or take a screen shot of abusive messages.
- Keep passwords private. • Do not put too much personal information about yourself online.
- Do not reply to abusive messages/posts.
- If the bully is a “friend or follower” on Facebook or other social networking site, remove them. You should block unwelcome messages, videos, photos etc.
- Report the issue to the mobile phone or website provider. If sufficiently serious, report the matter to the Gardaí.
- If cyber bullying is affecting your school life, tell a teacher.
- Always keep a detailed record of the bullying as evidence for the teacher.

#### **Appendix 4: Advice for Parents on Bullying including cyber Bullying**

- Control the use of mobile phones/social media during homework and at bedtime.
- Stress the importance of online responsibility and check her social media.
- Prepare your son or daughter for the possibility of bullying and should it occur the importance of
- Speaking about it to you.
- Continue to work on your son or daughter's self-esteem in order to build emotional
- Resilience. • Be aware of signs and indicators of bullying.
- Encourage your son or daughter to include others in her social group and be generally
- Inclusive.
- Take time to understand the social networking sites your son or daughter
- Uses.
- Use trusted websites for advice on keeping your son or daughter safe i.e., [webwise.ie](http://webwise.ie)
- Encourage your son or daughter to tell if they are being bullied.

## Appendix 5: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its Implementation

The Board of Management (BOM) 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 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?	
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 students?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented? Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, BOM

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/Secretary to BOM

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 6: Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

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

The Board of Management of Portlaoise College 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, BOM

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/Secretary to BOM

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_