

*Reviewed by BOM*

*October 2022*

## **Anti-Bullying Policies**



# **Scoil Náisiúnta Droichead an Chláir**



## **Anti-Bullying Policies**

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## 1. Introduction:

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 Clarecastle National 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. Principles of Best Practice:

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

*The contents of this policy apply to all members of the school community.*

In Clarecastle National School all stakeholders will endeavour to ensure that there is:

- 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;

*Refer to Appendix 1: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate.*

- 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 (*Please see appendix to this document re transphobic & homophobic bullying*).
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;

All members of the school community will **foster** a cordial atmosphere based on respect for all individuals, thus creating a caring, safe and positive school environment. Kindness, respect and tolerance towards each individual are expected of all members of the school community. These core principles are strongly advocated and actively promoted.

In our school teachers seek to build up a relationship of trust and confidence with their pupils with a view to preventing cases of bullying behaviour. Teachers are careful to act as good role-models and will not misuse their authority. Moreover, they aim to be firm, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures. *Techniques based on positive motivation and recognition have been found to be most effective in promoting desired behaviour.*

The school recognises the right and obligation of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life-skills.

The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring system to provide early intervention when/if necessary and responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

The school recognises the need to co-operate with and keep parents informed of procedures so as to maintain the positive relationships that exist within the school community. Teachers will discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils at an age appropriate level.

Teachers will emphasise that **bullying behaviour is unacceptable, will not be tolerated and is wrong**. Teachers will be vigilant and will respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying. All alleged incidents of bullying will be investigated by the relevant teacher.

The school disapproves of vulgar, offensive, sectarian language or other aggressive behaviour by any members of the school community. The school community recognises the right of staff members to a safe working environment and that of pupils to a safe and secure environment where learning can take place. Any infringement on the aforementioned rights of staff and pupils will be taken most seriously and appropriate action, as deemed necessary by the Board of Management, will be taken in the event of these rights being infringed upon by any member of the school community.

Modelling of appropriate behaviour

Incidentally during lessons e.g. reinforcing good social skills, identifying inappropriate behaviour

Through structured class guidelines e.g. collaboratively developed class rules

As self-esteem is the single most influential factor in determining behaviour, teachers aim to provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth. Children's self esteem is developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success through the curriculum and other activities. Pupils will be rewarded for effort and improvement and expectations of their performance will be positive.

Teachers help pupils to develop *empathy* by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others. Relationships with pupils are based on mutual respect and trust so that the pupils will have confidence in the school staff.

Formal School Curriculum :

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school's religion programme **Alive-O**. The **Social, Personal and Health Education** Programme, the **Stay Safe** programme and the **Walk Tall** programme will provide opportunities for children to explore issues around keeping themselves and others safe. In **Drama** pupils have opportunities to learn coping strategies and through role play they may practice using eye contact, positive body language and phrases e.g. "Go away and leave me alone". English extracts may be used as stimulus for discussion. In **S.E.S.E.** the interdependence of people can be discussed. In **Physical Education** co-operation and respect for others is promoted through team sports and non competitive participation in sporting activities. Sporting activities provide excellent opportunities for promoting the importance of conforming and playing fairly and by the rules. In the area of **Visual Arts** pupils can be allowed to explore feelings through colour, illustrate different situations etc.

At the teacher's discretion a "Worry Box" may be placed in the classroom. The pupils will understand that if they wish they may write a note detailing concerns they may have. This note must be signed.

**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);**

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

**The school's procedures will be consistent with the following:**

- 1) 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;
- 2) 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;
- 3) The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to ask any pupil to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.
- 4) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of alleged bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;
- 5) 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;
- 6) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
- 7) Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- 8) 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.
- 9) 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;
- 10) 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;
- 11) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
- 12) 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 by the relevant teacher 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;
- 13) 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

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;

Where meetings are necessary to discuss issues that may arise a teacher or a parent may choose to have another adult accompany them to any meeting being held.

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.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

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

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher. Incidents must be recorded using the Incident Report Form in Appendix 7 of this document. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

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

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- At the end of each term Relevant Teachers will forward and records of investigations to the Principal who will maintain same in a secure manner.

#### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

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

### **Referral of serious cases to the HSE**

- 1) In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.
- 2) Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, 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.
- 3) The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

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

- Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their class teacher or other teacher, along with continuing support when they feel they may need it.
- A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.
- The school will inform parents/guardians of what has happened and of the measures being taken to help them, encourage them to report further incidents if they occur.
- Help and support will be sought for the perpetrator. This will include speaking with them to discover why they became involved, informing their parents/guardians and continuing to work with them in order to modify their behaviour. The school code of behaviour applies to bullying. The perpetrator will be helped to see things from the victim’s point of view. Perpetrators may be excluded from the playground at lunch break for a specific period or subject to special monitoring procedures and if bullying continues they may be suspended in accordance with procedure.
- Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school code of discipline. Incidents of bullying will be used as opportunities for re-enforcing the anti-bullying policy of the school.
- Follow-up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

### **Responding to the Victim**

- Reassure the victim that this situation is not their fault
- Praise their courage for having reported it
- Listen to their story

### **Responding to Peers**

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. Dissemination of policy**

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.

#### **11. Policy Review**

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, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request, and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Clarecastle N.S. on 27 / 10 / 2022

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management by:



Mr. Pat Bergin  
Chairperson



## Appendix 2:

(The list of examples is non exhaustive)

### Examples of bullying behaviours

<b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</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>● Slagging</li><li>● The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li><li>● Offensive graffiti</li><li>● Extortion</li><li>● Intimidation</li><li>● Insulting or offensive gestures</li><li>● The “look”</li><li>● Invasion of personal space</li><li>● A combination of any of the types listed.</li></ul>
<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><li>● <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li><li>● <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li><li>● <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li><li>● <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li><li>● Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li><li>● Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li><li>● Abusive text messages</li><li>● Abusive email</li><li>● Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li><li>● Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li><li>● Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li></ul>
<b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>	

**Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: Homophobic or transphobic insults should be treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults- the teacher should calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable. Parents will also be informed should issues of homophobic or and transphobic bullying arise and a joint home/school approach will be adopted.</i></p>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<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>• "Bitching"</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>
<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>

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

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

---



---



---



---

### 9. Details of actions taken

---



---



---



---



---

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Relevant Teacher 1)

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

Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	NO
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?	YES
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	NO
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	NO

Signed Pat Bergin

Date 27/10/2022

Mr. Pat Bergin

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed MJ Malone

Date 27/10/2022

Mr. MJ Malone

Principal

## Appendix 5

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

**To: St. Senan's Education Office, Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly, Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe & Kerry**

The Board of Management of Clarecastle National School 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 27/10/2022.

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 Pat Bergin Date 27-10-22  
Mr. Pat Bergin  
Chairperson,  
Board of Management

Signed MJ Maloe Date 27-10-22  
Mr. MJ Malone  
Principal

school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

- **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

(Relevant Teacher)

## **Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**

Clarecastle National School aims to ensure that children are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. This school is committed to teaching children the knowledge and skills to be able to use ICT effectively, safely and responsibly.

### **What is Cyber – bullying ?**

There are many types of cyber-bullying. The more common types are:

1. **Text messages** – can be threatening or cause discomfort. Also included here is ‘Bluejacking’ (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using bluetooth wireless technology)
2. **Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras** – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
3. **Mobile phone calls** – silent calls, abusive messages or stealing the victim’s phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible
4. **Emails** – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else’s name
5. **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
6. **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger), Yahoo Chat or similar tools
7. **Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal ‘own web space’ sites such as You Tube, Facebook, Ask.fm, Bebo.

### **Aims of Policy:**

- To ensure that pupils, staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be combated.
- To ensure that practices and procedures are agreed to prevent incidents of cyber Bullying
- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

### **Understanding Cyber bullying:**

- Cyber bullying is the use of ICT (usually a mobile phone and or the internet) to abuse another person.
- It can take place anywhere and involve many people.
- Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff.
- It can include threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, vilification, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorized publication of private information or images etc.

believe you've changed your phone number

- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider about this.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying
- Visit their website for details.
- Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

### Useful Websites

[www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)

[www.childnet.int.org](http://www.childnet.int.org)

[www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)

[www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart)

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying)

[www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395](http://www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395)

[www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)

<http://ie.reachout.com>

[www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)

[www.sticksandstones.ie](http://www.sticksandstones.ie)

[www.abc.tcd.ie](http://www.abc.tcd.ie)

[www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Clarecastle N.S. on 27 / 10 / 2022

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management by:



Mr. Pat Bergin  
Chairperson



marital status, religion, sexual orientation etc.) Harassment is defined in law as “*unwanted conduct*” related to one or more of the discriminatory grounds which “*has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.*”

It is recognised that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, the commitment to a positive workplace, where dignity at work is respected, prevails.

