



Harold Boys' National School
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Principal: *Pauline Lennon*

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

At the time of drawing up this policy, all details and the enclosed information are correct. It is possible that between now and the review date, changes may have to be made to the provisions, policies and procedures of the school. This may be due to external changes required by the Department of Education and Skills, the school patron or other agencies. Mandatory policies will be available on the school website and up to date information will be posted regularly.

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 Harold Boys' 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 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 commitment to a Culture of Respect throughout our school community
- A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
- Pupils are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non threatening environment
- Collaboration among and between staff & pupils 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) which build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- 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)
- Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

OUR SCHOOL POSITION ON BULLYING

The school community of Harold Boys' National School, Dalkey believes that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation.

Our school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individuals' 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).

The immediate priority should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, (thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted) and resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved in so far as is practicable using a 'Reform, not Blame' approach as per Restorative Practice theory.

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 and 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 educational needs

This definition 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 using any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine their self-esteem or self-confidence.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

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

All pupils are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe environment in the school. On being made aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community pupils should notify a trusted responsible adult. Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is the Class Teacher. The Principal and Deputy Principal may also be involved at certain stages of the process.

EDUCATION & PREVENTION STRATEGIES

We are a Telling School

Pupils' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing school structures e.g. the Wellbeing Committee, Friendship Week, a variety of SPHE and social skills programmes. Awareness of bullying, and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

We actively promote a Culture of Respect in our school.

Through nurturing quality relationships within the school, we facilitate the wellbeing of pupils and staff members as well as fostering a shared responsibility for promoting positive mental health and well-being for all.

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:

- School-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- Fostering and enhancing the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- School-wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, staff, parents and guardians and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities.
- Ensuring that pupils know who and how to tell.
- Encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- Full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe programmes.
- Friendship Week is organised annually – celebrating diversity and inclusion
- Cyber Bullying Workshops for pupils and parents/guardians
- Internet Safety information in every monthly newsletter.
- Circle Time
- Friends for Life Programme is used in Senior Classes.
- The school will implement the advice in 'Sexual Orientation Advice for Schools' (RSE Primary, See appendix %
- Weekly Whole School Assembly

Other school policies relevant to the Anti-Bullying Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Acceptable Use Policy

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

The primary aim 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) Parents/guardians and pupils 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.

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; every effort will be made to ensure that all involved, including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) understand this approach from the outset.

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem solving approach, seeking answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

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 account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's accounts.

Step 1:

The class teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, whether these take place within the school or outside it, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end.

The first step in the process allows the class teacher to gather information about a reported or alleged incident of bullying. This might involve speaking with the pupil or pupils who have experienced the behaviours (without labelling them as victims of bullying), gathering information on who is involved (without labelling them as bullies), and recording any posts on the internet, social media or mobile devices (as applicable).

The school, through the class teacher, reserves the right to ask any pupil to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will generally be done on a blank A4 sheet of paper. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour. The main task at this stage is to determine if the incident constitutes bullying as described in this policy. The relevant teacher will complete a Behaviour Report Form at this point.

If the teacher determines that the reported incident does not constitute bullying at this time the report will be completed and kept on file. The incident may need to be examined under another school policy – e.g.; Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding etc.

If the teacher determines that the reported incident is in fact bullying, then the teacher should proceed to Step 2 of this process.

Step 2:

The incident has been confirmed as bullying and the class teacher and pupils are involved in dealing with the issue/problem.

From this point teachers are asked to keep a record of the incident and any strategies used to resolve the problem. It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The Principal and/or Deputy Principal is informed to support the teacher.

Parents/Guardians of the pupils involved (including alleged bully and alleged targeted pupil) are informed by phone call that there has been an incident of bullying and the steps that are being taken to resolve the problem within the class. Parents/Guardians may be called to meet the teacher at this time.

In the event that pupils have been involved in bullying behaviour they are asked to agree that they will treat all pupils fairly, equally and respectfully including the targeted pupil(s).

The class teacher does not apportion blame but rather treats bullying behaviour as a 'mistake' that can and must be remedied. He/she emphasises that the intention is not to punish pupils but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a guarantee that it will stop. If that guarantee is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no sanction and that will be the end of the matter. Pupils who report bullying therefore are not getting others 'into trouble' but rather enabling them to get 'out of trouble' (into which they may ultimately fall if the bullying continued).

If the 'no blame' approach does not succeed in stopping the bullying the school Code of Behaviour will apply.

