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Kill O' The Grange National School

Anti-Bullying Guidelines

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board, NEWB, the Board of Management of Kill o' the Grange National 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 by the DES 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 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 list of practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate is in included in APPENDIX 2 of this policy document and is the official recommendation from the Department. Staff will adopt these as guidelines to help build a positive school culture and climate as well as Appendix 1 for recording cases which is the official recommended template.

    (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 identity-based bullying, cyber-bullying and in particular bullying based on racial or religious prejudice, gender, disability, sexual orientation and belonging to a non-traditional family unit.

    (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

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3. 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 racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community, homophobic bullying 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. Parents must take responsibility for their own children's social networking. Facebook etc should not be accessed by anyone under the age of 13.

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 could/may 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 Sept. 2013.

4. The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying will be the class teacher initially. The class teacher(s) will be assisted by the principal teacher, where necessary. All members of staff will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and will adopt Appendix 1 as the template to record cases. Any member of staff who becomes aware of or to whom an allegation of bullying is made will have the duty to report the behaviour to the child's class teacher. The principal teacher may delegate responsibility to the deputy principal when she cannot deal with allegations made, in a timely manner.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at identity based bullying and cyber-bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows: -

School-wide approach
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

- We foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Social skills such as the making and maintaining of friendships are developed through the wide use of cooperative learning strategies and cooperative games.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- Use of ICT is monitored carefully. Accessing email, messaging services and social media websites is prohibited. At school having a mobile phone or other technology which can connect to the internet and/or transmit messages or media is discouraged. When a child has good reason to have a mobile phone in school, the phone must be not be seen nor heard.
- The school's anti-bullying policy will be discussed with pupils and made available to all parents/guardians.
- Staff members will encourage a culture of open communication and let pupils know that 'telling' is a positive act of kindness and friendship.
- Staff members will ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- All allegations of bullying behaviour are investigated.

School Initiatives
- School Assembly themes address positive friendships.
- Our code of behaviour is implemented consistently and reviewed regularly.
- Teaching staff take time, when necessary, to teach pupils games for the playground
- The Junior Achievement programme, school sports, school performances, after school activities, school choir and Green Flag for Schools/ Active Flag programme provide opportunities for collaboration and friendship building.
- We welcome visits of Community Gardaí and other agencies with expertise to cover issues around personal safety and safety on-line.

Curriculum Implementation
- There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Circle Time is an integral and valuable methodology in the implementation of these programmes. We are committed to the implementation of the SPHE curriculum, the Walk Tall, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes as directed by the DES.
- We encourage staff members to avail of CPD opportunities when they are available through the Education Centres and the PDST.

- The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, RE and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise are promoted through team sports, school choir, school performances, as well as through curricular subjects.
- Sporting activities in particular provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.
- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and how to stay safe while online.
- The widespread use of cooperative learning strategies, peer tutoring, collaboration in producing project work and other group work is strongly encouraged to develop interpersonal skills, fostering respect for others and the skills of making and maintaining friendships.

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6. Procedures

At Kill o'the Grange National School 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).

With this in mind the schools procedures for the 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 : -

(i)   Appendix 1 is the adopted template for recording cases

(ii)   In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type of bullying it is if it has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

(iii)   All reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). 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

(iv)   Non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker, should report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher/principal;

(v)   Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practical, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;

(vi)   It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;

(vii)   Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;

(viii) Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

(ix)   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;

(x)   When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) 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

(xi)   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

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

(xiii) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher/principal;

(xiv)   Where the relevant teacher(s)/principal has/have 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 reflect on their actions, see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied and think about what they can do to make things better going forward

(xv)   When a pupil cooperates with the process of restoring the relationship damaged by the bullying behaviour and undertakes to and in fact does not engage in further bullying behaviours, sanctions need not be applied;

(xvi)   In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should 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;

(xvii) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and guardians/parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents/guardians and the school;

(xviii) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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;

(xix)   An additional follow-up meeting with parents/guardians of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily;

(xx)   In cases where the relevant teacher(s) consider that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that the bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded in the bullying behaviour recording template

(xxi)   In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement take the following factors into account:
- Whether the bullying behaviours have 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 parents/guardians and any other teachers involved in investigating and dealing with the bullying behaviour;

(xxii) Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;

(xxiii) In the event that a parent/guardian 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 through official procedures.

RECORD KEEPING:

Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the template (Appendix 1) recommended by the Department for recording bullying behaviour. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

(i) While all reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s), the relevant teacher(s) will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

(ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher(s) must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

(iii) The relevant teacher(s) must use the recording template at Appendix 1 to record the bullying behaviour. This template is available in the teachers' from the office.

(iv) The relevant teacher will record the dates and the means of communication with the parents/guardians of the pupils involved in section 8 of the 'Bullying Behaviour Record Form'.

(v) Completed 'Bullying Behaviour Record Forms' will be submitted to the principal to be stored centrally in the office. These forms will be sent to the office when the issue has been resolved or at such time when the relevant teacher deems that the issue cannot be resolved without the further intervention of the principal.

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7. Support

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. The school undertakes to build empathy, mutual respect and resilience in pupils through our approach to curriculum delivery, placing particular importance on those elements of the curriculum that deal with building self-esteem and social skills, the hidden curriculum, modelling respectful behaviour and providing opportunities for the pupils to show their individual strength and talents. The school will openly address bullying behaviours. The school will endeavour to provide for adequate supervision and monitoring of pupils and consistently record, investigate and follow up bullying behaviour. The school will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures adopted to address bullying behaviours. The school recognises the complexity of bullying behaviour and that no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals, so that appropriate outside agencies are contacted, in order to access further support for the pupils and their families, if needed.

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 reasonable and practicable to prevent expressions of prejudice and harassment against pupils or staff members on any of the nine grounds specified. The Board of Management recognises, welcomes and values diversity in our school community.

11. Publication:
This policy will be made available to school personnel and published on the school website. Parents will be provided with a soft copy of this policy, through the office, if they request one (or a printed version). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. Ratification and Review:

- This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually
- The Board shall use the Checklist template as recommended by the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti bullying policy annually
- Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel and made available to parents as requested.
- A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was last reviewed (and updated) and approved by the Board in May 2019.

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Appendix 1 Bullying Behaviour Record

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
 -tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9.   Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal _____
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Appendix 2: 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 is 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.
  - o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
  - 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.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.