### **C. A Positive Work Environment**

It is agreed that we will all work to make this school a good place to work. A good place to work has a positive work environment characterised by

- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication based
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Professional dialogue
- Collaboration (*for further information please refer to **Collaborative Planning Policy***)
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict (*for further information please refer to **Collaborative Planning Policy***)
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff (including fair systems of selection, promotion and allocation of duties in line with agreed procedures)

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Safety Statement - as mandated under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – will also include a commitment to a positive work environment, in light of the Employer’s obligations as outlined at Section 8 of that Act, including the duty to manage work activities in such a way as to prevent “*improper conduct or behaviour*” likely to put health and safety at risk.

It is agreed that the adoption of this policy in our school will be accompanied by a number of steps to examine our work environment and, as necessary, to agree changes which reflect a commitment to dignity at work. These steps will be initiated by Management, and be repeated by way of review at appropriate intervals.

The actions to be undertaken may generally be described as Identification, Assessment, Implementing Strategies and Monitoring.

### **D. Adult Bullying as a Problem**

Our school recognises that Adult Bullying and Harassment are problems where they occur in any workplace.

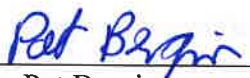
**Just as inappropriate and undermining behaviour among work colleagues is taken seriously, so is such behaviour when perpetrated against an employee of this school by any other person.**

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

**In summary, we are committed to having a good place to work.**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Clarecastle N.S. on 27 / 10 / 2022

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Pat Bergin  
Chairperson

- the principal teacher should be briefed by each party on the discussions which have occurred at the informal stage;
- as part of effective leadership, the principal teacher has a role in promoting positive working relations and accordingly should hear the parties and seek to mediate and resolve the staff relations difficulty;
- the principal should act in a fair and impartial manner and may exercise judgement and make decisions which he/she considers necessary to resolve matters;
- the onus is on both parties, facilitated by the principal teacher, to engage constructively to resolve matters and it is expected that the parties would be prepared to reach solutions and, if appropriate, move their position in order to resolve matters at the earliest opportunity;
- where the principal teacher deems it prudent and appropriate, he/she may raise the matter at a staff meeting and seek to initiate a framework through full staff dialogue, to resolve matters. In these circumstances, it is recommended, that where possible, a neutral member of staff or a member of staff acceptable to both parties, should be selected to chair the staff meeting;
- the outcome of the discussions should be recorded by the parties including the principal teacher in a mutually agreeable manner;
- 20 school days are provided to resolve matters at stage 2 and the parties should note the time frames which should only be extended by agreement.

Please note that where resolution is not achieved at stages 1 or 2, it is open to the parties to move to stage 3 or to go directly to stage 4.

### **Stage 3: External intervention**

Where resolution has not been achieved at either stage 1 or stage 2, the parties and/or the principal teacher may request the board of management to appoint a mediator, agreeable to the parties.

Prior to entering a mediation process, each of the members of staff concerned, will be required to supply the following background information for the attention of the mediator only:

- a written account of the issues involved;
- a written account of the initiatives taken to date to resolve matters, detailing any progress made, together with a general outline of the sequence of dates. Where the principal teacher has been involved at stage 2, he/she should also supply an account;
- a list of the outstanding issues and the resolutions sought by the parties; and
- a written and signed undertaking, to the effect, that he/she:
  - will constructively participate in the mediation process;
  - will be flexible in order to achieve resolution; and
  - will abide by and act on the recommendations of the mediator.

The mediator shall:

- review all of the documentation;
- arrange to meet with the parties;
- decide on whether it is possible to achieve a framework for resolution in light of the attitudes of the parties; and

- the board of management should complete its investigation within 20 school days of receipt of the written referral;
- the steps taken at stage 4 should be recorded, reviewed and monitored and the record should be available to the parties.