

# Holy Angels National School

Clogher,  
Claremorris,  
Co. Mayo.  
F2RC95



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## Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of CLOGHER N.S. 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 20/6/22 [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 Leanne O'Reilly  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 21/06/2022

Signed Adi O'Connell  
Principal

Date 21/6/22

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## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Policy Aims:

- To create a school ethos that sees Holy Angels N.S. being a community in which mutual respect, co-operation and natural justice are integral features.
- To create a school which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents and guardians.
- To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

The school in which pupils, teachers and parents all support and respect each other is a happy environment in which a young child can grow towards becoming a confident, fulfilled adult.

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 Holy Angels 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;
- 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

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- 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:

## **Physical Aggression**

It includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, pinching, slapping, poking, tripping people up.

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## **Interference With / Damage to Property**

This includes damage to clothing, schoolbooks and other learning materials as well as the taking of or interfering with other people's property e.g. pencils, toppers, coats etc..

## **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".

## **Intimidation**

Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it is based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting to victims can be the so-called 'look' – a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

## **Name Calling**

Persistent name-calling, 'slagging', making inappropriate personal comments, directed at the same individual(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates, is regarded as a form of bullying behaviour.

## **Cyber-bullying:**

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

## **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.

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Mr. Ormsby
- Ms O'Hora
- Ms. Nevin

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- Substitute Teachers if the above teachers are absent for a prolonged period

5. 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

## Positive School Ethos

- Through a programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.
- Children are made aware that bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour. This is done explicitly through the Stay Safe Programme, the Walk Tall Programme, Zippy's Friends Programme (HSE) and specific Cyber-Bullying lessons (Prim-Ed) (c.f. school policy SPHE). Opportunities also arise in Religion lessons and across other curricular areas.
- Similarly the school's Code of Behaviour emphasises the promotion of respectful behaviour (c.f. Holy Angel's Code of Behaviour);
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy and parts thereof will be discussed each term with the pupils.
- Staff is particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and the policy will be reviewed annually.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by **encouraging positive behaviour** both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others and **by communicating concerns to the school**.

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:

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- The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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).
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- All reports of bullying will be noted, investigated and dealt with by the class teacher so that pupils will gain confidence in telling.
- A template for recording bullying behavior will be used by the relevant teacher.
- Serious cases of bullying will be dealt with by the class teacher and the principal.
- Parents will be informed very early in the process and invited to consult with class teacher / principal.
- Pupils will be encouraged to understand that reporting is not telling tales but behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff are encouraged to discreetly report observed incidences of bullying.
- Parents are asked to inform teachers **immediately** when they become aware of incidences that have taken place during the school day, about which we may be unaware. Teachers cannot be responsible for incidents, which occur outside of school hours.

## Investigation / follow-up / recording / intervention

- Teachers should adopt a calm unemotional approach.
- Incidents are often best investigated outside classroom situation.
- Teacher should speak separately to the pupils involved.
- Answers should be sought to the questions-Who, What, When, Where, How, Why.
- Members of a group should be met both individually and together.
- Teachers will keep a written record of their discussions with those involved.
- Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, teachers will contact the parents or guardians of the parties involved as appropriate. They will explain the actions being taken and the reason for them and discuss ways in which the parents can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.
- Teachers will continue to monitor the situation and to liaise with parents.

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred to the school's complaints procedures.

In the event that a parent 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 to the Ombudsman for Children.

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## 7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Teachers will use learning strategies and programmes that enhance each pupil's feeling of self-esteem and self-worth e.g. Walk Tall Programme, Stay Safe Programme, Zippy's Friends Programme, Grow in Love programme.
- Outside agencies may be used from time to time to deliver programmes that will supplement work being done in the school.

## 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 **21st June 2022**

11. This policy will be made available to school personnel and all parents. 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 and parents. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Leanne O'Reilly  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Ad. O'Leary  
(Principal)

Date: 21/06/2022

Date: 21/6/22

Date of next review: June 2023