# Derrylamogue National 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 National Education Welfare Board and as mandated by the Department of Education and Skills in circular 45/13 the Board of Management of Derrylamogue 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
     + 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.

The Board of Management has decided that this anti-bullying policy will apply to all pupils enrolled in our school during the school day or involved in school activities or representing the school either during or after school. All adults are covered under the school’s adult anti- bullying procedures and Dignity in the Workplace policies.

1. 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.
  + Use of sarcasm regarding appearance, background or ability.
  + Humiliating directly or indirectly a pupil who is academically weak or outstanding.

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*.

1. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):
   * Classroom related incidents:
     + The class teacher
   * Yard incidents:
     + The supervising teacher or it may be passed onto the class teacher, deputy principal or principal.
   * Incidents at school events:
     + The supervising teacher or it may be passed onto the deputy principal or principal.
   * The above order does not prevent any teacher in the school acting as the relevant teacher should circumstances warrant their involvement.

* The education and prevention strategies 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*:
* A culture of respect, responsibility, encouragement, positivity, support, enabling, consideration and tolerance for all within the school is encouraged throughout every school day.
  + Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by all school staff.
  + Supervision of pupils during the school day and at school events with particular attention given to SEN pupils and pupils where there is a concern.
  + The encouragement of empathy, respect and resilience amongst pupils.
  + Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth.
  + Develop pupils’ awareness and understanding of bullying and how the school deals with bullying including its causes and effects to include where age appropriate, cyber bullying, identity based bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying.
  + Through ongoing awareness raising exercises on bullying the school hopes to build a culture where bullying is **Recognised, Rejected and Reported** by all in the school community. The Anti-Bullying Campaign website provides helpful exercises in this regard which can be used in conjunction with curricular programmes. As part of this awareness raising pupils will be explicitly taught how to recognise, reject and report bullying behaviour. Pupils will also know who to tell and be advised on ways to tell eg.
    - Approaching teacher/staff member at an appropriate time.
    - Hand up note with homework
    - Get a friend/parent/guardian to tell on your behalf.
  + Education of pupils on appropriate online behaviour including staying safe online and cyberbullying.
  + Close supervision of access and use of technology in school.
  + Development of social skills and inclusion amongst pupils particularly focusing on those children with SEN.
  + Use of curricular programmes such as The Stay Safe programme, RSE curriculum and SPHE curriculum which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness as well as the inter-related areas of belonging, integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. Use of Mindful Matters in all classes to promote positive wellbeing and mental health.
  + Respect is fostered across all curriculum areas and in all teaching and curricular opportunities are used to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Co-operation and group enterprise are particularly encouraged through school activities and all pupils are encouraged to participate in the wide variety offered throughout the school year.
  + Outdoor facilities for play will be kept in good condition and play areas will be divided into age appropriate groups.
  + Parents/guardians attention is drawn to the fact that both policies are available on the school website.

1. 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 (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

# Investigation

# Stage 1 Reporting Bullying Concerns

* + 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. The aim is that bullying is **Recognised, Rejected and Reported** by all members of the school community and that where bullying has taken place the emphasis is on **Reform not Blame**. This approach consistently implemented is recognised as leading to the best outcomes in incidents of bullying behaviour.
  + In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/ her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
  + All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher and reported to the Principal. 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.
  + All members of the school community are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour. This can be reported to the relevant teacher or the Principal.
  + Where a pupil, parent/guardian or staff member has a bullying concern it should be brought to the attention of the relevant teacher. For parents/guardians or staff members this should be done through arranging a meeting with the teacher.
  + Parents 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 relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
  + It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupil and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.

