

St. Patrick's National School

Ughtyneill, Moynalty, Kells, Co. Meath A82 VW95

Telephone: 046-9244704

Email: secretary@ughtyneillns.com

www.ughtyneillns.com

Roll No: 12879T

Charities No: 20201805

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

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1. Introduction:

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the Educate Welfare Service, Tusla, the Board of Management of St. Patrick's N.S. school has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour.

2. Key Principles of Bullying:

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;
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- A community approach – staff and parents working collaboratively;
- 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
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

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 and
- 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.

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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.

4. Responsibilities

The class teacher will have responsibility for investigating and dealing with first incidents of potential bullying behaviour. A pupil, staff member, parent/guardian may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. It is the responsibility of the person to whom the report is made to pass on the relevant information to the class teacher of the child/children concerned or to the Principal. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of potential bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Serious incidents/on-going incidents will be referred by the class teacher to the Principal. The procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour are set out in section 6 of this policy.

5. Prevention

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):

Proactive Strategies towards prevention of Bullying:

Our school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, tolerance, respect and co-operation. It is within this context that the following pro-active strategies are incorporated into our school year.

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- Staff are constantly vigilant of children's behaviour. Positive behaviour is modelled, recognised and affirmed throughout the school. Children are explicitly taught what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like in class and around the school. Deliberate efforts are made by the staff to notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour. Children are rewarded regularly at class level for positive efforts to recognize the special efforts they have made. Records are kept of children's behaviour. Where a child is having difficulty with his/her behaviour he/she is given the necessary support. In this way, our goal is to follow up and follow through with pupils who struggle to follow the rules.
- Regular Social, Personal, Health Education and religion lessons incorporating the following programmes; Walk Tall, Bi Follain, Relationships and Sexuality Education, Stay Safe, Grow in Love.

Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises. Children are taught conflict resolution skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying behaviour

- Circle Time and class discussion is a regular part of classroom life where children are given the opportunity to share their feelings, opinions and problem solve with regard to social situations and relationships. These activities allow the children to develop empathy, respect for others and tolerance in a non-threatening setting.
- We ensure adequate supervision in the playground and staff record incidents of negative behaviour.
- Children are encouraged to share their concerns around negative interactions with others and are assured of being listened to.
- We make it a priority to catch children "being good" - we notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Staff consistently tackles 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.
- All staff are expected to give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- All staff are encouraged to be particularly vigilant for signs of bullying behaviour.

6. Procedure to Deal with Bullying

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):

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First Report

Any person in the school community, a pupil, staff member, and parent/guardian may report an incident of serious negative behaviour towards another individual. The class teacher will usually deal with the complaint initially. In investigating and dealing with negative behaviour, the teacher will exercise his/ her professional judgement to determine whether potential bullying has occurred and how best the situation can be resolved. If in investigating the incident, previous unreported incidents are referred to, the staff member should take note and record this information, but treat this report as the first incident formally noted. Please see Appendix 2, template which will be used for recording incidents of bullying behaviour.

Teachers will take a calm, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of potential bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get all sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for all the pupils concerned. It may also be helpful to ask those involved to write down an account of the incident. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way. A written record of the incident will be kept in the class teacher's behaviour records. As bullying is defined as behaviour that is 'systematic and ongoing' a first incident of aggressive behaviour is not viewed as bullying. It becomes bullying when there are subsequent incidents. Negative behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour (and may include informing parents).

If the teacher concludes that this negative type of behaviour could lead to bullying, the child/children involved will be made aware of this and the consequences of similar behaviours reoccurring (as outlined in the following sections). An effort will be made to allow him/her see the situation from the other child's point to view.

Second Incident

This would usually be referred to the Principal. A similar approach to that identified above will be used to investigate the incident. An incident report will be written and filed in the pupil(s). Parents will be informed and records will be kept of any parent/teacher conferences that result.

Third and Subsequent Incidents

The Principal will deal with further incidents. Incident reports will be written and filed. Parents of victim and child involved in bullying behaviour will be informed. Records of action plans and parent conferences will be kept. If and when it is deemed necessary, outside agencies may become involved.

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At every stage of the process, parents and pupils are asked and 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. Any lack of co-operation will be referred to the Board of Management.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. Adoption of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in **May 2021**

10. Communication

This policy has been made available to school personnel and is published on the school website,

11. Reviewing the Policy

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years

Next Review Date: June 2022

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

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Appendix 1:

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- 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.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- 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 are adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - 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.

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Appendix 2

1. Details of pupil being bullied:			
Name:		Class:	
2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupils engaged in bullying behaviour:			
Name:		Class:	
3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick all relevant boxes)		4. Location of incidents (tick all relevant boxes)	
Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern:			
6. Type of bully behaviour (tick all relevant boxes)			
Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyberbullying	<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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Racist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability/SEN related	<input type="checkbox"/>	Membership of Traveller community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Brief description of bully behaviour and its impact:			
9. Details of actions taken:			
Signed:		Date:	