Anti-Bullying Policy – Jan. 2023

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 Yellow Furze National School has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. 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 using the restorative practices approach and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

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

(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;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

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

(i) 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. (See YFNS Unacceptable Behaviour Policy)

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. Parents need to exercise their own responsibility in this area.

Parents please note:
The legal age for having a social media account is **13 years.** Social networking sites including Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, You Tube and all others, have associated risks and dangers to your child and others.

Parental supervision is essential.

Use of the internet and social media accounts (at home) fall under parental responsibility

 If your child has a device which connects to the internet, parents should be aware of, and have control of, the websites/ platforms visited and people contacted. They should also be aware of messages sent and received.

Parents acknowledge that the school has safeguards in place with regard to internet access. Social media websites / platforms are not accessible through the school internet.
The school and parents association organises information evenings on cyberbullying. Parents are requested to attend such important events bearing in mind the ever changing world of cyberspace.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. See over*

The list of examples below is non exhaustive.

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. • Exclusion – being left out of groups.
Cyber	• **Denigration**: Spreading rumours, 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. TikTok/ Instagram/ WhatsApp/ Snapchat /Twitter/You Tube 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 based on any of the above.
Relational	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.
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling. • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs. • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying. • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability. • Setting others up for ridicule. • Exclusion

Relevant Teachers:

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

- All teachers
- Deputy Principal
- Principal

4. 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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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 develop 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
• 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.
• On wet days, one of the on-duty teachers will remain down the senior end with constant supervision of 5th and 6th classes, while the other teacher will patrol from 3rd class down to junior infants. The third teacher will move between classes as required.
• Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code/ Pupil's responsibilities 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) can access the policy on our website under the Policy heading 'Code of Behaviour'.
• The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; student surveys, school or year group assemblies/ Friday intercom announcements.
• Encourage a culture of standing up against injustice with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. There is "**no such thing as an innocent bystander".**
• 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.
    ○ Include on class surveys.
    ○ Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied – parents should phone to make an appointment to talk to the class teacher in the first instance.
- An Acceptable Use ICT Policy is in place in the school.
- The supports currently being used in the school include: Talks on Cyber safety, Walk Tall, Stay Safe – programme available on line at staysafe.ie, Prim Ed Series for lower, middle, upper, Socially Speaking (6 – 9yrs), stopbullying.gov, Circle time books. Aspects of the Grow in Love programme.

Implementation of curricula
- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, #UP2US, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet. Prim Ed Series.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression and Cyber**, **Diversity and Interculturalism,** using the resources detailed above.
- Delivery of the Garda Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, 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 school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.

5. 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:

Reporting bullying behaviour
- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a concern about an incident of bullying which reportedly took place between pupils during school hours to any teacher in the school. This policy also applies to pupils participating in school approved events outside school hours.

- Incidents of bullying between pupils which occur outside school hours do not fall under the remit of this policy except in the case at Point 3 on page 2 of this policy which deals with pupils of this school *'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'.*

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with incidents is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships between 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.

- **Steps to Follow Within the classroom setting: (Stay Safe Programme)**
a) Discuss various types of bullying (physical, verbal, social etc. – refer to Prim-Ed books)
b) No names or accusations are allowed during discussion.
c) Feelings associated with acceptable /unacceptable behaviours are discussed.
d) Identify which actions have been witnessed.
e) List the behaviours that have been brought to the teachers' attention.
f) Make class aware of the consequences of their actions and the hurt it causes.
g) Inform them of the steps that will follow if the behaviour doesn't improve   or is serious enough to invoke these steps now.
h) Appeal to the moral aspect rather than scare tactic.
i) Encourage them to come forward and speak to you if they have been the victim.
j) Demand that the behaviour STOPS IMMEDIATELY.
k) Wait for a short period, ideally one week and no more than two weeks, get feedback, and if situation hasn't improved then follow steps in policy (Stages I to IV)

STAGE I

- The incident(s) is reported to a teacher who
    a) Informs the principal
    b) documents the facts as reported to him/her in the Incident Book (located in Principal's Office)– this includes the name of the alleged perpetrator, what was said and done to the pupil and where and when the incident(s) took place.
- Teacher and/or principal then question the individuals concerned regarding the reported incident - if more than one pupil is involved, they should be questioned individually, or, if deemed more appropriate, together in principal's office as per Restorative Practices'. This process can take a considerable length of time –up to 2/3 weeks of discussion, intervention and coping strategies, while highlighting expected behavioural changes.
- If the incident(s) is considered to be of a bullying nature, then;
    a. The pupil(s) concerned is given a severe warning to stop,
    b. A think sheet is issued, which must be signed by a parent and returned the next day.
    c. All Think sheets issued for behavioural transgressions are filed in the Incident Book in the Principal's office.
    d. Pupils are informed that a repetition of this type of behaviour will result in the sanctions moving up to Stage II.

STAGE II
- If the bullying persists, the above procedure is repeated, and the parents of the pupils concerned are informed.
- Supervised detention for two days is issued to the pupil/pupils concerned – during which the pupil(s) is required to complete an exercise from the S.P.H.E. Curriculum on Bullying.

STAGE III
If the actions taken and sanctions imposed during STAGES I & II are unsuccessful and the behaviour persists, Stage III sanctions are as follows
- Three days detention during which the pupil(s) is required to complete an exercise from the S.P.H.E. Curriculum on Bullying.
- List of Privileges drawn up which may be lost if matters proceed to Stage IV.
- Parents called in and the situation re detention and possible loss of privileges explained to them.

STAGE IV:
If the problem behaviour persists, privileges are withdrawn.
If the issues persist, then Stage V follows.

STAGE V:
Matters referred to the BOM with a view to Suspension.

Follow up and recording

- 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;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s) / guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately as a 'check-in'.
- Record 'Follow Up' on Incident Form.
- 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.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interview with relevant 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.
- Conducting questionnaires.

Yellow Furze NS

5 things I would like teacher to know:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows
(See Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- In-school support will be provided for pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience.
- Pastoral care – staff are made aware of children who may need support and will informally monitor these children and offer positive reinforcement.
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same with parental consent. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

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.

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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

Reviewed Jan 2019, review due Jan 2020
Reviewed Sept 21
Reviewed January 2023

Principal:	
Chairman:	
Date:	