

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with incidents:

- The 'Relevant Teacher' (the class 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.
- The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to ask any pupil to write an account of 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.***
- Pupils who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour are interviewed by the 'Relevant Teacher' to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour and any reasons for it. In the event that they have been involved in bullying behaviour they are reminded of their 'pupil promise' which they have signed in their journal.
- The 'Relevant Teacher' does not apportion blame but rather treats bullying behaviour as a 'mistake' that can and must be remedied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Pupils who report bullying therefore are not getting others 'in trouble' so much as enabling them to get out of trouble into which they may ultimately get if the bullying continued.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them.
- While all reports must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- 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 relationships of the parties involved.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

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

- If a pupil has signed such a promise but then chooses to break that promise again and continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a 'mistake.' In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed and requested to countersign their son's promise. Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a very grave matter and a serious sanction may be imposed by the school authorities. The parents of the bullied child will also be informed. A meeting will be arranged for the relevant teacher and principal to speak to the parents of the bullied child and the school's programme for supporting pupils who have been bullied discussed. A plan of action will be decided.
- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school until the children involved reach 21 years of age (nine years after the pupil leaves 6th class).

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behaviour,
- Ensuring the school culture fosters respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
- Ensuring the school culture fosters 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.
- Making adequate counselling facilities within the school available to pupils who need it in a timely manner and/or arrange a referral to an appropriate external agency.
- 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).

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,
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth
- In dealing with negative behaviour 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.

Newport Boys National School

Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures

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”.

This is a summary of our Anti Bullying Policy please refer to our website to read or download the policy in full



Newport Boys National School Anti 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 Newport 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 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 whole school 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.**

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 will 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. All pupils will be taught the potential of harmful images or statements on a social network. Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

As this is a primary school the teacher investigating and dealing with child to child bullying in Newport Boys National School will normally be the class teacher.' (Procedures 6.8.3).

Education and prevention strategies used in Newport B.N.S

- A series of lessons to be delivered in SPHE over a 4 week programme, taking into account the age and maturity of the pupils concerned. This programme explicitly teaches pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school. All staff are made aware of the content of the programme, in order to ensure that all members of the school community have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour. Pupils are informed that it is the schools intention to create a safe and happy environment for all pupils and that bullying will not be tolerated.
- The support of outside agencies to help in the education of students in the areas of Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying; Cyber-Bullying; Healthy Living; Positive Mental Health etc.
- Curricular & Extracurricular activities to promote self-esteem in our pupils and to encourage respectful behaviour in group activities.
- Staff Awareness: the provision of staff training for our anti-bullying strategies through staff workshops, presentations by guest speakers.
- Maintaining the focus on the key issues through the SPHE and RSE programmes but also in other relevant subjects.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) on entry and are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school. They are also advised it can be viewed on the school website.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and regular school assemblies by principal.
- **Children are reminded that the school is a 'telling school', with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. It will 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.**
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Anti-bully or Niggle box.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.

- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place
- A annual review of our Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, #UP2US, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), **Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources)
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately

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)

Newport Boys National School have chosen the song **'Count on Me'** by Bruno Mars as our theme song. All classes will be taught this song and sing it in class. It is a very good song for communicating the message of friendship and always being there for each other.

