

## St. Clare's P.S.

### Prevention and Management of Bullying Policy

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. Clare's Primary 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.

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;***

#### **A school-wide approach.**

All staff members will have shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact. The 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 will be a keystone of school policy and be integral to S.P.H.E. Teaching.

This policy addresses the following issues

1. The effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
2. The supports for staff;
3. The recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
4. The intervention strategies.

#### What is Bullying?

In St Clare's P.S. and 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 can be experienced in many different ways. The list below (not exhaustive) gives samples of how bullying may be experienced by a child or adult.

- Being called names
- Being teased
- Being pushed or hit
- Having your possessions thrown round
- Having rumours spread about you, malicious gossip.
- Being accused of wrongdoing unjustly or unfairly.
- Being ignored and left out, deliberate exclusion.
- Being forced to do things you don't want to do e.g. hand over money.
- Being deliberately undermined in the performance of your duties.
- Being attacked in relation to any of the 7 grounds as outlined in equality legislation. (Race, gender, colour, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic background)

Cyber bullying -The use of technology to facilitate some of the ways described above. e.g. Text Messages , picture messages , E Mails , Facebook postings , Messages , photos ...or other use of Social media (which constantly changes) ...askFM, BEBO, Whatsup, Skype, Viber, Instagram, snapchat ..... etc.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate in accordance with the school's code of behaviour for children/codes of conduct for staff or complaints procedures or grievance procedures where applicable.

#### Cyber Bullying – Exceptional

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 codes of behaviour.

Prevention Responsibilities.

The responsibility of all in the school community staff, parents and pupils in addressing the prevention of bullying situations arising is a key part of the school strategy. Developing resilience is a key factor for all in prevention strategies.

Bullying situations may/will arise, this is a fact we all accept .Every member of our school community have a continuing /ongoing role in ensuring they do not develop and become serious issues through awareness and an ongoing education prevention programme .

A sustained effort will be made to ensure management, parents, pupils and staff have a clear understanding of what bullying is and what it is not. To this end training will be made available every school year for staff and parents. All staff members will be encouraged to avail of opportunities to inform and update themselves in relation to general wellbeing and prevention of bullying. Croke Park hours may be used for the purpose of individual or whole staff in-service.

### **Bullying is not...**

1. Been instructed on what to do by your teacher, manager or in school management in relation to day to day work or behaviour.
2. Being corrected / advised in relation to your work practice by teacher manager or in school management.
3. Being orally warned /sanctioned or disciplined by a teacher, management or employee representative due to ineffective or incompetent work practice.

### **Bullying not considered by the Board as our responsibility when .....**

The alleged Bullying / Harassment occurs outside of school official times 9am to 2.55 pm with the exception of immediate assembly and dismissal times. Only school organised and B.O.M. approved school organised and sanctioned activities are accepted as the responsibility of the board.

Those providing a private service / coaching etc... are responsible for the management of bullying in their own classes. If found to be remiss in carrying out this responsibility then their continued facilitation by the BOM will cease.

### **The relevant persons for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:**

The Principal will ultimate responsibility and also have day to day responsibility for the control, management and prevention of bullying in the school. This responsibility will be shared with the Deputy and Assistant principal and day to day issues will be dealt with by one of them in the absence of the principal.

The Deputy Principal will on an ongoing basis promote the policies and procedures within the school which help prevent bullying and develop the culture of wellness and positivity amongst staff, pupils and parents.

The Assistant Principal as Health and Safety Representative will note issues which pertain to the health of staff or pupils within the context of bullying for the attention of the Health and Safety Officer.

### **Reporting Bullying and protocols for staff and parents**

Reported incidents of alleged bullying will be monitored by all concerned - class teacher, support staff, the Principal, those on yard supervision, sna's and parents/guardians.

### **There will be a strictly followed NO BLAME approach.**

1. Children are encouraged to tell what/as they experience.
2. Teachers are asked to listen and record without judgement.
3. Parents/Guardians are asked to inform the school as soon as possible if school related bullying is suspected. Parents are asked to allow the school to deal with the bullying situation.
4. Bullying lessons are introduced through S.P.H.E., Religion, I.C.T., P.E., Circle Time on an ongoing basis to ensure children understand what bullying is and is not and to ensure they have the language for reporting.
5. Teachers keep records of any bullying incidents reported at break times in Yard Incident Books. Teachers note situations for monitoring daily in yard supervision books.
6. Teachers on duty listen when approached with a child's complaint and record if they feel it appropriate.
7. Incidents reported are investigated by Principal / D.P./A.P. in a non-judgemental and objective manner.
8. Parents/Guardians of victim/bully and staff will be informed of any serious bullying situations. Parents/guardians will be encouraged at every opportunity to inform the school in relation to even minor events.
9. Pupils will learn from staff and parents /guardians that reporting is responsible behaviour. Tell someone – is a key message reinforced by everyone teacher, principal, parent etc...

### **Dealing with Bullying situations - WE FOLLOW the NO BLAME POLICY.**

An immediate response will be to make an attempt to stop any alleged bullying.

We consider the situation of

1. The Alleged Bully / bullies
2. The Alleged Victim/s

3. The person /people who witnessed the bullying or were aware of the bullying.

We talk to the victim, to the bully and to those who witnessed.

