

St. Joseph's School

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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 St Joseph's 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.

Three books/booklets are referred to in the policy.

- ANTI – BULLYING PROCEDURES FOR PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS
- ANTI – BULLYING SUPPORT MATERIAL.
- INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR SCHOOLS.

A hard copy of each book/booklet has been given to every teacher in the school. There are also copies in the school office which are available to parents to borrow. The books/booklets can also be downloaded from this website. www.pdst.ie



2. KEY PRINCIPALS 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 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 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.
- promotes respectful relationships across 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.
- Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

(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).

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

Additional information on *Key Principles of Best Practice* is set out in Section 6 and appendix 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.* ([p22 – 30 and p43.](#))

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3. 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.

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.*(p9 , 10 , 11.)



4. RELEVANT TEACHERS.

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in St.Joseph's School are as follows:

- Class Teacher .
- Principal.
- Deputy Principal.
- Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

Additional information on Relevant Teachers is set out in Section 6 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. (p29 , 30.)*



5. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES.

The education and prevention strategies , including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying , that will be used by the school are as follows.

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community will be promoted.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- The teaching of rules ,classroom, playground and school rules, in a positive way.
- The proper supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Supervision will also apply to monitoring pupils' use of communication technology within the school.
- The development and promotion of Anti-Bullying messages for the school and the display of these messages in classrooms and throughout the school .
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils, on a regular basis, in an age appropriate way,
- All parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy of the Anti – Bullying Policy ,when their child is enrolled in the school.
- A culture of telling will be encouraged, 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 will 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.
- Parents are encouraged to approach their child's class teacher if they suspect that their child is being bullied. Parents should understand that it may take some time to investigate their report.
- All parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy of the school's *Code of Behaviour , Child Protection Policy , Policy on the use of mobile phones by pupils in school* and the school's *Internet Acceptable Use Policy* when their child is enrolled in the school.

- The teaching of programmes that help prevent bullying by fostering empathy, respect, resilience and self worth:
 - Stay Safe.*
 - Walk Tall.*
 - Relations and Sexuality Education (RSE)*
 - Restorative Practices.*
 - Circle Time.*
 - Alive –O.*
 - Other relevant educational programmes*

- The delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes . (delivered by Community Gardai)
- 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.

- Links to the following Community and other Groups have been developed and will be further developed .
 - School Completion Programme*
 - NEPS*
 - St Michael's House*
 - Barnardos*
 - Mounttown N.Y.P.*
 - Community Garda*
 - Junior Achievement.*
 - Cuala GAA Club*
 - Lucena Clinic*
 - Carmona Services*
 - DRAFTS*
 - Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.*

Additional information on the Implementation of Education and Prevention Strategies is set out in Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.* (p26 - 28.)



6. Procedures for reporting , investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour .

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 below.

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).

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.

- In investigating and dealing with an alleged bullying incident , the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- If the relevant teacher determines that a bullying incident has occurred he/she will use the school's "Record of Bullying incident "(copy attached to policy document) to facilitate his/her recording of the incident.
- 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 will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- When investigating bullying incidents the relevant teacher will make every effort possible to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews are 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 and who . This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- 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, and to his/her parents 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;
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- If necessary, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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

All recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.

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

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- By investigating an alleged bullying incident, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the

situation might be resolved;

- All reports, including anonymous reports, of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must deal with the bullying as outlined above .
- If the relevant teacher determines that a bullying incident has occurred he/she will use the school's "Record of Bullying incident " (copy attached to policy document) to facilitate his/her investigation and recording of the incident. The relevant teacher must make every effort to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The relevant teacher will inform the principal of any bullying incident being investigated.
- Annually, at the end of June, teachers must give all documents/records relating to bullying incidents investigated by them to the principal, who will arrange proper storage of the documents/records.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 - Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3 - Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** (copy attached to policy document) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- 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.
- When the recording template - **Appendix 3 - Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

Referral to the HSE.

- Sections 6.8.12 , 6.8.13 and 6.8.14 of the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. (p35 .)** deal with the referral of serious cases of bullying to the HSE.

Additional information on Procedures for Reporting , Investigation, Follow-up and Recording of bullying behaviour is set out in Section 6.8 of the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. (p29 – 36.)** and in the **Anti –Bullying Support Material (p26 – 47)**

7. Programmes of support

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

- 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 to build resilience e.g.
 - Effective teaching of *Stay Safe* , *Walk Tall* , *RSE* and other relevant educational programmes.
 - Group work such as circle time .
 - Using restorative justice practices and question words.
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 - If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same.
 - Pupils will be guided to understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

Additional information on *Programmes of support* is set out in Section 6.8.16 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. (p35.)*

8. Supervision and monitoring of pupils .

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

9. Prevention of Harassment

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

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 02 February 2015.

11. 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 is given to all parents when their child is enrolled in the school. 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: Maire D'hoarell
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Padraon Fay
(Principal)

Date: 02/02/2015

Date: 02/02/2015

Date of next review: APRIL 2016

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Record of Bullying Incident

(1) Relevant Teacher : _____

(2) Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class : _____

(3) Name(s) and Class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

(4) Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

(5) Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School bus	
Other	

(6) Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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(7) Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

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

Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

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

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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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/SEN 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 _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

* **Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.