



Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Stewarts 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.

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-
 - 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;
- 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.
- 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.

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*.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:
Class teacher or teachers of student(s) involved in investigation and Principal or Deputy Principal.

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:

Golden Rules - throughout the school students are taught and encouraged to adhere to the Golden rules. These rules help our students to interactive positively with others and to develop positive relationships both within and outside the school.

SPHE curriculum - where students are encouraged to foster a sense of care and respect for themselves and others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Resources such as the Stay Safe Programme, RSE programme, Safer Internet Day, www.webwise.ie programme which includes new anti-cyber bullying teaching resources *#myselfie* will be used to support student personal safety and the teaching of relationships.

Language and Communication – priority is given to the teaching of Language and Communication in order to give all students a tool to identify and communicate their needs and feelings. A Total communication approach is used in the school.

A Positive Behaviour Support Plan approach is implemented throughout the school as outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

Behaviour Support Plans and Strategies are in place for student who present with behaviours of concern.

supervision: All students are closely supervised at all times. There is a high student staff ratio in the classrooms and at break times.

The use of **mobile phones** by students in school is not allowed. If a student is found with a mobile phone in school, the teacher will keep the phone safe until the end of the school day. Parents are contacted and the phone is returned to the parents in the afternoon.

Students can only access the **internet** in school under the supervisor of a teacher/member of staff. Older students are reminded of safe use of the internet at home.

During periods of **remote teaching and learning** a responsible adult is required to be present for live teaching sessions. All group Zoom/Teams sessions are teacher led and supervised. Parents are advised about safe internet use for their children.

If an **incident of cyberbullying** between students in the school is discovered, parents of the students involved will be informed immediately. The class teacher, other relevant teachers and school principal and parents of students involved will put a plan in place to prevent further episodes occurring.

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:

All reports or observations of possible bullying by students, staff or parents will be investigated by the relevant teacher.

Pupils, parents and staff will be 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 students involved as quickly as possible.

Incidents of possible bullying will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

Incidents will be investigated through discussion with individual students involved and any parents or other students deemed to have information re incidents. Staff observation of student interactions will also be taken into account when investigating possible incidents of bullying.

In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred:

The parents of the students involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will 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.

It will be made clear to the student who has bullied and their parents that he/she is in breach of the school's Anti-bullying policy/Code of Behaviour and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. Student level of understanding will be taken into account and an emphasis on following rules of good

behaviour and the school's "Golden Rules" will be made. They will be reminded of the Code of Behaviour and if necessary suspension or expulsion will occur if bullying behaviour is such that:

- The behaviour is having a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety.

A report of the bullying incidents will be recorded (Appendix 1).

Follow-up meetings with the students 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.

Following a review of the bullying incidents the relevant teacher will put a plan into place to help prevent future incidents of such bullying in line with school policy of positive behaviour support. This plan will include, where relevant, the teaching of new skills including social skills, leisure skills, anger management skills, communication skills, etc. Close observation and supervision of students involved in bullying will be ongoing.

The class teacher will develop and put into place a plan to support a student or students affected by bullying. This plan will include activities to raise self-esteem, to develop their social skills and to build resilience. If necessary pupils will be referred to the school clinic team for support.

The above plans will be reviewed regularly and parents will be kept informed of any concerns. Parents will be encouraged to contact the school if they have any further concerns.

Within twenty days the relevant teachers will review the bullying behaviour. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

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

If the relevant teacher considers that the plan is not effective they will immediately report this to the Principal/Deputy Principal. The Principal will then look for support from other professionals e.g. child's CDNT.

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

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

Appendix 1

Record of 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

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

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|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 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)) *

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|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 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) |
| | | | | |

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.

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.

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.

Related Policies

Code of Behaviour

Health and Safety Statement

Child Safeguarding Statement

Staff Student Relationships

All Curriculum Policy Statements

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on February 22nd 2023. This policy has been made available to school personnel and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy is readily available in the school, in each classroom and will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the patron if requested. The policy is available on the school website.

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 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.

Signed: EM-Bygh
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Mary Long
Principal

Date: 22/02/23

Review Date: March 2024