



Anti-bullying policy

This policy serves as an appendix of, and should be read in conjunction with, the schools General Code of Behaviour.

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 North Monastery Coeducational Secondary 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 below (see also Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

Note

1 A consistent and clear approach to dealing with bullying when it occurs is essential to effective practice. This policy provides guidance and direction for the school Community in relation to the need to use established intervention strategies and ensuring consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour.

2 A pupil or parent may bring or report a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

3 The member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". At post-primary level, the school will determine, having regard to its own circumstances, which members of teaching staff have this responsibility.

4 The school's anti-bullying policy must clearly indicate the relevant teachers in its school. It is not necessary to specify the relevant teacher(s) by name in the policy so long as it is made sufficiently clear to all which teachers in the school have this responsibility.

The aid of National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) may be sought in certain circumstances.

Persistent cases of bullying may be referred to the HSE/TUSLA and/or the Gardaí.

Relevant Teacher for this policy is the Deputy Principal – In the absence of the Deputy Principal, the Principal takes the responsibility.

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*):

The school has a responsibility to

- develop an Anti-Bullying Policy in consultation with stakeholders
- outline what is unacceptable behaviour in terms of bullying
- explain the process involved in responding to incidents of bullying
- follow up complaints of bullying
- educate and inform students on strategies that promote positive responses to student welfare
- implement the Anti- Bullying Policy in conjunction with the School Code of Behaviour once an incident of bullying is reported.

To enhance matters in this regard the school operates in a manner that includes but is not limited to the following

- Is a JIGSAW school and highlights aspects of mental health and how bullying behaviour can influence mental health negatively.
- Uses curricular supports in SPHE and RSE to enhance wellbeing as far as possible. These aid with the outlining of the negative aspects of bullying including cyber and identity bullying.
- Encourages the use of collegiality in all subject classes to aid with inclusivity for all.
- Provides counselling for those affected by any bullying behaviour and to aid with self-esteem.
- Has a yellow flag to educate about diversity and the policy of the school to welcome all.
- Has a digital policy committee to aid with the education of all about cyberbullying.
- Has a clear link between the Anti-Bullying policy and the general Code of Behaviour which is strong on all aspects of bullying and that all students sign.
- Has posters displayed to educate about the inappropriate nature and effects of bullying behaviour.
- Has engaged with the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark.
- Has an Amber flag to highlight aspects that influence mental health generally.
- Provides an induction programme for those transitioning from Primary to Post-Primary.
- Provides a mentor/buddy system for incoming 1st years to aid with reporting.
- Works closely with the School Completion Programme on Campus to alleviate absenteeism which may be related to unreported bullying incidents.
- Incorporates the identification of vulnerable students to aid school retention as part of the DEIS plan. Vulnerable students will need supports for a variety of reasons which may include bullying.

- Identifies our school as one that uses Restorative Practices (RP) where staff training has been provided to aid with reconciliation between students when necessary, in as far as reasonably practicable.
 - Uses a year head system for year groups, class tutor system for each class and has a Student Support Team (SST) meeting on a weekly basis to highlight and discuss all student issues including bullying.
- 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*) :**

Students who may find themselves the target of bullying behaviour are free to approach any member of staff for advice, support and direction.

Students can be assured that their case will be treated with sensitivity.

The principles of natural justice will apply where a student finds himself the subject of an accusation. The School Management Authority will specify the nature of the complaint and allow the student concerned an opportunity to respond in full before a decision is made on the substantive issue and a penalty.

Once a complaint is made to a member of staff the following steps will be taken:

- (1) The staff member will take details of the alleged incident from the student.
- (2) The contact staff member will meet with the Deputy Principal (DP) (who is the relevant teacher) re the incident. In the absence of the DP the Principal will assume this role. The DP will arrange meeting with the relevant Year Head and member of staff.
- (3) The alleged perpetrator and the victim will be spoken to separately by the Year Head and the Deputy Principal. If it is established that an incident did occur then the following procedures will apply.
- (4) The Deputy Principal will inform the Principal that an incident has occurred.
- (5) The Principal will meet with the Deputy Principal and the Year Head to discuss all matters pertaining to the case.
- (6) The Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Head will meet with the student and parent/guardian of the perpetrator before a sanction is applied.
- (7) The parents of the students involved will be informed of the incident at the earliest opportunity by the Deputy Principal and the steps the school management propose to take to resolve the matter.
- (8) These procedures are underpinned by the School Code of Behaviour.
- (9) In the event of a First Year Student informing a mentor that he is being bullied, the mentor shall inform the Induction Coordinator/ TY Coordinator who will begin the process at (1).

It should be noted that the process can be stopped at any time if the allegations in the opinion of the relevant teacher cannot be substantiated. The parents of the complainant will be informed that a complaint was made and investigated.

Written notes, as appropriate, using GDPR guidelines will be kept by the relevant teacher. The relevant teacher will use Appendix 3:

- 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 anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

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*) :

(1) School Guidance Counsellors will have a key role to play in advising the school of the type and duration of supportive interventions required for both victim and perpetrator. It should be noted at this stage that the perpetrator must avail of counselling support.

(2) Both victim and perpetrator will be monitored for a period following the incident. The duration of the monitoring period will be decided by management in consultation with School Guidance Counsellors. If the bullying does not cease, then further sanctions will be considered up to and including expulsion.

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.

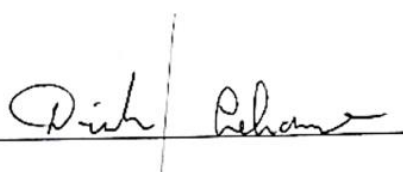
9. Prevention of Harassment

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 _____ [date].

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.

Signed: 

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 11-9-23

Signed: Jim Boyle

(Principal)

Date: 11-9-23

Date of next review: September 2024