St.Mary's N.S. Glaslough

Anti-Bullying Policy

Roll Number: 18401R

• The Board of Management of St.Mary's N.S Glaslough has adopted this policy following consultation with all staff members.

The school community believes that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation.

The school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the self-esteem and self-confidence of targeted pupil(s).
 Therefore it does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Every report of bullying is treated seriously and dealt with, having due regard for the well-being of the targeted pupil(s) and the perpetrator(s).

All teaching staff have the authority to investigate a bullying complaint/incident.

The immediate priority, should a bullying incident occur is to:
1. End the bullying, (*thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted*)
2. Resolve the issues
3. Restore the relationships involved insofar as is practicable using a "Reform, not Blame" approach.

All pupils are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe environment in the school. On becoming aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community, they should notify a trusted responsible adult. Within the school day children may report any concerns to their class Teacher. Outside of school hours children are asked to inform their parents and whilst travelling on school bus children may report to the bus driver/owner.

Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report.

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 St Mary's N.S. Glaslough 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:

- **St.Mary's N.S. Glaslough has 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;

- **Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that –**
  - Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
  - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying by empowering our students to apply safety rules relating to best practice whilst engaged with computers
  - address identity-based bullying, including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

- **Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils within the school day.**

- **Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behavior.**

- **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.

Bullying is 1)deliberate 2) repeated   3) hurtful.

The following types of behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,

- cyber-bullying
- 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.
- This definition of bullying includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.

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 behavior.

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.

Appendix 1 gives a list of specific examples of bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

The teaching staff will use their experience as educators or when advised by Department of Education & Science to add further bullying behaviours to the list, if/when the occasion arises.

4. The "Relevant Teacher(s)" for investigating and dealing with bullying in this school is/are as follows:
   - Mrs Johnson for Infants Classes.
   - Mrs Cassidy for 1st / 2nd Class.
   - Mrs Smith and Mrs McCrudden for 3rd/4th Class.
   - Mr Smyth for 5th/6th Class.
   - If bullying occurs on the yard, the relevant teacher is the teacher on yard duty at that time.

5. The education and prevention strategies used by St.Mary's N.S.,Glaslough are as follows:
   - Supervision of children during the school day by staff.
   - Teachers are asked to select anti-bullying lessons from the following resources and to teach a selection each year to their classes: RSE Programme, Walk Tall Programme, Stay Safe Programme. By doing so we aim to communicate the following to our students:

1. Pupils are helped to examine the issue of bullying in a calm rational way, outside of the tense context of particular bullying incidents. In the process they are made more aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms that it can take.
2. Pupils are made aware that the consequences of bullying behaviour are always bad for those who are targeted, even if this is not always obvious at the time.
3. Pupils are encouraged to recognise, reject and report bullying behaviour, either spontaneously or through questionnaires that are regularly used in the school.

- We will introduce bi-annual class surveys in senior classes (October and February) and annually in First & Second Class, with the aim to raise awareness of bullying behaviours and to provide an opportunity for students to report bullying issues.
- An Anti-Bullying Chart of Behaviours will be on display in each classroom as a reminder to students of the behaviours we encourage and wish to avoid.

6. Steps for Investigating Bullying Complaints.

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour are as follows:

Step One:

The 'Relevant Teacher' investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end.

Pupils will be asked to complete the restorative practices questions 1-6, in written format, in order to determine the facts of the situation.

If an incident of bullying is reported by a parent then an Incident Report Form is to be completed by the Principal.

Names of students linked to complaint and names of parents reporting bullying issues will be recorded in this form.

In order for the school to investigate the bullying incident, confidentiality of names cannot be guaranteed, so parents are asked to consider this in advance of making a complaint.

Step Two:

- The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to ask any pupil who witnessed the bullying to write an account/state orally what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.
- The witness may be asked to complete the restorative practices question 1 (orally or in written format).
- Whether to involve a witness on each and every occasion will be decided by the "Relevant Teacher".

Step Three: Restorative Meeting takes place at a time determined by the "Relevant Teacher."

