



Scoil Náisiúnta Tobair Eoin Baisde

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Anti-bullying policy

Education Act Requirements

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 Johnswell 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.

Key Principals

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.

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.

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*.

Investigating and Dealing with Bullying Behaviours

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (in accordance with section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

All members of staff are involved in dealing with bullying incidents as they occur. If further action or investigation is required this will be dealt with, initially, by the class teacher(s) concerned. Repeated and serious cases of bullying behaviour will be referred to the Principal for immediate action.

Education and Prevention Strategies

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*):

All classes implement the Stay Safe Programme and the relevant sections in the RSE, SPHE and SESE programmes. Children from First to Sixth classes take part in a series of Anti-Bullying lessons in the second term of each year. These are run internally. Teachers are flexible in the timetabling

of these programmes to facilitate a quick and early response to indications of bullying behaviour in the school.

Investigation, Follow-Up and Recording

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 (in accordance with section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

*a. **Action:** All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, are to be noted, promptly investigated and resolved by the school for the benefit of the individuals concerned and the school community at large. **Purpose:** This will allow for the school community to see that we in Johnswell National School treat bullying as intolerable and we all can gain confidence in our procedures.*

*b. **Action:** Cases will be dealt with initially by the class teacher(s) concerned. Repeated and serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils are to be referred to the Principal for immediate action. The teacher/principal investigates the claim and then reports back to the person who reported the incident. All cases dealt with as promptly as possible. **Purpose:** Cases are dealt with at a 'local' level in an attempt to resolve the problem promptly. Repeated instances or serious claims are given the appropriate level of consideration.*

*c. **Action:** Where there are serious cases or repeated incidences - parents/guardians of victims and bullies are to be informed by the Class Teacher and/or Principal, within a reasonable timeframe (days rather than weeks) of the incident(s) so that they are given the opportunity to discuss the matter. **Purpose:** Everyone is involved in finding a solution and is in a position to help and support their children before a crisis escalates.*

*d. **Actions:** Parents/guardians can make their enquiries regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians to the Class Teacher and/or Principal. They should not approach a child on any matter. **Purpose:** So they get the full picture and not exacerbate the problem further.*

*e. **Action:** Where a case relating to a pupil remains unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the Chairperson of the Board for immediate consideration and action in accordance with the steps outlined in the Code of Behaviour. **Purpose:** To get to the core of the problem and not let the complaint further damage the individuals concerned or the school community due to further delay.*

*f. **Action:** Where a case is not resolved at the Board level to the satisfaction of all parties, the Board will consider whether the case should be referred to another appropriate body (i.e. DES, or qualified facilitator/mediator). **Purpose:** To ensure that there is an independent definitive resolution.*

All allegations of bullying inter-staff will be dealt with by the Principal and/or Board of Management in accordance with the Industrial Relations Act 1990 (Code of Practice detailing Procedures for Addressing Bullying in the Workplace(Declaration) Order 2002. Allegations involving an instances of bullying between staff members and pupils will be dealt with by the Principal and/or Board of Management

The school Principal shall report any serious cases or repeated incidences of bullying to the Board of Management at each BOM meeting.

Rationale 1. The BOM are ultimately responsible for ensuring that school policies are operational, effective and appropriate.

Rationale 2. Cases not resolved at local level are referred to the Board – the reporting procedures suggested will give the Board advance warning of possible future cases.

Programme of Support

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

- ***Pupils(s) should report bullying to Class Teacher or other trusted person e.g. parent, sibling, staff member or friend who then reports to the Class Teacher.***
 - ***The Class Teacher(s) investigates the bullying, and then reports back to the person who reported the bullying.***
 - ***Where bullying has taken place the Class Teacher meets the Parent(s) of the child who is responsible for the bullying.***
 - ***A process is set up to investigate the reason for the bullying and to eliminate a reoccurrence.***
 - ***The Class Teacher meets the Parent(s) of the bullied child.***
 - ***An apology is given to the bullied child and an effort is made by the child responsible for the bullying to make amends.***
 - ***Ongoing support is given both to the bullied child and the child responsible for the bullying where necessary.***
 - ***If a second bullying incident takes place the Principal and Class Teacher meet with the Parents and the process above is re-initiated.***
 - ***Outside agencies may be employed to begin counselling with both the child responsible for the bullying and the bullied child where necessary. The area NEPS representative is Caroline Donnelly.***
 - ***If the bullying continues the Board is informed and disciplinary action may be considered.***
- All investigations of bullying are recorded and records are kept by the Principal.***

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.

Communication of the Anti-Bullying Policy to the school community

- A copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy made available to school personnel and to the Parents' Association.
- The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

Policy review

This policy was initially drafted and introduced in 2013. It will be reviewed by the school management team periodically and amended as required.

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management on 28/1/2021 (date)
Signed: [Signature] (Chairperson of Board of Management)
Signed: [Signature] (Principal)

This policy was reviewed on 22/03/2022 (date)
Signed: [Signature] (Chairperson of Board of Management)
Signed: [Signature] (Principal)

This policy was reviewed on 18/03/2023 (date)
Signed: [Signature] (Chairperson of Board of Management)
Signed: [Signature] (Principal)

This policy was reviewed on 29/02/2024 (date)
Signed: [Signature] (Chairperson of Board of Management)
Signed: [Signature] (Principal)