

# NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. 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 Newtownmountkennedy Primary 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.
  
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 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.

This policy applies to activities and events that take place:

- During school time (including break times)
- Walking to/from school on the avenue during school times
- Going between school buildings
- School tours/trips
- Extra-curricular activities

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school.

Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

The member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". This is the class teacher.

### **Who Is Responsible For Doing What?**

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

#### **Anti-Bullying Coordinators:**

- **Deirdre Lennon** (*School Principal*)
- **Orla Keyes** (*Deputy Principal*)
- **Ronan Keddy** (*Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator*). Responsibility for links with parents and dispersal of relevant information and supports.
- **All Teaching Staff, with the support of SNAs** All Teaching Staff, with the support of SNAs, will investigate and record incidents of bullying behaviour

### **Our Procedures Re 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 as follows:

Since the failure to report bullying can lead to a continuation or a deterioration of bullying, the school and parents encourage children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. This can be with the class teacher, the teacher on yard duty at the time, Special Needs Assistants, and the principal or with parents. This is a "telling school" as defined in the Stay Safe Programme. Children will therefore be constantly assured that their reports of bullying either for themselves or peers will be treated with sensitivity.

- a. An Incident of bullying behaviour will be noted and recorded by the class teacher or the teacher on duty/yard duty.
- b. The Incident will be investigated – what, who, when, where, why?
- c. An effort will be made to resolve any issues and to restore as far as practicable, the relationships.
- d. The teacher will exercise professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and as to how it can be resolved.
- e. Parents and pupils are required to cooperate with any investigation.
- f. Serious incidents, or a recurring incident of bullying behaviour which has in the opinion of a teacher not been adequately or appropriately addressed within 20 school days will be recorded on the DES template and shall be reported to the principal / deputy principal. The teacher will also use the DES recording template where he/she considers the bullying behaviour to constitute serious misconduct.
- g. If a group is involved, they will be met both individually and as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said. This account will be recorded.
- h. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way, and will be expected to assist the investigation. Children should understand there are no innocent bystanders if they remain passive where bullying is concerned—All bystanders *must* report bullying.
- i. The alleged "bully" will be asked to reflect on his/her behaviour and its consequences for himself/herself and for the person who is the victim.

**j.** Parents will be made aware of this behaviour and requested to come and discuss it with the teacher/principal with a view to solving the problem. If necessary the aggressor will be asked to sign an undertaking that "this behaviour will not reoccur."

**k.** The situation will continue to be monitored to ensure that the problem has been resolved. Actions taken will be recorded. Records will be reviewed and analysed.

**l.** The code of behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal.

**m.** If a case remains unresolved the matter will be referred to the school's Board of Management. The Board will also be briefed in relation to the number, if any, of templates which have been completed.

**n.** Additionally, where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the Board of Management.

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

### **The School's Programme of Support**

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

1. Circle time
2. Nurture Groups
3. Festina Lente
4. Developmental Dance
6. Play Therapy Groups
7. Our support teachers will facilitate one-to-one self-esteem building activities. Work with small groups will also be facilitated.
8. Through the means of curricular and extracurricular activities to develop positive self worth.
9. Developing pupil's awareness of identity-based bullying and in particular trans-phobic bullying, i.e. the "Growing Up" lesson in SPHE. Particular account will also be taken of the important and unique role pupils with Special Educational Needs have to play in our school.
10. Choir, Drama and concerts.
11. GAA training and matches.

12. Lego Club

13. Student Council

### **Cyber Bullying**

Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons.

Cyber bullying includes the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone.

It may take the form of general insults or impersonation, defamation or prejudice-based bullying.

***Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.***

While this policy addresses issues related to cyber bullying of students (i.e. situations in which one or more students are the victim[s] of bullying), the policy also applies to teaching and other school staff.

### **Key Measures re Cyber Bullying**

- Staff will be trained to identify signs of cyber bullying and will be helped to keep informed about the technologies that children commonly use.
- Advice will be communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying (as perpetrator or as victim) and to advise them on reporting any incidents.
- Students will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at the school.
- Support Organisations will visit the school once a year to talk about cyber bullying (Pupil and Parent Workshops).
- Teachers will dedicate a standalone lesson to deal with the issue of cyber bullying.
- Parents will be invited to a talk on bullying to include cyber bullying.
- Students and staff are expected to comply with the school's policy on the use of computers/Chrome Books/i-pads in the School. (Acceptable user policy)
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.
- Parents and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks, including Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat.

- Newtownmountkennedy Primary School endeavours to block access to inappropriate websites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in classrooms, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present.

### **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.

### **Date This Policy Was Adopted**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on: 19th December 2019

### **Availability of This Policy**

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.

### **Review of This Policy**

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.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date:

