

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 Howth 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.(See also Appendix 1)
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
- 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 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*, and appears as Appendix 2 of this document

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):
 - * The class teacher(s) initially
 - * The principal thereafter if necessary
5. The following education and prevention strategies, at the appropriate and relevant levels for each class, will be used by the school:
 - Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to develop a positive sense of self-worth
 - Prevention and awareness raising methods focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online etc.
 - Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner
 - 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. Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour.
 - The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious education, and Physical education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects.
 - Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. GAA and soccer coaching is offered to some classes from outside agencies and teachers are also involved in coaching the school's soccer and gaelic teams

6. 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 area as follows:
- 1) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation may be resolved
 - 2) All reports, including anonymous 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
 - 3) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNA's), caretakers, cleaners etc. must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher
 - 4) Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as it practicle, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
 - 5) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset
 - 6) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents
 - 7) 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
 - 8) 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
 - 9) 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. 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
 - 10) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher
 - 11) Where the relevant teacher(s) 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 see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied
 - 12) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
 - 13) 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

- 14) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school
- 15) 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
- 16) An additional follow-up meeting with parents of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matters have been resolved satisfactorily
- 17) 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 school's complaints procedures
- 18) 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

Recording: Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the *template for recording bullying behaviour (Appendix 3)*. 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:

- 1) While all reports, including anonymous 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
- 2) 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
- 3) The relevant teacher(s) must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour which is available on the server
- 4) At least once in every school term, the principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out: (i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 3) since the previous report to the Board and (ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools* (iii) the minutes of the Board of Management meeting must record the above but in doing so must not include any identifying details of the pupils involved
7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention / support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals to appropriate outside agencies in order to receive 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. Referral of serious cases to Child and Family Agency: In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where ‘the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the Child and Family Agency with a view to drawing an appropriate response, such as a management plan’. Serious instances of bullying behaviour will in accordance with the *Children First* and *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the Child and Family Agency and / or Gardaí as appropriate.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 26/05/2014

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 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 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 (See appendix 4 and Appendix 5 of this document)

Signed: Mr. Joe Kirwin
 (Chairperson Board of Management)

Signed: Mr. John Chambers
 (Principal)

Date: 26/05/2014

Date: 26/05/2014

Date of next Review: 08/06/2015

Date of next Review: _____

Date of next Review: _____

Date of next Review: _____

Howth Primary School

Roll No: 18080A

Appendix 1: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

There 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 school rules on mobile phone and internet use
- Follow-up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules
- 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
 - 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
- Support the establishment and work of student councils

Howth Primary School

Roll No: 18080A

Appendix 2: Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

Physical aggression: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in ‘mess fights’, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain

Intimidation: Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation. It may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike

Isolation / exclusion and other relational bullying: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person’s attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control – ‘Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore (implied or stated), a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy), non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours about a person or giving them the ‘silent treatment’.

Cyber-bullying: This type of bullying is increasingly common and continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, email, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful is the most common form of cyber-bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact, cyber-bullying

can occur anytime (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Name calling: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) that hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g. size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers are also targeted.

Damage to property: Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phones or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Howth Primary School

Roll No: 18080A

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	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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	
Damage to property	
Isolation / Exclusion	
Name calling	
Other (specify)	

7. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed: _

_

Date:

Relevant teacher:

Signed:

Date:

Date submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal:

Appendix 4: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implications

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implications. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and it not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes/No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	

Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and / or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed:
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date:

Signed:
Principal

Date:

Howth Primary School

Roll No: 18080A

Appendix 5: Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Howth Primary School wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ (date).
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of

the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: Joe Kirwin
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 26/05/14

Signed: John Chambers
Principal

Date: 26/05/14