- Pupil(s) who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour are interviewed by the 'Relevant Teacher' to establish/discuss the nature and extent of the behaviour and the reasons for it.
- The answers to the restorative practice questions will be utilised by the "Relevant Teacher".

- The aim is for those who engaged in bullying practices would
    1. admit to the wrong doing
    2. take ownership of their behaviour
    3. understand the impact of their actions had on others
    4. would learn from their unacceptable choices
    5. grow personally in their ability to make more sound decisions
    6. be better able to resolve disagreements
    7. engage in acts of empathy and forgiveness.

- The emphasis is not on blaming the child, but encouraging a different pathway going forward.

Step Four:

- In the event that they have been involved in bullying behaviour the student may be asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all pupils fairly, equally and respectfully including the targeted pupil(s).
- Pupil Behaviour Promise is written by student.
- The "Relevant Teacher" may impose a consequence at this stage, in line with the school discipline policy.
- Parents will be informed that a bullying incident, involving their child, has occurred & was investigated by the "Relevant Teacher".

Step Five:

- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the 'Relevant Teacher' will file the paperwork relating to the completed restorative questions in the "Anti-Bullying Folder" in School Office, along with a brief report (Teachers may opt to use the "Bullying Report Form"), to include the findings of the investigation and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.

Step Six:

- If a pupil has signed such a promise but then chooses to break that promise and continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a "mistake".
- In this event the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed and requested to countersign their daughter/son's promise.
- A **Promise witnessed and signed by Parents** is written by the student.

Step Seven:

- Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a **very** grave matter.
- In this situation the Pupil involved, the Relevant Teacher and the Pupil's Parents will meet with the Principal and an appropriate sanction decided on by the Principal will be given.
- Following on from this meeting the pupil will be observed even more closely to ensure the bullying has ceased.

Step Eight:
- If the bullying continues the matter will be brought to the Board of Management and further sanctions may be imposed.
- At this stage or at a later stage, it will be a matter for the Board to decide whether to suspend or expel the pupil from the school.

- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school.

The school's Programme of Support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- **Bullied Pupils:**
  - Ending the bullying behaviour,
  - Promoting of a school culture which fosters more respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
  - Promoting of a school culture which fosters greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
  - Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the awareness-raising programme,
  - Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations.
  - Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
  - Offering to supply contact details of recommended counselling services if requested by parents.

- **Bullying Pupils:**
  - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not still blamed or punished and get a "clean sheet."
  - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this.
  - Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
  - Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
  - In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child.
  - In dealing with bullying behaviour, seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a "clean sheet" and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.
  - Offering to supply contact details of recommended counselling services if requested by parents with the aim to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others.

7. 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.

8. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps as 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.

9. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

10. 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 of Education and Skills and to 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 and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

Signed: _Pat Hallet_ Signed: _Shone Smyth_

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _17 / 01 / 2024_ Date: _17 / 1 / 24_

Date of next review: _September '24_

Appendix 1

Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- **Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:**
  Shouting and uncontrolled anger,
  Personal insults,
  Verbal abuse,
  Offensive language directed at an individual,
  Continually shouting or dismissing others,
  Public verbal attacks/criticism,
  Domineering behaviour,
  Open aggression,
  Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact.

- **Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:**
  Treating in a dictatorial manner,
  Ridicule,
  Persistent slagging,
  Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort/dirty looks.

Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual.

Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re.personal life/family

Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork.

- **Interference with property, for example:**
  Stealing/damaging books or equipment
  Stealing/damaging clothing or other property
  Demanding money with menaces
  Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property
  Marking/defacing property

- **Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:**
  Condescending tone,
  Deliberately withholding significant information and resources,
  Writing of anonymous notes,
  Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments,
  Malicious tricks/derogatory jokes,
  Knowingly spreading rumours,
  Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new ideas,
  Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling),
  Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying),
  Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual in his/her absence,
  Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person.

- **Ostracising or isolating, for example:**
  Deliberately marginalising an individual
  Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group,
  Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational
  Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do.