

# LISVERNANE NS



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## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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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 Lisvernane 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.

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; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

**(b) Effective leadership (p23 6.2.1)**

**(c) A school-wide approach (p24 6.3.1)**

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact (p11 3.1.1)**

**(e) 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;

**(f) Supports for staff**

**(g) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**

**(h) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.**

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.

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*. *This document is available for viewing in the School Office*

### Examples of bullying behaviours

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to or taking others property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging / Mocking</li> <li>• Blaming others in the wrong</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> <li>• Exclusion and Isolation</li> <li>• Judging or slagging someone based on academic ability</li> <li>• Judging someone on their appearance (how they dress, if they have a physical prominent feature)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p> <p><b>NB: It is illegal for any child under the age of 13 years to be a member of any social networking site.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube/Snap Chat or on games</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consoles</li> <li>Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>  <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or travellerbackground, accent</li> <li>Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malicious gossip</li> <li>Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>Ignoring</li> <li>Excluding from the group</li> <li>Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>Spreading rumours</li> <li>Breaking confidence</li> <li>Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>Use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name calling</li> <li>Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

**The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:**

The Relevant Teachers in Lisvernane NS are:

The Principal

The Deputy Principal

All Class Teachers

Learning Support Teachers

Resource Teachers

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

**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**

The school will utilise a range of education and prevention strategies to encourage good behaviour and discourage bullying. We will seek to develop a positive school culture in the following ways:

- 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 and 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/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’ Council 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.

- Restorative question list displayed around the school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff will actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- As self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour, we will, through both our curricular and extra-curricular programmes, provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- 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.
- School wide awareness raising of bullying, to include all members of the 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.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Playground 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- 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.
  - Niggle box.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Telling versus Reporting is taught and displayed
    - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
    - Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
    - The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored (mobile phones are strictly forbidden in Lisvernane NS)

### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe/Friends for Life 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, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme.
- 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), **Diversity and Interculturalism**, Circle Time, Niggle Box, Social Stories, Alive O, Grow in Love, Youth Services.
- 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**

- School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, PE Policy, Swimming Policy, School Tour Policy

**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 class teacher will have primary responsibility for investigating alleged cases of bullying. However, dependent on the seriousness of the actions involved, the class teacher may decide to involve the Deputy Principal/Principal in accordance with our Code of Behaviour.**

**Where an alleged incident of bullying involves students from a number of classes, the class teacher will liaise with the Deputy Principal/Principal to carry out the investigation. The primary aim will be to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).**



### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

1. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'reporting'. 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. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the teacher. However, this does not have to be done directly after the break but at a more appropriate time when the issue can be investigated.

### **Investigating bullying behaviour**

1. 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;
2. 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;
3. Staff will use restorative practices.
4. Incidents may be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
5. 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;
6. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
7. If a group is involved, each student involved may be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each student should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure clarity of events.
8. Every effort is made to ensure students feel supported.
9. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
10. 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;
11. Where the relevant teacher has 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;
12. It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and par-

ent(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.

13. If appropriate, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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.
14. In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it will be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template.
15. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher 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, and
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school principal/deputy principal
16. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the schools' complaints procedure. If having exhausted these procedures the parent is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Recording Bullying Behaviour**

1. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour is as follows:
2. The class teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of all reports of bullying, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. If it is established by the class teacher that bullying has occurred, he/she will 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. All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them.
3. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying 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
4. The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

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

5. 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.
6. The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for

the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher. Children's allocated numbers from the Roll will be used rather than children's names.

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

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour. It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

This form will be passed to the Deputy Principal. In cases where the bullying has been resolved the template form will serve as a summary of the investigation. However, where appropriate, additional notes and details will be attached to the form to retain on file, particularly in cases where the bullying was not resolved within 20 days of the initial investigation. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in this recording template does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

### **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(s)/guardian(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
- Incredible Years / Friends for Life.

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf)

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

### **Code of Behaviour/Referral to outside agencies**

Bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. Accordingly instances of bullying will be dealt with in tandem with the school's overall code of behaviour. In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

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 Gardai 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.

### **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
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  - Care team / Croke Park Hours
  - Group work such as circle time
  - Art Therapy
- Close monitoring of pupils (those bullying and those being bullied) on yard in the weeks following an incident of bullying
- Workshops to be made available throughout the year in particular to senior classes
- Follow up meetings with students on an ongoing basis following any incident of bullying
- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- We will raise pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects, taking particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for these pupils will include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.
- We will use the elements of the SPHE curriculum which makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe programme is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's

self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

- Good supervisory and monitoring measures are put in place both to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour.
- The Board of Management will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that temporary and substitute staffs have sufficient awareness of the school's code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- Cross curricular approach to foster an attitude of respect for all, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.
- There will be consistent investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies.)

Individual class teachers will use some of the following systems:

- Praising appropriate behaviours "catch them being good"
- Proximal praise
- Sticker charts
- Golden time
- Student of the week
- Group reward system
- Individual behaviour profiles

This is not an exhaustive list.

### **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 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 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.