



HARTSTOWN  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
POBALScoil BHAILE AN HARTAIGH

## 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 Hartstown Community School 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.

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*.

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

All class teachers, assistant principals and year heads, guidance counsellor, deputy principals and principal

Year heads

Ms. O'Regan

Mr. E. Brady

Ms. C Murray

Mr. N. Wade

Ms. S. Fitzgerald

Mr. N. Grennan

Mr. D. Crawley

Guidance Counsellors: Mr. Brady, Mr. Keane, Ms. O'Reagan and Ms. Duffy.

Deputy Principals: Mr. G. Fleming, Ms. N. Clince and Mr. J. Horseman.

Principal: Ms. L Ryan

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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- We believe that all partners in education, parents, teaching staff, ancillary staff, management and students share responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe school.
- Informed by our school code of respect, we as management, teachers/workers, parents and students commit to maintaining a respectful attitude in our communication and relationships with each other.
- We continually raise awareness of bullying and its effects and reinforce our policy on bullying in S.P.H.E. classes, at assemblies and in tutorials for students, at parents' nights, and on the School website and official School social media accounts.
- We encourage students to educate each other about the dangers of bullying. Through our peer mentoring initiative the Student Council deliver a student designed programme Coping with Cyber Bullying to Junior classes.
- We encourage students to reject bullying behaviour in their own social groups and to recognise and challenge those who engage in bullying behaviour. We encourage them to report bullying of themselves or others by creating a supportive school atmosphere.
- In all our formal and informal interactions with students, but explicitly in our Wellbeing programme we seek to foster self-confidence and resilience in our students which will enable them to face challenges they may encounter in life.
- We supervise and monitor students in out of class time as far as is practicable.

- [Empty box]
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 (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :

The 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.

Please see Appendix 1

- A student or parent may bring a concern of bullying to any staff member in the school who will refer it to the relevant teacher, see appendix 1.
- All staff including non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher, see appendix 1.
- 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 their professional judgement based on this policy to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Teachers take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. Interviews will be held with the relevant persons. Those involved will be asked to write an account of the incident.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal should be informed that an investigation has been initiated.
- Parents and students 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 through Restorative Practice.
- Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. All interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved also provide very useful information in this way. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher seeks answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This is done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved are contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken. The school gives parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their students. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it is made clear to the

student how they are in breach of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts are made to enable them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

- If a student is involved in bullying they will be told to stop and parents will be informed as above. Professional help may be recommended for the student where it is considered necessary by the School. The student's behaviour will be carefully monitored and recorded. It is made clear to all involved (with each student and their parent) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, their parents and the School.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together through Restorative Practice at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect and is engaged with through the students. The Restorative Practice will occur when both students are ready. They will be supported individually by Guidance Counsellors prior to this and will have their Guidance Counsellors present as a support during the Restorative Practice session. All Restorative Practice sessions are confidential and should not be discussed with any friends.

- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after they has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher on the form for reporting bullying behaviour and referred to the Senior Management of the school. (Appendix 1).

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of their 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 has any feedback been 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, the parents may seek a meeting with the Principal to discuss the matter in full and make a complaint if necessary through the School complaints procedure.

- In the event that a parent has exhausted the School's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied. The Principal can offer the service of an independent Mediator.

- In the event that a parent has exhausted the School's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the Principal will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

- If further allegations are made at this point after the support of the school has been unsuccessful as well as the support from an outside agency, the school may refer the student to the Board of Management for an Expulsion, please see Stage 4 of the Charter of Behaviour Policy.

- If a student refuses to engage with the school and supports from outside agencies, this will be recorded and in the event that further bullying persists, this will be referred to the

Board of Management and could result in a Stage 4 Expulsion. Please see Charter of Behaviour

7. 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*) :

The school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

- A support structure for students who have experienced bullying is in place in Hartstown Community School. Such students may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. We use: restorative practice, mediation or reconciliation where appropriate.
- We maintain open communications between the school, parents and outside agencies where necessary. We work together to resolve the situation and protect the victim.
- A programme of support for those students involved in bullying behaviour is also part of the school's intervention process. Students involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities are developed to increase feelings of self-worth. We recognise that it is important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the student's self-worth. Students who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
- Students who observe incidents of bullying are encouraged to discuss them with teachers or a member of the care team, a teacher, a tutor, a Year Head, a Deputy Principal, the Principal or a Guidance Counsellor

## **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 23/08/2023
11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

The Board of Management of Hartstown Community School 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.
- 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 students or the harassment of students 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 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 trustees. 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, 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 Trustees and the Department.

Signed:  Date: 23/08/23  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  Date: 23/08/23  
(Principal)

Date for next review: \_\_\_\_\_



# Anti-Bullying Procedures in Hartstown Community School

## Appendix 1

### Anti- Bullying Procedures for Teachers

When a student indicates directly or indirectly to you that he or she is being bullied, harassed, teased, hit or in any way mistreated by another, please follow procedures as below:

1. Refer matter to the member of the Anti-Bullying Committee responsible for that year group (unless the nature of the report dictates that you inform the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal immediately.

The member of the care team or any member of staff will fill out AN ANTI-BULLYING RECORD FORM and give it to the Year Head and the link Deputy Principal and Principal.

2. The member of staff will inform the relevant tutors, Year Head and link Guidance Counsellors. Staff will observe the students involved and relay any concerns to the Year Head for the duration of the investigation of the event(s) and for a time after its conclusion.

3. The member of staff may need to follow up Steps 4-10 unless the nature of the events require that a member of the Senior Leadership Team deals directly with the matter.

4. Incident(s) are investigated discretely.

5. Parents of the student or students who have been targeted are informed.

6. Parents of student who has engaged in the behaviour are informed.

7. The student or students who have been targeted fills out an Incident Form.

8. Student engaged in the behaviour fills out an Incident Form.

9. During the investigations, students will be given the opportunity to visit a Guidance Counsellor. Separate Guidance Counsellors for the all students involved will be made available.

10. Students who then engage in a Restorative practice session do so with the Anti Bullying Coordinator. Guidance Counsellors can also be present during the Restorative Practice sessions.

11. All records are retained/filed by the Anti-bullying Coordinator and Yearhead.

***ALL BULLYING COMPLAINTS MUST BE ADDRESSED  
WITHIN 20 DAYS OF THE FIRST REPORT***

