



Anti-Bullying Policy – May 2018

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;
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

(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 Facebook account is 13 years. Other social networking sites including Stardoll, Instagram, Snapchat, Kick, Tumblr, Ask.fm, Twitter, You Tube and all others , have associated risks and dangers to your child and others.

Parental supervision is essential.

Parents acknowledge that the school has safeguards in place with regard to pupil internet website access. Use outside of school falls under parental responsibility.

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.

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*. See below

The list of examples below is non exhaustive.

Examples of bullying behaviours	
General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed. • Exclusion – being left out of groups.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles. • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures. • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.
<p>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).</p>	
Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background. • Exclusion based on any of the above.
	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p>

Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching. • Harassment.
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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*):

Sample Education and prevention strategies

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a

positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- On wet days, one of the on-duty teachers will remain down the senior end with constant supervision of 6th class, while the other teacher will patrol from 3rd class down to junior infants
- 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) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year).
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; Friendship Week, student surveys, school or year group assemblies by principal.
- 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.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - **No such thing as an innocent bystander.**
- 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 program.

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.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

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 secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

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

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

STAGE I

- The incident(s) is reported to a teacher who 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 reporting the incident and where and when the incident(s) took place.

- The teacher informs the principal.
- Teacher and/or principal then question the individuals concerned regarding the reported incident - if more than one pupil is accused of bullying, they should be questioned individually.
- Restorative Practices used here
- If the incident(s) is considered to be of a bullying nature,
 - 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 behaviour transgressions must be filed in the office on their return in the Incident Book.
 - 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 formally notified.
- 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.
- Name entered into Black Book and 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 withdrawn

STAGE V:

Matters referred to the BOM with a view to Suspension.

Reviewed May 2018, due for review May 2019