

Rathduff NS 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 Rathduff 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 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;

 - **See Table A (6.1.5.Procedures): Key elements of a positive school culture and climate, and also Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a school culture and climate.**

 - 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.

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 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*.

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

All teaching staff- In particular the relevant class teacher

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying , homophobic and transphobic 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 stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- 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. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of

communication technology within the school.

- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (on enrolment).
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, .
- Lessons on **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe-Be Web wise, Web wise Primary teachers' resources).
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Links to other policies

- School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, School Tours/Excursions/Mobile Phones.

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 are as follows :

- ✚ The relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how the situation might be resolved.
- ✚ The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- ✚ All reports (including anonymous reports of bullying) will be investigated and dealt with. It will be made clear to all pupils that when they report an incident of bullying that they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- ✚ All non teaching staff will report bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.

- ✚ If it is established that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved.
- ✚ Parents/guardians and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable the relationship of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- ✚ Teachers will take a calm, sensible, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.
- ✚ Where possible incidents will be investigated outside the classroom to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- ✚ All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned
- ✚ The relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- ✚ If a group is involved each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all involved will be met as a group where each member will be asked for their account to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each others statement.
- ✚ Sometimes it may be helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of what happened.
- ✚ Once it has been established that bullying has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. Parents will be given an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.
- ✚ The relevant teacher will make efforts to try and get the pupil involved in bullying behaviour to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- ✚ Follow up meetings with the relevant parties will be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date
- ✚ In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it will be recorded by the relevant teacher in the attached recording template.
- ✚ Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent will be referred as appropriate to the schools complaint procedure.
- ✚ In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedure and is still not satisfied, the parent will be advised of their right to make a complaint to the ombudsman for children.
- ✚ Additions will be made to this document post training in 2014/15

7.The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :

- All in- school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilliance eg.

Stay Safe

S.P.H.E Lessons

Circle time

Walk Tall

The Anti- Bullying campaign literature and website

- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher

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 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.

10.This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

11.This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____