

# Glenasmole 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 NEWB, the Board of Management of Glenasmole 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) 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;

**(b) Effective leadership**

**(c) A school-wide approach**

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

**(e) 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, as appropriate at this age level

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

**(g) Supports for staff**

**(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**

**(i) 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*.

#### **Examples of bullying behaviours**

<b>General behaviours which apply to all</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying (LGBT), racist bullying, ethnic/religious bullying etc.</li><li>• Physical aggression</li><li>• Damage to property</li><li>• Name calling</li><li>• Slagging</li><li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li><li>• Offensive graffiti</li><li>• Extortion</li><li>• Intimidation</li><li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li><li>• The "look"</li><li>• Invasion of personal space</li><li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li></ul>
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<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>● <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>● <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>● <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>● <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then posting online</li> <li>● <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>● <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>● <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>● Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>● Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>● Abusive text messages</li> <li>● Abusive email</li> <li>● Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li> <li>● Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>● Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>  <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<p><b>Homophobic and Transgender</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>● Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>● Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>● Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>● Threats</li> </ul>
<p><b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>● Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relational</b></p>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Malicious gossip</li> <li>● Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>● Ignoring</li> <li>● Excluding from the group</li> <li>● Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>● "Bitching"</li> <li>● Spreading rumours</li> <li>● Breaking confidence</li> <li>● Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>● The "look"</li> </ul>

Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>● Harassment</li> </ul>
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name calling</li> <li>● Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>● Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>● Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>● Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>● Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

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

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

Every teacher – both class teachers and Special Education teachers. **Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school include the following:

**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.
- Staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- 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. A high level of vigilance is expected of all adults working in the school environment, but the human factor and the hidden nature of some bullying is taken into account, given the adult-child ratio and the fact that toilets and corridors will not have adult supervision and that within the classrooms and yard, children will not always be working under direct-teaching/instruction situations.
- Involvement of the Senior Class children in contributing to a safe school environment, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support, for example a Yard Buddy system.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of 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 every year in the school journal.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. Friendship Week, a notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship during friendship week, parent seminars, student surveys, regular school assemblies
- 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. In order for a teacher to effectively investigate incidents, children are encouraged to approach a teacher as soon as possible after the event. Children are encouraged to support each other in telling the teacher of any concerns they have.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class/at lunchtime.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Green post box in hallway
  - Make contact on Class Dojo - portfolio or message
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf. They can make a phone call to the school, leaving a message for the teacher if necessary or send an email.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
  - Through the confidential survey held in Friendship Week
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. Parents should report any incident to the class teacher and ask that it be investigated. The sooner an incident is reported, the more effective an investigation will be. 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. Reports of past incidents which had not been reported to the teacher will be investigated in the context of the most recent incident.
- The maintenance 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
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (excluding, damaging reputations and withdrawing friendship) at age-appropriate stages e.g. Web wise Primary teachers' resources, Stop, Think, Do resource, Friends for Life.
- Invitation to Community Gardaí from Tallaght Garda Station, when available, to deliver a programme covering 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.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

#### **Links to other policies**

- The school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying are our Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Toilet Procedure, Mobile Phones & Electronic Gadgets policy, Extra-curricular activities, Special Education Needs

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:

#### **Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

**The primary aim 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);**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset. This approach is included in the letter to parents at the outset of Friendship Week each year.

#### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) should bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), GAA coaches, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the class teacher/principal;
- Teachers on yard duty, supervision or in-class support report any incidents or disclosures to the class teacher

#### **Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach**

- 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;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) 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;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be 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 who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the 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 a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s). 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 a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;
- In cases where it has been determined by the teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved are 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 provides parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been 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 try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

#### **Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the 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;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- 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.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Pupils.

#### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

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

##### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

##### **Informal-determination that bullying has occurred**

- If it is established by the relevant teacher 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 relationships of the parties involved.
- Records must be stored securely in accordance with our Record-Keeping policy

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) 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

b) In certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. These circumstances, as outlined in our Code of Behaviour include:

*Gross Misbehaviour: Gross misbehaviour should never be seen in the school, under any circumstances. Samples of gross misbehaviour are threatening behaviour or language, deliberate kicking and hitting other students or teachers, serious theft etc.*

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. This record is kept in the central incident file maintained by the Principal.

**Established intervention strategies which may be used. A record of these interventions is kept in the student file.**

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Support Group Method
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given
- The Code of Behaviour will inform the selection of appropriate actions by the relevant teacher or the principal. Sanctions may be imposed if deemed appropriate in the context of the Code of Behaviour. Such actions are a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying include the following

- 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 resilience e.g.
  - Pastoral care – administered by the Principal and Deputy Principal
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring
  - Group work such as circle time



- If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to advise parents of the services available. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the 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.

#### **In Glensmole School:**

- There are agreed, appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school. These are outlined in our Supervision policy.
- Danger spots for bullying have been identified – the yard, corridors and toilets are seen as particular danger spots, although the classroom is also often the place where bullying can occur. Our Toilets Procedure and Child Protection policies outline our approach in use of, supervision and monitoring of these areas. Parents and pupils have been consulted in the identification of these danger spots.
- All staff will support measures to counteract bullying behaviour. This policy outlines the involvement of staff in this regard.
- Pupils, in particular senior pupils, will be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying. The use of a buddy system in the yard may be used to encourage all children to be alert for bullying and to help a child to seek assistance where necessary.
- After School Clubs promote Anti-bullying through the establishment of a suitable code of acceptable behaviour at the outset of each club session and the regular reminding of pupils to follow this code. External supervisors and teachers are provided with a copy of this policy and are obliged to follow the procedures contained within.
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school the following issues are addressed:
  - All Internet sessions supervised by a teacher.
  - The school regularly monitors pupils' Internet usage.
  - Pupils are instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision.
  - Pupils are instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school.
  - The Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is provided for educational purposes only.

## 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 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014. It was reviewed and updated in January 2019 and further reviewed and updated in January 2020.

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 once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, 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: Breda Doyle  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Kenn Moran  
(Principal)

Date: 24th November 2021

Date: 25/11/21

This policy was updated by the BOM to reflect changes in the Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk assessment on 24th November 2021

Date of next review: 24th November 2022

Note 1 - from procedures

6.8.10 (i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same;