



Anti-Bullying Policy St Aidan's SNS

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

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

(a) A positive school culture and climate (see appendix 1)

- 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;

What we see as the Key Elements of Positive school culture and climate

St Aidan's acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.

St Aidan's acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his / her worth as an individual.

St Aidan's promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members

We have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular.

We have the capacity to change in response to pupil's needs

We are aware of the aspects of the curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.

St Aidan's takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

We acknowledge and recognise the need to work in partnership and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.

The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills.

St Aidan's recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

Key Elements of Positive school culture and climate.

We promote habits of mutual respect courtesy and awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.

The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.

All staff shares a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying / aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

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

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

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

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

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

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

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

Bullying is 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.

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

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

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

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

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. (For example once-off private messaging)

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

The list of examples below is non exhaustive, and we may wish to add behaviours which reflect our own circumstances.

Examples of bullying behaviours

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. ● Physical aggression ● Damage to property
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name-calling ● Slagging ● The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person ● Offensive graffiti ● Extortion ● Intimidation ● Insulting or offensive gestures ● The “look” ● Invasion of personal space ● A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 ● Cyberstalking: 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 email ● Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles ● Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures ● Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

<p>Identity-Based Behaviours 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).</p>	
<p>Homophobic and Gender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation ● Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation ● Taunting a person because of non-stereotypical gender behaviour. e.g. constant belittling of a girl for ‘acting like a boy’ ● Name-calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical intimidation or attacks ● Threats
<p>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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
<p>Relational</p>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Malicious gossip ● Isolation & exclusion ● Ignoring ● Excluding from the group ● Taking someone’s friends away ● “Bitching” ● Spreading rumours ● Breaking confidence ● Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear ● The “look” ● Use of terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
<p>Sexual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching ● Harassment

<p>Special Educational Needs, Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name calling ● Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying ● Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. ● Mimicking a person's disability ● Setting others up for ridicule
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4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying in St Aidan's are **All class teachers. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

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

<p>School-wide approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. Good manners among all members of the school community are emphasised and modelled.
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- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of all our pupils' self-esteem through curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with a specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School-wide awareness-raising and training on all aspects of bullying, including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Lunchtime Pals and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support. Getting the children to identify "hot spots" for bullying in the yard and around the school.
- Update the Anti-Bullying code for the school, include it in student journal and display

publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year).
 - The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent/guardian seminars; regular school or year group assemblies by the principal, deputy principal, etc.
 - Use of drama/role play at assembly – eg- the importance of bystanders in a bullying scenario.
 - Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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.
 - Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - o Hand note up with homework.
 - o Suggestion box in class- can be for ideas re curriculum as well as private messaging to teacher re bullying
 - o Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - o Administer a confidential questionnaire occasionally to all pupils.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.**

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- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. Peer Mediation, Yard behaviour lunch club, Individual Support plans, Self Esteem and Self Identity, Super Kid, Just like me, Copping on, Keeping cool, A Volcano in my tummy, All about me, Art around Feelings, Emotions and Empathy, Positively me, Conflict Resolution – Prim Ed, Self Esteem- Prim Ed, Transition issues- Prim Ed, Look who's talking, Re- Tracking sessions, The Respect Project, Friends for life, Paired Reading, Specifically tailored group sessions and Classroom Support Circle time programme.
We will endeavour to have Regular Circle time in class where deemed necessary.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum: Walk Tall, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression, Cyber Bullying** (Web wise Primary teachers' resources) **Diversity and Interculturalism**.
- School will apply to the Yellow Flag Programme.

- Resources from the Anti-Bullying Centre in Dublin City University. ● Teach the 9 grounds of Equality legislation as part of Human Rights education Use “Lift Off” resource- produced by INTO and Amnesty International

<http://amnesty.ie/resources/education#PRIMARY>

Enter “Show Racism the Red Card”- competition for 5th/6th classes, deadline is end of March each year. www.theredcard.ie good site with many resources re racism Teach the Rights of the Child- *What do you say? Exploring children’s rights with children*, Ombudsman for children and young people www.oco.ie

Declaration of Human Rights.

Intercultural Education in the Primary School- NCCA

Peer Mentoring- Children from 5th class will be trained in the skills in term 1, then implement the programme in terms 2/3.

Restorative justice

http://www.twcdi.ie/images/uploads/general/CDI-RP_Report_-_Web.pdf See executive summary, pp. 1-5

Roots of Empathy programme

<http://www.rootsofempathy.org/en/where-we-are/europe/republic-of-ireland.htm>

⌋ Paused due to COVID restrictions.

- Regular meetings with Student Council

- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at the primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying

- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in “Sexual Orientation advice for schools” (RSE Primary, see appendix 2).
- The school will commit to two hours per year staff training. Anti-bullying training to be given to all staff including ancillary staff- caretaker, secretary, lollipop lady.

Links to other policies

- List school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities. Code of Ethics as per the IWS (Irish Water Safety)Manual.

6. The school’s procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and

Post-Primary Schools):

6.8.9. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)

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- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach. ● Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It

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

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
 - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;

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-Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

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

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

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

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

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 that will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Anti-Bullying Procedures page 43) The relevant teacher must use the recording template in **Appendix 3** 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
- 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.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. Decisions around record-keeping should be noted in this policy.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchoolsKenRigby.pdf

- The traditional disciplinary approach
 - Strengthening the victim
 - Mediation
 - Restorative Practice
 - The Support Group Method
 - The Method of Shared Concern

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

(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - Pastoral care system
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Tutor/Year head system
 - Care team / Student Support Team
 - Group work such as circle time

- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and

The following Prompt Questions may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school? ● Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots? ● How will the student support/care structures (including HSCL, SEN teachers, support teachers, Project workers) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour? ● How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered? ● How will school teams & clubs be involved?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
 - o Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
 - o Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage?
 - o Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

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 27.9.17.

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 (where one exists). 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.

Signed:

Karen Quigley Chairperson of Board of Management)

Tomás Hayes Date: 1.10.25

Appendix 3

Template for recording bullying behaviour

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1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

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

- Pupil concerned
- Other Pupil
- Parent
- Teacher
- Other

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

- Playground
- Classroom
- Corridor
- Toilets
- School Bus
- 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
- Other (specify)

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

- Homophobic
- Disability/SEN related

Racist
Membership of Traveller community
Other (specify)

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8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

