



St. Vincent de Paul Infant School,

Griffith Ave,

Dublin 9.

Roll No: 16754 R

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Principal: Mrs. Leanne Drought

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of **St. Vincent de Paul Infant School, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9** 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 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;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- 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;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including the 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 and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or another 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*.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools and Post Primary Schools*.)

All teachers and the principal. All teachers and the school principal are aware of this responsibility.

5. The education and preventative strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*):

1. Whole school approach in creating an atmosphere that instils in pupils that we are accepting of differences and diversity. This will be done where applicable through the curriculum and on an incidental level throughout the school.
2. Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth and good self-esteem through curricular and extracurricular activities.
3. Where applicable, teachers will use curricular topics to promote attitudes of respect and acceptance of diversity. Children will be engaged in lessons/activities to build empathy, respect and resilience.
4. Pupils with a disability/S.E.N. will be engaged in a focus on improving inclusion and on developing social skills.
5. Our school will engage in age level appropriate actions against bullying. With this in mind, the issues of cyberbullying and homophobic/transphobic bullying will not be directly addressed. However, children will be equipped with age-appropriate language and knowledge that will aid them to not engage in any bullying activities as they mature and to be accepting of differences, diversities, values and cultures.
6. The children will be engaged in specific sessions of friendship/ self-esteem and anti-bullying awareness. These may take form in an awareness day or week in accordance with whole staff decisions on same and will be class level appropriate.
7. Teachers will engage pupils in appropriate class level lessons from the Stay Safe Programme.

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 (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

Procedures for investigating and dealing with Bullying

- 1)When analysing incidents of bullying 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 conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- 2) If bullying that has occurred outside the school has had a negative impact on the school, this will be dealt with in the same manner as bullying that has occurred in school. The situation will be investigated and recorded and relevant parties made aware of this.
- 3)If a group of children is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then all of those involved should be met as a group. Each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else said.
- 4)If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.
- 5) Each member of the group should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from the other members after interviewing by the teacher.
- 6) Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussion with those involved.

7) In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, meet with the parents/guardians or the two parties involved as appropriate. Explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring to the school policy. Discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support actions taken by the school.

8) Arrange the follow-up meetings with the two parties involved separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the victim is agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.

Procedures for noting and reporting an incident of Bullying behaviour

1) All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way, pupils will gain confidence in "reporting". This confidence factor is of vital importance.

2) Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils should be referred immediately to the principal or deputy principal.

3) Parents or guardians of victims and bullies should be informed by the principal or deputy principal earlier rather than later of incidents so that they are given an opportunity of discussing the matter. They are then in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs.

4) Parents/Guardians must be informed of the appropriate person to whom they make their inquiries regarding incidents of bullying behaviour, which they might suspect, that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians.

5) It should be made clear to all pupils that when they repeat incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

6) Individual teachers in consultation with appropriate staff member should record and take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's policy and code of behaviour and discipline.

7) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants, classroom assistants, caretakers, cleaners etc should be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, to the appropriate teaching member of staff.

8) In case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should normally, in the first instance, be raised with that staff member in question and if necessary with the principal.

9) Where cases, relating to either a pupil or teacher remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the Schools Board of Management.

10) If not resolved at B.O.M. level, refer to the local Inspectorate.

What to do if you know someone is being bullied

As a Pupil:

A) Take Action; watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.

B) If you feel you cannot get involved tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.

C) Do not be, or pretend to be friends with the bully.

As a Parent:

A) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly or not want to complete work to a normal standard.

B) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they spent their time with, how their lunchtime was spent etc.

C) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.

D) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.

E) Tell your own child that there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.

F) Make sure your child is fully aware of School Policy concerning bullying and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

As a School:

A) Organise the school community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying.

B) Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other. E.g. Implement the Stay Safe Programme.

C) Restorative practice may be used when the situation presents suitable for same.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*):

1. Pupils involved in bullying will be supported by involving them and where applicable the class as a whole, in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, develop friendships and social skills.

2. Those who have engaged in bullying as the bully, will be encouraged and helped to learn to behave appropriately and with empathy around others. Assistance from home in this process is essential.

3. Pupils who have witnessed bullying will be encouraged to speak to teachers.

4. A class which is known to have been impacted by a bullying situation as a whole will be supported by the class teacher through lessons and activities to encourage positive behaviours.

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 was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

11. 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.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:

Chairperson B.O.M

Signed:

Principal

April 2024