# Holy Family School Anti-Bullying Policy

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**Anti-Bullying Policy for Pupils**

l. 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 The Holy Family has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully compIies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post­ Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

1. 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 by promoting:
   * 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 Prima,y and Post-Prima,y 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 fonns ofrelational bullying,
  + cyber-bullying and "
  + identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveling community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

The Holy Family School recognizes that an understanding of this concept may be difficult for some of our pupils, therefore, every effort is made to educate our cohort of pupils as to the nature of bullying and the detrimental effect it has on others.

Staff identified the **following pupil to pupil** behaviours which could fall within the definition of bullying within the context of our school.

* **Physical:** Pushing, pulling, kicking. spitting, pinching, hitting, squeezing, biting, choking, scratching, inappropriate touching.
* **Emotional:** Exclusion, name calling, teasing. ignoring, intimidation, body language, taking or breaking possessions, destroying work, invasion of privacy, telling lies, verbal intimidation, peer pressure, mimicking.
* **Cyber:** sharing of hurtful videos, photographs/messages on any platform.

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 for investigating and dealing with buJlying is as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):* Initially the class teacher

with support and guidance from the Deputy Principal, Andrea McHugh.(Advice from behaviour team if re\_guired)

1. **EDUCATION AND PREVENTION:**

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):*

* + Careful planning of class groups each year

Focus on building positive self-esteem for all pupils and a culture of respect across the whole school for staff and pupils

* + Recognition that some pupils do not interact well with others and the adoption of appropriate strategies to alleviate tensions.

Identification and risk assessing of 'Hot Spots' - playground, toilets, corridors, transitions from one activity to another, visiting other classrooms, or areas of the school where the presence of another child causes anxiety, assembly times and home time

* + Implementation of strategies to reduce identified risks such as delaying some pupils at home time, providing additional supervision in toilet areas, behaviour support plans, etc.
  + Close liaison with bus escorts, drivers, parents, and school staff regarding behaviours on school transport
  + Developing 'Pupil Profiles' at the end of each year for handover to next classroom
  + Staff awareness of pupils who have a documented history of engaging in behaviours that challenge and support provided to them to manage incidents where necessary.
  + Discussion at teacher's weekly meetings on strategies to support vulnerable pupils throughout the school day in all areas of the school.
  + Awareness of staff on the importance of taking the time to listen to children and to give them time to process what is said to them.
  + Teaching relevant SPHE and Stay Safe programmes, Circle Time, Growing up for Girls &

Boys programme.

* + Developing Social Stories on building respect, empathy and resilience.
  + Teaching of the school rules in class and reinforcement during circle time. The use of visual aids in throughout the school.
  + Active communication and liaison with parents/carers, ancillary staff, bus escorts and drivers.
  + Regular contact with all parties involved.
  + Implementation of positive handling strategies such as diversion, diffusion, de-escalation, re­ directing etc.
  + Use of relevant educational materials to promote and foster respect for others.
  + A strong and active culture of child protection.

# Staff will regularly review other Relevant Related Policies:

* Child Protection Policy
* Intimate Care Policy
* Code of Behaviour
* Policy on behaviours that challenge
* Health and Safety Policy
* Internet Acceptable Use Policy and photo/video policy
* Restrictive Practices Policy
* Confidentiality Policy
* Relationships and Sexuality Policy

# Diversity and Difference:

* The school promotes a positive culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity. We respect cultural traditions and religious beliefs, and lesson materials reflect the diversity in the world.

# Cyberbullying:

* Pupils in The Holy Family School do not have unsupervised access to phones or the internet.
* For those pupils who may understand staff will discuss with them the impact of:
* Inappropriate comments/photos, etc. on Facebook or other social media
* Inappropriate texts/messages/photos via pupils' phones
* Inappropriate pictures/websites on iPads, laptops, etc.
* The importance of respecting sexual orientation of peers.

