

MANULLA
NATIONAL SCHOOL



Anti-Bullying Policy

Manulla National School



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Introduction:

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 Manulla 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 for primary and post primary schools* which were published in September 2013:

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 practices 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;
- Support 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.

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.
- 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 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 *AntiBullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

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);

Class Teacher

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity -based bullying 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 Schools)

- Invitation to Community Garda to speak to children on these topics.

- Anti-Bullying week
- Prim Ed lessons and posters
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall programme -S.P.H.E. programme
- R.S.E.
- Integrated into the whole school day
- Model respectful behaviour
- Display key respect messages
- Reward respectful behaviour
- Tackle the use of inappropriate language
- Teach about the use of social media.
- All staff watch out for signs of bullying behaviour
- Open door policy - if parents have any concerns they are encouraged to contact the school immediately.

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying 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;)

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:

School authorities must ensure that the school has clear procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying and that these are set out in the school's anti-bullying policy. The school's procedures must be consistent with the following:

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 relationship of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame)

2. 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.
3. 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;
4. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
5. Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issue and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
6. It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset
7. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
8. Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
9. 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.
10. 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 a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

11. 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 statement.
12. Each member of the group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them, from the other members of the group, after interview by the teacher.
13. It may be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
14. In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour 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 of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports of their pupils.
15. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
16. It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of parents/pupils) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.
17. 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.

18. 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 at Appendix 3
19. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as a 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 relationship 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;
20. Where a Parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;
21. In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour:

The Board of Management must ensure that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these must be documented in the school's anti bullying policy. All records must be maintained in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour must adhere to the following:

1. 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.
2. 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 relationship of the parties involved.
3. The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 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) Where the school has decided as part of its ant-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 be noted that the time line for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

FOLLOW UP:

Consequences of Bullying Behaviour will include:

1. Extra homework e.g. Extra homework/school work, which must be signed by a parent.
2. Detention during breaks.
3. Loss of privileges; Free homework nights exclusion, School related outing- Tours.
4. Referral to the B.O.M. – In serious cases the B.O.M. may decide to involve external agencies.

Supports for pupils affected by bullying:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary School)

Our schools support for pupils affected by Bullying will include:

- *Class/Group/Individual will have specific class time/circle time to build and enhance self-esteem.*

- *Group Meetings/Individual Meeting-Principal/Teacher will meet with group/individual on a regular basis (weekly/fortnightly).*
- *School Home Contact-Principal/Teacher will meet with parent/child in child's home (if deemed necessary and beneficial) and will have an on-going communication with parent/child to assess how child is coping.*
- *Extra-Curricular Activities- child will be encouraged to get involved in extra curricular activities aimed at promoting self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline.*
- *Peers Support/School Alert- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers. Pupils are encouraged to support and include any child who may have been subject to bullying behaviour.*

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied must be in place. Such pupils 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.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying must also be part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

Referral of serious cases to the Tusla:

In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (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 Tusla Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as management plan".

Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools be referred to the Tusla Children and Family Social Services and/or the Gardaí 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 Tusla, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the Tusla Children and Family Social Services.

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. 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.

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

Date: _____

10. 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.

11. 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.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____