



Anti-Bullying Policy

Roll No: 18377A

Principal: Geraldine Burke

Chairperson: Brian Shinnick

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 St. Joseph's N.S. 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 by the Department of Education & Skills in September 2013.

1 Best Practice in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour

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 positive school culture and climate which-
 - o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - o promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - o explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

2 Definition of Bullying

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

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

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.
- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability, physical characteristics, accent or distinctive voice, sexual innuendo etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language / dirty looks/mimicking.
- Verbal abuse, showing disrespect anonymous or otherwise.
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse. (pushing, punching, kicking, tripping, assaulting)
- Being mean
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Offensive joke; whether spoken or by email, text messaging etc.
- Victimisation; including very personal remarks about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene, school work, family circumstances, ability at games.
- Interfering/breaking/hiding/defacing/stealing personal possessions. (property, damage to clothing, school books, learning materials)
- Unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable.
- Unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
- Threats, including demands for money or other belongings.
- Writing derogatory comments on books, copies, desks etc

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.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, DES, 2013*.

3 School Contact Personnel

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows (*see section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School*)

- ***Ms Geraldine Burke (Principal)***
- ***(Deputy Principal)***
- ***Other Class Teachers when applicable***
- ***Learning Support/ Resource Teachers***

Any incidents witnessed by other staff members will be relayed to the above mentioned teachers.

4 Education & 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:

(see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

1. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) used in St. Joseph's N.S. are as follows:

- The school will adopt the Anti-Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools Handbooks 1 & 2 c.f. www.antibullyingcampaign.ie
- The SPHE curriculum including, RSE, Walk Tall, Roots of Empathy, Nurture Principles, Stay Safe programmes and Friendship activities including a Friends for Life Programme are used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy.
 - Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
 - Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
 - Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
 - The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
 - Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
 - All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
 - Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
 - Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.
- Using school assemblies to remind pupils of the school's anti bullying policy

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- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable... visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, cooperative games, circle time...
- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good – notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help to identify bullying 'hot spots' and 'hot times' for bullying in the school.
 - o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/ outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.

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- o Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

Types of cyber-bullying – SEE APPENDIX 2

2. 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:

- C.F. Appendix 7 – Anti-Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools – HANDBOOK 2

RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Both parents/guardians and pupils will be told when a record is being made about a child's behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

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

- The school will adopt the Anti-Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools Handbooks 1 & 2 c.f. www.antibullyingcampaign.ie

5 Parent/Guardian Reporting of Bullying

Protocol for the incidence where the Parent/Guardian suspects their child may be the subject of bullying behaviour while in attendance at school. (See Appendix 8)

6 Investigation & Follow-Up Procedures

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)

7 Working with Pupils Affected by Bullying

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

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

8 Supervision & Monitoring

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

9 Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10 Adult Bullying/Bullying at Work

"Bullying in the workplace is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person or persons. Bullying is where aggression or cruelty, viciousness, intimidation or a need to humiliate dominates the relationship. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while to be condemned, should not be described as bullying. . Only aggressive behaviour which is systematic and ongoing should be regarded as bullying." (Health and Safety Authority)

It should be noted that where bullying exists, the whole school atmosphere can be affected resulting in a climate of fear and intimidation and the loss of morale and damage to the fabric of the whole school community. School staff can be bullied by those in authority, by colleagues, by students and by parents.

School authorities should make it clear that bullying behaviour directed against staff or students will not be tolerated regardless of the source. Schools should promote a culture of respect and should encourage staff who experience bullying behaviour to bring this to the attention of the appropriate authorities so that action can be taken.

The school's procedure for dealing with bullying in the workplace is as follows:

See Appendix 9

11 Policy Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 01/02/2021

12 Communication

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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13 Implementation 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 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.