## INVESTIGATION, FOLLOW UP AND RECORDING OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

The Holy Family School procedures for investigation and 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 (as per Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures/or Primary and Post-Primary Schools):*

## Investigation:

* + All reports even anonymous ones will be investigated by the relevant teacher. All staff, parents & bus escorts, must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them.
  + The relevant class teacher will investigate and try to resolve any issues and restore as far as practicable the relationships of the parties involved. Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents ofalleged bullying behaviour by pupils. When analyzing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when. who and why? The Principal and /or Deputy Principal will be kept informed.
  + Parents of pupils will need to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues.
  + Any interview conducted during the investigation should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all the personnel/pupils involved.
  + The teacher will fill in the template labelled Appendix 3 from the Department Guidelines. This will need to be done outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all concerned. S/he will exercise professional judgement to ascertain if bullying has occurred. If more than one person is involved, each person will be interviewed separately initially and then brought together as a group where each person's perspective will be shared.
  + If it is determined that someone has engaged in bullying behaviour, then the school will endeavour to make it clear that this behaviour is unacceptable by whatever means of communication is most effective for that person. This may include visual supports/social stories/comic book conversations/role play/video clips etc. The assistance of the multi­ disciplinary team may be requested to develop appropriate resources/programmes in this regard.
  + In cases where the relevant teacher has decided that bullying has taken place, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will give parents support in developing ways they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and support their own child.

## Recording:

* + The teacher will fill in the template labelled Appendix 3, from the Department Guidelines.
  + A copy of this Appendix will be given to the principal or deputy principal.
  + Data gathered from these reports will provide information in relation to the presence of bullying behaviour in the school.
  + This data will be collated at least once a term and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any trends in behaviour.
  + A record of this analysis will be retained and made available to the Board of Management once each term.
  + Appropriate responses to any issues identified wi II be drawn up and implemented.

## Follow Up:

* + Where disciplinary sanctions may be required, it will be a private matter for the person being disciplined, his/her family and the school.
  + Follow up meetings may be scheduled with the relevant parties, as required or social skills programmes set up to develop co-operation and mutual respect.
  + 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 teacher in the template at Appendix 3.

In determining if it has been adequately addressed the teacher wi11 take into account the following factors:

* + - I-las the bullying behaviour ceased?
    - I-lave the issues between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable?
    - Has the relationship between parties been restored?
    - I-las any feedback been received from their families or the Principal or Deputy Principal?
* Where a parent is not satisfied with how the school has dealt with the bullying case, the parents have the right to complain to the Board of Management. If they rem am dissatisfied ,, ith local representations, they can decide to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
* Serious incidents of bullying behaviour may be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or the Gardai as appropriate.

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

Supports for pupils affected by bullying will include their engagement in programmes to raise their self­ esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby promote their resilience to actions of a bullying nature. The Holy Family School Nurture approach will be adopted for all parties involved.

The school recognises that our cohort of pupils may not be aware that actions they are engaging in are of a bullying nature. Social stories and visual signs/symbols will be used to help these pupils understand what bullying behaviour is and how it affects their peers. Visuals will also be used to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Follow up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

## 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 ,, ill, in accordance "ith its obligations under equality legislation. take all such steps that are reasonabl) practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of Lhe nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation. religion. age. disability, race and membership of the l raveler communit).

This policy was adopted b) the Board of Management on 27.02.2023

1. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school \\ebsite is and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association(\\ here one exists). A cop) ofthi5 poliC) ,,ill be made availahlc to the Department and the patron if request.
2. r his polic) and its implementation will be revie\.,ed b) the Board of Management once in ever) school year. Written notification that the rcvie\\ has been completed will be made a\ailable to school personnel. published on the school \\Cb ite and is read ii) accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the revie\\ and its outcome \\ iII be made available. if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Date of next re\ ie\\: March 2024

NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF MANAGEMEN'I ANNUAL Rf.VIEW Of- Till: ANTI BULLYING POLICY

The Board of Management of the Hol) Family School 19-09B \\ ith to infonn you that:

* + The Board of Management's annual re\ ie\\ of the school's anti-bull) ing polic) and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 27.02.2023
  + The review was conducted in accordance\\ ith the ched.list set out in accordance,, ith the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the Department"s Anti bull)' ing procedure for Primar:, and Post Primary Schools.

Signed:

Date:

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Chairperson Board of Management

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Principal

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