We understand that each person will/may have a very subjective view of what has happened.

The Principal will make the parents of a class group aware of bullying situations within a particular group and will advise parents of all concerned informally to allow parents to address the issues with their own child.

Class teacher and /or principal will discuss bullying with classes where bullying is suspected to ensure awareness for victims, perpetrators or witnesses.

**Supporting the Victim/victims - Disapproval of bullying behaviour will be unambiguous.**

Reported Bullying will be monitored closely by all.....

1. The class teacher and support staff.
2. The Principal.
3. Parents/guardians.

Parents will be encouraged to promote resilience for their own children.

Parents are encouraged to be proactive at all times in relation to their own child's wellbeing

**Supporting the bully in changing his / her behaviour will involve**

1. A discussion with the pupil to explore reasons and context for behaviour.
2. Class Lessons with group involvement in supporting positive behaviours.
3. Parental involvement in ensuring change of behaviour.

Sanctions will be used only as appropriate and we ask that the policy is supported by all parent/guardian as outlined in agreement noted in the school code of behaviour.

**The education and prevention strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying that will be used by the school are as follows**

Activities/strategies/lessons are taught in all classes to develop tolerance and inclusiveness and when necessary restore lost confidence and self-esteem. A selection of programmes are used. An on-going/continuous prevention education programme is in place in each classroom to attempt to reduce/prevent bullying taking place. Lessons on a monthly basis as a minimum taken from the resource list below.

(e.g. Walk Tall/Alive O/Zippy' s/Apple's Friends/Circle Time programme lessons, Show racism the red card etc....)

2. Assistance/support put in place to make reporting more accessible to the pupils (e.g. confidential visit to principal/staff member other than class teacher)
3. Ensure that victims knows that there is to be a determined effort to stop the bullying by all members of staff and parents.

#### For Staff.

Staff are advised in relation to all prevention of bullying information at staff meetings.

Bullying is included on every staff meeting/ISMT and BOM agenda for review or discussion.

In-service in relation to prevention of bullying matters will be allowed by the BOM as C.P hours in-service.

Positive mental health for pupils and staff are given serious consideration as part of our health promoting schools objectives.

Training in new programmes aimed at reducing risks for staff and children are availed of. These include include Zippy's friends, Apples Friends, HPS etc...

Adult Bullying concerns are brought to the attention of the principal/Deputy principal or Chairperson of the board.

The bullying of staff by outside parties (e.g. parents / BOM members etc...) will be brought directly to the attention of the BOM.

The full procedures for the prevention of Bullying for staff are contained in the Adult Bullying/Harassment policy and may be read in conjunction with this policy.

#### **FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS**

The message is that bullying is never acceptable.

The message that children's resilience must be developed

Advice for parents in relation to Cyberbullying is made available to parents on our website.

Parents are encouraged to attend prevention of Bullying training for parents which are organised in conjunction with Parents Association each year.

#### **DAY TO DAY PRACTICAL PREVENTION MEASURES.**

This is a GOLDEN RULE which is promoted and repeated on an ongoing basis throughout the school - If you have nothing nice to say about someone SAY NOTHING.

Pupils are reminded to KEEP their hands to themselves so that physical contact is controlled within reason. Rough Play (Play which may cause pain or injury) is not allowed.

Groups of Children are NOT allowed congregate with no defined purpose in evidence. Staff are watchful for children who may be isolated.

Activity and team work is promoted and encouraged (Team games to suit all, athletics, football, table tennis, parachute). Competitiveness is controlled and developed in line with principal objectives of involvement and enjoyment.

Parents are given advice in relation to Cyber Bullying and training for parents made available whenever possible. Advice is published on our school website.

Supervision systems are revisited annually.

Teachers do not leave children unattended/unsupervised at any time during school hours. Supervision is in place from 9:05 to 2.55 pm.

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.

All alleged bullying incidents are recorded

1. In the teachers Classroom behaviour Notebook
2. In the Yard Books
3. The principal will keep a record of reported serious incidents or recurring incidents based on evidence above. (Rule of 3 applies)

In class, teachers are watchful, observe the social relationships between pupils in the class and how they interact with each other (Teachers and S.N.A.)

In the case of children with SNA support the supporting SNA will be vigilant in relation to the protection of these children who may be vulnerable or need support in regard to Bullying.

Investigate pupils' views, use a confidential survey to ascertain levels of bullying (Principal/Deputy Principal)

Keep records of any incidents regarding bullying and detail how they dealt with it on incidents notebooks (Teachers). S.N.A 's will report any alleged/suspected incidents to the class teacher and/or principal.

In the yard Staff are encouraged to be watchful and to discuss potential problems (All staff)

Carry out a school wide observation exercise to identify trouble spots Principal/Deputy/Assistant Principal and/or health and Safety representative.

All Bullying incidents are reported to the Board of Management and an outline of actions taken are reported at each meeting.

### Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management will ensure 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. Supervision Rotas with substitute cover for absences on display in all rooms and hall area. Staff are obliged to be in classrooms punctually in the mornings and after break-times to ensure no bullying situations may arise or develop.

### 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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St Clare's P.S. in \_\_\_\_\_ 2016. The policy is available to school personnel, published on the school website and is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Current review completed may 2016.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and otherwise readily be accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ ( Chairperson B.O.M.)

Date of next review: May 2017.