# Stage 2: Staff Procedure for dealing with a report of bullying Report by a child of a possible bullying incident.

* + Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
  + Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
  + All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils that are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
  + When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher 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 conflict in a non- aggressive manner.
  + If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. 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.
  + Each member of the group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher
  + It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to **write down** their account of the incident(s)

# Stage 3 Where bullying appears to have occurred

* + Where it has been established through investigation that bullying is taking place the following approach will be used to deal with the incident:
* In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying 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 by reference to the school policy. The school should give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.
* Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is **in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.**
  + The teacher will make clear to all parties 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.
  + Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;
  + 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 must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template as per Appendix 3of the Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.
  + In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
    - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
    - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
    - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
    - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;
  + Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, parents can make a complaint through the school’s complaints procedure.
  + In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, parents have a right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

# Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

The school’s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour adhere to the anti- bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools as outlined in section 6.8.10

The school’s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

* + All reports of concerns of bullying made must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. The teacher will use his/ her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and a note of discussions held with those involved. A copy of this should be given to the principal.
  + The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** of the Anti- bullying Procedures to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

1. in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
2. where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.
   * In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at **Appendix 3** must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at **Appendix 3** does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

# Referral of serious cases to the HSE

* + In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (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 HSE Child and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan.”*
  + Serious incidents of bullying behaviour either by pupils or adults will in accordance with the *Children First* and *The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Child and Family Services and/or the Gardai as appropriate.
  + *The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Child and Family Services.

# Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour

* + Bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. In such cases the behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour Policy and referral will be made to the relevant external agencies and authorities as appropriate.
  + In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

# Supports for Pupils affected by bullying

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*) :

* + Pupils affected by bullying both those who have been bullied and those who have bullied may need counselling. The school will advise parents on where counselling services may be available.
  + Advice will be offered to pupils affected by bullying by the class teacher or Principal.
  + The school runs a wide range of activities for children throughout the year both during and after school. The school will encourage pupils affected by bullying to become involved in these activities if they are not already involved.
  + Class teachers will check with pupils affected by bullying on a regular basis.
  + The school will seek to identify areas of responsibility for children affected by bullying which will help to improve their self-esteem.
  + Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss them with their class teachers.
  + The school will seek assistance from NEPs as required in each case and will act on advice received.

# Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

# Prevention of Harassment

**1 Supervision:**  There is a rota for teachers on Yard Duty posted in the staff room.

**2 Yard:** The yard is divided into sections according to class

**3 Outdoor facilities:** Football pitch, basketball court, junior play area

**4 Resources:**  Teamwork games, co-opertive games

**5 Indoor facilities:**  Board games, books, educational toys

**6 Access to the internet** is to be supervised at all times in the classroom

**7 Mobile phones for pupils**  are not allowed during school time or on school related outings

**Classroom resources include:**

Grow in Love Programme

Walk Tall Programme

Stay Safe

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.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year using the standardised check list provided in Appendix 4 of the Anti- Bullying Procedures issued by the Department of Education and Skills. Any identified areas for improvement arising from the review will be addressed in an action plan to be implemented in the school year of the review. 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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: Nov 2022

# Appendix 2 Building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some actions that are taken in our school to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

* + All school users are expected to model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
  + Pupils are explicitly taught what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
  + Key respect messages are displayed in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Pupils are involved in the development of these messages.
  + Pupils receive positive attention for being good.
  + Staff 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.
  + Staff give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
  + A system of encouragement and rewards is used to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
  + Pupils are encouraged to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Pupils who ignore these rules are followed up on in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour.
  + The school promotes the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
  + The school highlights and teaches school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
  + All staff watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
  + Pupils are supervised during school times and at all school activities.

# Signs and symptoms which may suggest that a pupil is being bullied.

1. Anxiety about travelling to or from school.
2. Unwillingness to attend school, refusal to attend, truancy
3. Deterioration in education performance, loss of concentration, loss of interest in school
4. Pattern of physical illnesses
5. Unexplained changes in mood particularly after weekends or more especially after longer holidays
6. Visible signs of anxiety or distress eg. Stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, crying, not eating, bedwetting.
7. Spontaneous out of character comments
8. Possessions missing or damaged
9. Increased requests for money or stealing money
10. Unexplained cuts, bruising, damaged clothing
11. Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.