****

**Grange Post Primary Anti-Bullying Policy**

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 Grange Post 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.

This policy comprehends bullying that is either perpetrated by students or experienced by students in the School / College. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the following ETB policies.

* Bullying Prevention Policy – Compliant Procedure for ETB Staff
* Harassment / Sexual Harassment prevention policy – complaint procedure for ETB staff.

1. 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:
   1. **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;

**The school:**

* Acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
* Acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
* Promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.

**The parents:**

* Need to work in partnership with the school and be kept informed on procedures.

**The community:**

* Recognises its role in preventing and dealing with bullying.

**The staff:**

* share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

*Refer to pg. 23 Anti-Bully Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools September 2013 (DES)*

* 1. **Effective leadership**
  2. **A school-wide approach**
  3. **A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**
  4. **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;
  1. **Supports for staff**
  2. **Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**
  3. **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.*

|  |
| --- |
| The list of examples below is non exhaustive, and schools may wish to add behaviours which reflect their own circumstances. |

**Examples of bullying behaviours**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying** | * Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. * Physical aggression * Damage to property * Name calling * Slagging * The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person * Offensive graffiti * Extortion * Intimidation * Insulting or offensive gestures * The “look” * Invasion of personal space * A combination of any of the types listed. * Mimicking a person’s disability * Setting others up for ridicule * Name calling * Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs |
| **Cyber** | * **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation * **Harassment**: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual * **Impersonation**: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name * **Flaming**: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight * **Trickery**: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online * **Outing**: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images * **Exclusion**: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group * **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety * Silent telephone/mobile phone call * Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls * Abusive text messages * Abusive email * Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/YouTube or on games consoles * Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures * Abusive posts on any form of communication technology |
| **Identity Based Behaviours**  **Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community). | |
| **Homophobic and Transgender** | * Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation * Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation * Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner * Physical intimidation or attacks * Threats |
| **Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community** | * Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background * Exclusion on the basis of any of the above |
| **Relational: The Bully aims to damage ones relationships or social status.** | This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:   * Malicious gossip * Isolation & exclusion * Ignoring * Excluding from the group * Taking someone’s friends away * “Bitching” * Spreading rumours * Breaking confidence * Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear * The “look” * Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way |
| **Sexual** | * Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching * Harassment (Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community). |

Those who bully others in a non-physical way often do not realise that their actions may have serious legal consequences for them. **The reality, however, is that** **bullying may constitute a criminal offence**.

For example, bullying may constitute a criminal offence under **Section 10** of the **Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997**.

Section 10 of this act deals with harassment and provides that a person may be guilty of this crime if s/he:

*‘… without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, by any means including by use of the telephone, harasses another by persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with him or her.*

*‘For the purpose of this section, a person harasses another where-*

1. *he or she, by his or her acts* intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to the other, and

(b) his or her acts are such that a reasonable person would realise that the acts would seriously interfere with the other's peace and privacy or cause alarm, distress or harm to the other’.

**Section 10 harassment** is an arrestable offence and, if convicted on indictment, carries a jail term not exceeding 7 years. On conviction also, a court may make an order that the guilty party may not, for a specified period, communicate by any means, or come within a specified distance of a person’s home or workplace.

**Section 2 of the Prohibition of** **Incitement to Hatred Act (1989)** makes it a criminal offence for a person *to publish or distribute written material, to use words, behave or display written material ... or to distribute, show or play a recording of visual images or sounds, if the written material, words, behaviour, visual images or sounds, as the case may be, are threatening, abusive or insulting and are intended or, having regard to all the circumstances, are likely to stir up hatred*.

Those convicted on indictment under this provision may be sentenced to a maximum of two years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £10,000.00.

Even where bullying does not amount to a criminal offence, the perpetrator may be held liable for damages in civil court proceedings. For example, **statements made on social media sites are covered by the provisions of the Defamation Act 2009**, which at Section 2 defines a defamatory statement as ‘one which tends to injure a person’s reputation in the eyes of reasonable members of society’.

Many, young and not so young, seem to feel that by posting anonymously on social networking sites, they can guarantee that their identity is protected. This, however, is not the case. Indeed, in many cases the content of messages makes it easy to identify the perpetrator. In any case, where the Gardaí have grounds for believing that criminal activity may be occurring, applications can be made to the courts requiring the internet service provider or others in possession of relevant information to divulge a perpetrator’s identity.

Where it is felt that bullying may amount to a criminal act, the School/College will seek legal advice and the matter will be reported to the Gardaí.

1. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

* Principal: Eimear Harte. (overall responsibility for bullying within the school and reporting to the board of management).
* Deputy Principal: Maranna Grimes. (in the absence of the principal assumes functions of principal in relation to following bullying procedures, and is a lead member on the Anti-Bullying Investigation Team.
* Anti-Bullying Investigation Team: Fiona Kearins, Daniel O’Conner.
* Tutors: Low level incidents within the class group will be dealt with by tutors.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-

bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows;

**Education and prevention strategies**

**School-wide approach**

* A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
* The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
* The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
* Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils’ lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
* An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
* Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
* School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
* Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
* The student council will be expected to engage in activities in support of the Anti-Bullying Policy on an on-going basis.
* Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
* The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school every year.
* The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. displays in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; term student surveys; class group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, tutors.
* Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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 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.
* 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.
* Parents are encouraged to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
* Implementation of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to try to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored and restricted, as is the pupils’ use of mobile phones.
* We will provide students with a list of supports currently being used in the school. E.g. Mind Your Head, Spunout, Show Racism the Red Card etc.

**Implementation of curricula**

* The School’s RSE and SPHE programme will specifically address the issue of bullying with each year group, each school year.
* Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
* School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, such as; Cool School Lessons, Bully4U, #UP2US, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.
* Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes delivered by Community Gardaí on occasion.
* Social skills programmes will form part of the programme for SEN students.

**Links to other policies**

* Code of Behaviour.
* Child Protections policy.
* Acceptable Use policy.
* Attendance.
* School Outings and School Tour.

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:

**Procedures for Investigating and 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);

The school’s procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

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

**Reporting bullying behaviour**

* Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
* All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated by at least two members of the Anti-Bullying Investigation Team and dealt with by any of the relevant teacher.
* Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teachers.

**Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach**

* In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
* Parent(s)/guardian(s) 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;
* Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
* Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
* 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;
* One of the investigating teachers will be responsible for the questioning of the students while the second teacher records all the information and is responsible for making sure that the students are equally represented.
* When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teachers 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;
* If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first and an account of events will be pieced together by comparing reports. The final account will be relayed back to each individual involved.
* Where the relevant teachers have 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;
* Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;

It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

* In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teachers that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) involved will receive a letter or be contacted by phone informing them of the incident and actions being taken and an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils (by reference to the school policy);
* It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

**Follow up and recording**

* In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teachers must, as 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 relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;

-Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

* Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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.
* Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school’s complaints procedures.
* In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

**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. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher (red card system)
* While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teachers, the relevant teachers 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 teachers that bullying has occurred, the relevant teachers 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.
* The school in consultation with the relevant teachers have agreed that all records of investigations by the Anti-Bullying Investigation Team will be of investigations will be filed separately in a cabinet in the Guidance Room.

**Formal Stage 2-Appendix 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) As part of our code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy that in high level bullying incident must be recorded on the red sheet system and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school’s code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teachers in question in the file in the Guidance room (Room 15) and a copy maintained by the principal in a locked filing cabinet. These records can be accessed by high level management or the relevant teachers (when deemed necessary). They will be retained on file for 10 years or at the discretion of management.

**Possible intervention strategies**

* Teacher interviews with all pupils
* Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
* Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
* No Blame Approach
* Circle Time
* Restorative interviews
* Restorative conferencing
* Implementing sociogram questionnaires
* Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

7. The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows;

* All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
* Pastoral care system
* Tutor/Year head system
* Care team / Student Support Team
* Group work such as circle time

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

The School will put in place a programme of supports for students who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements.

* Students who have been bullied will be:
* offered appropriate counselling;
* provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
* Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:
* provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others;
* provided with appropriate opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.
* Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and their parents and to avail of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.

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.

**The following Prompt Questions will be addressed at a BOM meeting once per school year.**

* Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
* Have bullying danger spots been identified?
* How will the student support/care structures (including year heads, class tutors, SPHE, Guidance, RE, CSPE, HSCL, Learning Support teachers) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
* How will the student council be involved?
* In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
  + Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
  + Does the school regularly monitor pupils’ Internet usage?
  + Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
  + Have pupils been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only)

**Preven**t**ion 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.

**This Policy was ratified by the Manager on:** 20/11/2023\_

**Signed:** \_Bernadette Rowland\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(Manager) Date:** 20/11/2023

**Signed:** \_Eimear Harte\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(Secretary) Date:** 20/11/2023

**Date of next review:** 2024

This draft policy was drawn up by Eimear Harte, Orla Mc Art, Vanessa Gaynor and Maranna Grimes on 27/03/14 in consultation with the stakeholders of Grange Post Primary School.

Reviewed/ Updated on 20/11/23