

# **Greaghrahan NS**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

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## 1. 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 Greaghrahan NS 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. Key principles of best practice

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) 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.
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

### At Greaghrahan NS we consider the following to be key elements of a Positive School Culture:

- We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and their worth as a human being.
- We promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- We actively prohibit vulgar, offensive, or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members.
- We have a clear commitment to promoting equity and in particular gender equity.
- We have the capacity to change in response to our pupil's needs.
- We identify aspects of the curriculum through which positive and sustainable influences can be exerted towards forming pupil's attitudes and values.
- We take particular care of 'at risk' pupils and use systems to identify needs and facilitate early intervention where necessary – thus responding to the needs, fears and anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- Greaghrahan NS recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community.
- We recognise the right of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.
- We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- We promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among its members both in school and outside of school.
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

### (b) Effective leadership

- The Board of Management has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The BoM must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy.
- The Principal of Greaghrahan NS as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to dealing with bullying.

- Teachers must act as good role models and not misuse authority, but be fair, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

**(c) A school-wide approach**

- A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and Greaghrahan NS community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians.
- Beyond the school community, bullying behaviour may extend to outside of school. Where this negatively impacts on a school - parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.
- The assistance of Gardaí, Tusla and Community Workers may be required in some cases.
- Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school/community sector to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner.

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

- Greaghrahan NS endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that all relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in Section 3 of this policy.

**(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies see section 5 of this policy, (including awareness raising measures) that-**

- 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.

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

- Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent.
- Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively, with particular attention given to arrival and dismissal times.
- The SNA and school secretary are well placed to inform if any behaviour which may constitute bullying is noticed.

**(g) Supports for staff**

- Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis.
- All staff must have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context.
- Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and new/inexperienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and model best practice.
- CPD in relation to Anti-Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all members of 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.
  - 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.

**The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:**

- **Physical aggression:** this includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in "mess fights", they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- **Intimidation:** some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.
- **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** this occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined.
- **Damage to property:** personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's bicycle. Items may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- **Extortion:** demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats in the event of the victim not promptly "paying up". Victim's lunches may be taken. Victims may also be forced into the theft of property for delivery to the bully. This tactic may be used to incriminate the victim.
- **Name calling:** persistent name calling directed at the same individual or individuals, which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying. Academic ability can also provoke name calling.
- **Slagging:** this behaviour usually refers to good-natured banter which goes on as part of the normal social interchange between people. However, when this slagging extends to very personal remarks aimed again and again at the one individual about appearance, clothing and personal hygiene or involves references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family, then it assumes a form of bullying.

- **Abusive telephone calls:** abusive, anonymous telephone calls are a form of verbal intimidation or bullying.
- **Cyber-bullying:** cyber-bullying is the use of ICT to abuse another person. It can take place anywhere and can involve many people. It can include threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, text messages, picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras, mobile phone calls, emails, chat room bullying, instant messaging (IM), bullying via websites.
- **Homophobic bullying:** remarks couched in sexual innuendo can be a form of bullying. Suggestive remarks about a pupil's sexual orientation may also be regarded as bullying.
- **Racist bullying:** racist name calling can be particularly hurtful and damaging for a child and those who are being bullied in this way may feel that not only are they being attacked but also their family and community.
- **Bullying of school personnel:** bullying of school personnel by means of physical assault, damage to property, verbal abuse, threats.
- **Teacher behaviour:** a teacher may unwittingly or otherwise, engage in, instigate or reinforce bullying behaviour by using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language when addressing pupils, humiliate directly or indirectly a pupil who is particularly weak or outstanding or vulnerable in other ways or use any gesture or expression of a threatening or intimidatory nature.

### Indicators of bullying behaviour

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school.
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches.
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays.
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers.
- Possessions missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing, and reluctance and/or refusal to say how it happened.