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of bullying behaviour:

- Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to change their behaviour)
- Communication with parents/guardians
- May be subject to special monitoring procedures
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others

- Loss of privileges (eg tours/extra yard time)
- Extra written work during break time
- Referral to Principal
- Suspension (In accordance with Rule 130(5) of the rules of National School)
- Expulsion (Rule 130(6))

Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school Code of Behaviour. Incidents of bullying will be used as opportunities for re-enforcing the Anti-Bullying Policy of the school. Follow-up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the class teacher will complete a report: Appendix 3 to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.

Step 3:

If a pupil has made a guarantee to change his behaviour but then chooses to break that guarantee and continues the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a 'mistake'. In this event parents/guardians will be informed. Breach of this guarantee by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a very grave matter and a serious sanction may be imposed by the school authorities. The matter is formally referred to the Principal.

The teacher and Principal may meet parents/guardians separately to discuss the issue and possible solutions.

The teacher, Principal, pupil(s) and parents/guardians work together to resolve the problem.

The teacher and Principal continue to keep a formal record of steps taken to date (minutes of any meeting kept and the decisions taken).

Step 4:

If the bullying continues in spite of the steps taken to resolve the problem, the case is brought to the attention of the Board of Management in order to explore other options and to draw on the expertise of the Board members.

REPORTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- 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. (Ref: Appendix 1 for examples of bullying behaviour)
- 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

In each of the circumstances above, the recording template Appendix 3 must be completed in full and retained by the relevant teacher and a copy provided to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal and/or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to the case. When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained.

All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school. Any pupil or parent/guardian may bring a bullying incident to the attention of any teacher in the school. All reports including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence 'in telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling lies but rather behaving responsibly.

Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers, cleaners, school traffic wardens are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

SEN PUPILS AND VULNERABLE PUPILS

Pupils with disabilities, special educational needs and those who struggle with social awareness may require a differentiated approach to understanding bullying, learning how to recognise if they are bullying or being bullied, and developing skills to tackle both.

Teachers should take particular care to help these students to clearly understand the purpose of any sanctions if their behaviour is unacceptable. The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with identified special educational needs.

Class teachers and specialist personnel (e.g. SEN teachers and SNAs) should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that these students can understand. This understanding should be checked from time to time, especially when a student is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour.

Teachers and SNAs will, as far as possible, ensure that these particular children fully understand the procedures for reporting bullying incidents and can identify who they should report to.

Teachers should be aware of other students that may be vulnerable and those from ethnic minorities and migrant groups, pupils from the traveller community, LGBTQ+ pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ+ and pupils of minority religious faiths.

PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT

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

Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behaviour
- Re-enforcing the school culture fostering empathy and respect for all pupils.
- 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
- After resolution, enabling bullied pupils to complete a victim-impact statement
- Supporting bullied pupils (eg class seating arrangements/social groups etc) at the discretion of the class teacher.

Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet'
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this
- Re-enforcing the school culture fostering empathy and respect for all pupils.
- Continue to use learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth
- 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

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.

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.

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 has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, is 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. 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 patron and the Department.

Signed:

Damian Mc Keown

Chairperson Board of Management
9th April 2024

Pauline Lennon

Principal
9th April 2024

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 slugging
- Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort
- 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 joke,
- Knowingly spreading rumours
- Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new idea,
- 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

Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.

Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick)*

- Pupil concerned
- Other Pupil
- Parent
- Teacher
- Other

4. Location of incidents (tick)*

- Playground
- Classroom
- Corridor
- Toilets
- Other

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick) *

- Physical Aggression
- Cyber-bullying
- Damage to Property
- Intimidation
- Isolation/Exclusion
- Malicious Gossip
- Name Calling
- Other (specify)

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

- Homophobic
- Disability/SEN related
- Racist
- Membership of Traveller community
- Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Yes

Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association? Yes

Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)? Yes

Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day-to-day work? Yes

Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils? Yes

Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies? Yes

Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented? Yes

Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?
Yes

Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? Yes

Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal? Yes

Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board? Yes /No

Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents? No

Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation? No

Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? No

Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour? Yes

Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? Yes

Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement? No

Damian Mc Keown Date 9th April 2024
Chairperson, Board of Management

Pauline Lennon Date 9th April 2024
Principal

Appendix 5 Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Harold Boys' National School, Dalkey wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 9th April 2024
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Damian Mc Keown Date 9th April 2024
Chairperson, Board of Management

Pauline Lennon Date 9th April 2024
Principal