### Characteristics Associated with Bullying

- A significant proportion of bullying is not merely behavioural but is rooted in a lack of respect for diversity and in social inequalities. "Prejudice-based" or "identity-based" bullying can be a significant factor in bullying behaviour.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self-discipline. They may lack any sense of remorse convincing themselves that the other person deserves the treatment they are receiving.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour can be attention seeking, setting out to impress bystanders and responding to the reaction their behaviour provokes. They can lack the ability to empathise. They can appear unaware or indifferent to the other person's feelings. It is of note that pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour often suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem.

- However, it must also be recognised that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or may not recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others.
- It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may also have been bullied themselves.
- Any pupil through no fault of their own may be a target of bullying. It is common in the course of normal interaction for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour. As pupils can be particularly quick to notice differences in others, pupils who are perceived as different in some way can be more prone to encounter such behaviour. However, the pupils who are most at risk of being bullied are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour can be related to the pupil's continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression.
- Pupils who are bullied often experience difficulties in speaking up about bullying. The difficulties include:
  - Fear of reprisals
  - Concerns about being perceived as a "tell-tale" for reporting bullying.
  - Concerns about "getting into trouble" with the principal or teacher for reporting bullying.
  - Not having evidence to back up a bullying allegation.
  - Not knowing how the matter will be dealt with by the school.
  - Not feeling fully confident of being believed.
- While bullying can happen to any pupil, it is known that some may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying. Such vulnerable groups include pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, those from ethnic minority and migrant groups, pupils from the Traveller community, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQ) pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ and pupils of minority religious faiths.
- There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying amongst pupils with special educational needs and particularly those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some pupils with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly.
- Homophobic and transphobic bullying (bullying targeted at those who are or who are perceived to be LGBTQ) has also been found to be prevalent with evidence that such pupils have particular difficulty in speaking up or reporting the bullying behaviour.

**4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in accordance with the Anti - Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools – section 6:7.6, 6:7.7 - are as follows:**

- Class Teacher.
- Special Education Teacher.
- Principal/Deputy Principal.
- If the bullying takes place within school hours the class teacher investigates and deals with the bullying problem.
- If bullying takes place on the yard the teacher on yard duty at that particular time will assist the class teacher in investigating the bullying.
- If bullying takes place outside of school hours but impacts on life in school, then the Principal/Deputy Principal with the cooperation of the class teacher deals with the problem.



## 5. Education and prevention strategies

**The following education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) will be used by Greaghrahan NS . (Ref:Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School***

The following education and prevention strategies are used by the school to build empathy, respect and resilience in all pupils.

- Through curricular and extra-curricular activities, pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their sense of self-worth and self-esteem.
- Class rules are formulated with children, displayed in classroom and regularly referred to.
- Positive inclusive behaviour is modelled by staff.
- An attitude of respect for all is fostered; to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Attitudes to bullying behaviour are influenced in a positive manner through a range of programmes which are taught as part of SPHE. These include Stay Safe Programme, R.S.E. Programme, Walk Tall Programme, Weaving Well Being, Friends for Life, Anti-Bullying resource material from the PDST and various websites.
- Friendship board in Junior Classes. Anti-Bullying board in Senior Classes.
- Links are fostered with the local community: Drumlane GAA Club, Krafty Kidz After School.
- Internet Safety – Webwise Resources, Cybersafe Tools for School.
- Internet Safety webinars for parents – Barnardos.
- Consistent supervision and monitoring measures prevent and deal with bullying behaviour. These systems can facilitate early intervention. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to class teachers.
- Awareness among school staff. Behaviour and bullying is discussed regularly at staff meetings to ensure all are aware of procedures to follow.
- Whole school awareness measures:
  - Anti-Bullying Week
  - Wellbeing Week
  - Friendship Week
  - Grandparents / Special Person's Day
  - Random Acts of Kindness Week
- Whole School Initiatives
  - Student Council with representatives from each class.
  - Amber Flag
  - Green School Programme
  - CASE Shared Education programme with Newtowngore N.S.
  - Active School Programme
  - Daily Mile
- Cooperation promoted through team sports i.e. Cumann na mBunscol.
- Teachers remind pupils regularly that they can talk to them if they have concerns about bullying.
- A culture of speaking up is encouraged, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. It is made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Staff establish supportive, respectful relationships with students.
- Correct the use of discriminatory and derogatory language if it arises – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of children with a disability or SEN.
- Awareness of bullying in the school community is created so that members are more alert to it and

its harmful effects.

- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of cyber-bullying which may impact on pupils in the school.
- Staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management are to be made aware of issues surrounding cyber-bullying.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Student Council, lunchtime buddies and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school on enrolment.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell i.e.
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school
  - Anti-bully or Worry box.
  - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
- The school's Acceptable Use Policy includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.

### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE 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.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Restorative Practice and Cyber Bullying (Cybersafe Kids Tool for Schools. Web wise Primary teachers' resources)
- Delivery of the Garda School's Programme at primary level. 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.

### **Links to other policies**

The following school policies, practices and activities are particularly relevant to bullying:

- Code of Behaviour,
- Child Protection Policy,
- Supervision of Pupils,
- Acceptable Use Policy,
- Attendance Strategy,
- School Tours Policy,
- SEN Policy,
- Health and Safety Policy,



### **Advice for Pupils**

#### **When you are being bullied:**

- Tell yourself that bullying is wrong.
- You do not deserve to be bullied.
- If you can, be firm and clear - look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Try not to fight back.
- Get away from the situation and tell an adult as quickly as possible.
- If you can, try not to be on your own in places where bullying happens.

#### **After you have been bullied:**

- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.
- Tell a teacher or another adult in your school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens.
- If the bullying has happened by text message or on the Internet do not delete the message without copying it or taking a screenshot/photo of it.

#### **When you are telling an adult about being bullied be clear about:**

- What has happened to you.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Who saw what was happening.
- Where it happened.
- What you have done about it already.
- How it started in the first place.

#### **What pupils who witness bullying can do:**

- Tell a teacher or staff member what is happening.
- Do not allow someone to be deliberately left out of a group.
- Do not smile or laugh in a mean way when someone is being bullied.
- Encourage people who are bullied to join in with group games etc.
- If you can, tell the bully to stop what they are doing.

### **Advice for Online Bullying**

- Don't give out your personal details online – if you are in a chat room, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.
- Be responsible online by respecting other people. Be nice –treat others the way you would like to be treated.

### **Advice for Parents**

- Be aware of the school's policy on bullying. Remember we are a telling school.
- Maintain good communication with your child, provide opportunities for one-to-one chats.
- Support any bullying awareness campaigns/speakers in the school and wider community.

- Remember, there will always be conflicts between children. However, bullying is different to the normal conflicts that children have.
- Respect your child and teach them to respect others.
- Don't let your children come to school too early or hang around after school – there is only supervision during school hours between 8.50 a.m. and 2.40 p.m.
- If you witness what appears to be a bullying incident in the school, make your concerns known to a member of staff.
- Make sure you know at least as much, and preferably more, than your child about the range of features on mobile phones and all forms of online communication. Speak to your child about being responsible online and assure them you will always be there to help if they have any issues online.

## **6. 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, parents/guardians) 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 and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants (SNA) must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the class teacher.

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

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the class teacher will exercise 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.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the class teacher 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. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- 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.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them

of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) 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.

- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to 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.
- 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.

### **Consequences**

Depending on the gravity of the bullying problem, the following may be imposed. More serious cases may warrant more severe consequences.

- Time out on yard.
- Supervised detention at break times.
- Separation from peers within and outside of class.
- Implement behaviour management programme in cases where bullying persists.
- School privileges may be withdrawn.
- Temporary suspension.
- Expulsion as a last resort, when all interventions and all possibilities for changing bullying behaviour have been exhausted.
- Referral of serious instances of bullying or potentially abusive behaviour to TUSLA and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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. This can have a therapeutic effect.

### **Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of 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 should 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 Parental Complaints Procedure.
- 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**

- Recording of bullying incidents will 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. Incidents that happen at breaktime will be recorded in the Yard Incident Book by the teacher on supervision duty. All incidents will be reported to the class teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with, the class teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved.
- The class teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

### **Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

- If it is established by the class teacher that bullying has occurred, the teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- Records relating to the incident will be stored securely in a filing cabinet.

### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

- The class teacher must use the recording template attached (Appendix 3) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - In cases where she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred;
- Records will give a clear, honest and accurate account of all relevant matters, in chronological sequence, including details of offending behaviour meetings/discussions with children and/or attempted resolutions/interventions. Yard duty record books may be used as proof of evidence. Children involved may be asked to write an account of what happened.
- If the incident involves the Internet or social media, any relevant information or posts (text or photos) must be removed.
- The issue is formally reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal. All records of the incident to date will be handed to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- The timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at **Appendix 3** does not in any way preclude the class teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.
- Parents of the pupils involved will be informed by a phone call, by the class teacher that there has been an incident and the steps that are being taken to resolve the problem within the class.
- The recording template must be retained by the class teacher in question in a secure filing cabinet in her classroom and a copy will be maintained in a locked filing cabinet by the Principal.

### **Formal Stage 3**

- If the bullying continues the Principal/Deputy Principal and class teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the issue and possible solutions.
- The minutes of any meetings will be kept and the decisions taken will be recorded.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will continue to keep a formal record of steps/interventions taken.
- Intervention from SET may be put in place at this stage if deemed necessary for the victim/bully. It will be monitored and developments reported to parents on an ongoing basis.

#### **Formal Stage 4**

- Principal/Deputy Principal communicates with parents with a view to implementing more serious sanctions which may include suspension /expulsion.

#### **Referral of serious cases of bullying to the HSE**

- Where the bullying incident is considered serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school will consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”. [\*Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 \(Children First\)\*](#) and the [\*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools\*](#)
- 6.8.13 Serious instances of bullying behaviour will, in accordance with the Children First and [\*the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools\*](#), be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- Where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person will seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

#### **Established 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/guardian to support school interventions.
- No Blame Approach.
- Circle Time.
- Restorative interviews.
- Restorative conferencing.

#### **Restorative Practice**

Restorative Practice is one approach that is utilised by our school. Restorative practice provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where a breakdown in good relations occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

#### **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.
  - SPHE Lessons
  - Stay Safe Programme
  - Walk Tall
  - NEPS programmes on [www.neps.ie](http://www.neps.ie)
  - Friends for Life, Weaving Wellbeing
  - Anti-Bullying Week

- Buddy System
- Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. NEPS will also be contacted for advice.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

## **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.

- There are agreed supervision and monitoring practices in the school
- Mobile phones are not permitted in school or on school tours/outings.
- Bullying danger spots have been identified as the playground, football courts, exit areas, toilets, resource rooms, corridors, school tours/trips, after school activities.
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school the following issues are addressed:
  - All internet sessions are supervised by a teacher
  - The school regularly monitor pupils' internet usage within school time.
  - Pupils are instructed to access only those websites that have been approved by the school.

## **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. Incidents of harassment against pupils or staff will be investigated and dealt with under the school's Anti-Harassment policy.

## **10. Success Criteria**

- The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying prevention and intervention strategies will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. If necessary, surveys will be carried out among pupils, staff and parents to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy.
- Appendix 3 template for recording and reporting bullying will be a valuable and readily accessible source of data in relation to bullying in the school. A record of any analysis will be retained and be made available to the Board of Management. The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be included as an agenda item for staff meetings.
- Once in every school term the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out the number of cases reported by means of the reporting template and confirm that all cases have been or are being dealt with in accordance with school policy.
- The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school. A standardised checklist to be used in undertaking the review is included in Appendix 4. The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas identified for improvement identified by the review.



## 11. Communication

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy will be available on request from the school office. This policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## 12. Review

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 of Education.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management at a meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_

- Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)
  
- Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Greaghrahan NS, Staghall, Belturbet, Co. Cavan. H14 CH74**

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[www.greaghrahanschool.ie](http://www.greaghrahanschool.ie)

**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 relevant box(es))\***

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

**4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\***

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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**6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \***

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**

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**9. Details of actions taken**

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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.

Yes /No

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
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?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
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?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
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?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

### **Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_ [date].
- 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*.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal