



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 Dunamase College 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, and will refer to this document frequently. It also complies with the LOETB social media policy.*
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; Each member of staff will be aware of their responsibility to show good example (as laid out in the Professional Code of behaviour for Teachers) recognise bullying, be welcoming, supportive and understanding where any individual reports any form of bullying
 - 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 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(see appendix b):

- 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.
- Stealing , interfering with or damaging personal belonging of another person

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.

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

Where a bullying incident occurs outside the school but impacts negatively on the school environment, the school management will assess its implications and the best way to resolve the matter. Parental support would be expected in such incidents in order to see resolution.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are

1. The class teacher
2. The principal
3. The deputy principal

A teacher whom a student confides in

5. *The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, 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):*

a. School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community and for people outside the school.
- 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.
- A regular 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.
- Involvement of the student council and the student body in general in contributing to a safe school environment. The development of the various clubs and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school – extracts 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 information as to how to access the school's anti-bullying policy eg. in the student diary.
- The implementation of regular annual whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; annual student surveys; parent surveys at PT meetings, regular school or year group assemblies by principal, class teachers etc.

- 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 speaking out is the responsible thing to do

- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:

- O Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.

- O Hand note up with homework.

- O Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.

- O Anti-bully button on webpage

- o Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.

- O Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.

- O 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 ICT Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Organising various activities during the school year to foster students awareness of bullying issue eg a special notice board in classrooms regarding friendship making and preventing bullying, friendship week, visiting guest speakers, and parent/gardaian seminars.

b. Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programme include input and discussion on the dynamics and impact of bullying behaviours with the help of programmes available.

- 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 involving prevention of various types of bullying.

- The school should list anti bullying SPHE resources and supports and have these available to staff
- Facilitate delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes post-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.
- This policy is an integral part of all school policies and practices with particular relevance to the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable ICT Usage policy, Attendance, Sporting activities, etc.

Furthermore in support of these aims the school should :

- Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Provide continuous professional development for the staff on awareness of bullying and towards the development of relevant skills to deal with bullying complaints.
- Ensure involvement of student council in creating a safe school environment.
- Ensure that all staff members, teaching and non teaching , secretaries, SNAs, cleaners, make the relevant teacher aware of any bullying incident that they may witness or that may be mentioned to them.
- Asking bus drivers and other individuals providing services to/for the school to inform the school of any bullying incidents that they may notice.

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) :*

a. 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, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

b. 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 recorded 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 incident of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Students are encouraged to report any incident of bullying happening to themselves to any teacher. This can be done in various ways for example:

Speaking to a teacher after class or at another suitable time.

Giving a note to a teacher.

Asking a parent/guardian/friend to inform a teacher in the school on their behalf.

c. Investigating and dealing with incidents:(see section 6.8.9 of circular)

- 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;

- 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 listen with understanding to any case of bullying being reported to him/her.

- 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 relevant 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(s)

- 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 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;
- 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;
 - The primary aim for any teacher 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 apportion blame.
 - In investigating alleged bullying the teacher will complete and keep in a private place the school reporting form and give another copy to the principal/vice principal.
 - A professional judgement will then be made as to whether bullying has occurred.

d. 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 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/guardian 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.

e. Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

i) Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made, e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.

- 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.

- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

ii) Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- 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.

- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

iii) Formal Stage 2 Recording Template (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours (as are listed above) that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Due consideration will be given to where and for how long these records are kept on a case by case basis depending on severity, possible repetitions and patterns or links to other cases. Bullying case folder kept in safe storage accessible through secretary or Principal/vice principal who has access to them.

iv) Established intervention strategies

- Interviews will be conducted with all relevant parties, including pupils who are not directly involved. Such interviews will be carried out with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all concerned.
- 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 with a teacher present
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given from Teenline, for example
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice/ Reconciliation charter
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

Following on from individual interviews, group meetings may be held as appropriate.

Written accounts of the interview may also be requested from all those involved. Records will be kept safely of these reports.

Sociogram questionnaires may be implemented.

The method of shared concern may be used.

Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressure that may face them from other members of the group after interview by the teacher.

FOLLOW UP ACTION FOR SCHOOL

The interaction between parties involved will be observed on a continuous basis and a records kept of any follow on incidents after the initial reporting / intervention.

Continuous conversations will occur between the principal/deputy principal/ relevant teacher and the parties in question monitoring progress.

In determining whether a bullying case had been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must as part of his relevant 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 relationship between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;

Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians 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/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures. The parent guardian must be referred as appropriate to the schools complaints procedure.

In the event that parents / guardians have exhausted the schools complaints procedures and are still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents/guardians of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for children.

RECORDING OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be dealt with in an objective and factual manner.

Each relevant teacher will fill out The School Bullying report sheet when an incident of bullying is reported or witnessed to him/her. S/he will keep a copy in a safe place and give another one to the principal/deputy principal.

In cases that have not been resolved with 20 days after the relevant teacher has determined that bullying, s/he will use the office recording form (Appendix 3 DES Antibullying procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools), to record the bullying behaviour and give it to the principal and it will be kept in a locked file in the principals office.

In serious cases of bullying e.g. fighting, the official recording form will be completed and the bullying reported immediately to the Principal or deputy principal.

The length of time that a report is stored will be decided on a case by case basis determined by the seriousness, possible occurrences and links to other incidents.

REFERRAL OF SERIOUS CASES

In cases where there are serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPs) will be sought.

The School's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows: (see section 6.8 DES Anti bullying procedures for primary and post primary schools)

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) :

The students are made clearly aware that they should always report any incident of bullying that happens to them or that they witness happening to another.

Pupils who are being bullied or who have been bullied and those involved in bullying will be supported and provided with assistance.

This will be done on an ongoing basis through pastoral care, school counsellor and participating in activities within the school.

Attention will be taken in the event of the student refusing to participate in school activities, games, trips etc.

Every effort will be made to strengthen the self confidence and self worth of the student.

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.

Board of Management – Supervision and Monitoring

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. Therefore at least once each term the principal will check the bullying diary/records and give a report to the Board.

This will be done promptly in cases where

Physical bullying is involved or any sexual aspect is alleged in bullying.

Constant bullying is occurring between the same individuals.

Any report of a member of staff bullying by a student

- 10.** 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 be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association (when one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix A: Key elements of a positive school culture and climate

- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his / her worth
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, or aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has a capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedure to improve relationships on a whole school basis.
- The school recognises the role of the parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out 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.

Appendix B: Different forms of bullying behaviour

1. General behaviour which apply to all types of bullying:

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the inequality legislation e.g. sexual, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling/ the use of nicknames
- Slagging and unwelcome jokes or banter or abusive language.
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person.
- Offensive graffiti
- Stealing
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- Picking on someone or setting some up to fail
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Rumours, lies or gossip belittling someone

2. Online or cyberbullying:

- 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: On going harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety.
- Silent telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive telephone mobile phone calls.
- Insulting text messages/instant messages
- Abusive email.
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. facebook, twitter youtube, snapchat etc
- Abusive website comments blogs pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.
- Fraping/accessing someone's accounts to make trouble for them
- False reporting.

3. Identity based behaviours

Including the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality legislation which include:

- a. Gender including transgender, b. Civil status, c. Family status, d. Sexual orientation, e. Religion, f. Age, g. Disability, h. Race and i. Membership of the traveller community.
- b. Gender, homophobic including transgender

- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of different sexual orientation.
- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian... used in derogatory manner.
- Physical intimidation or attacks
- Threats.
- Publicly condemning/inciting condemnation.
- Isolation and exclusion based on orientation.

B Race, nationality, ethnic background, and membership of the travelling community:

- Discrimination
- Prejudice
- Comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background.
- Exclusion on the basis on any of the above

C. Relational: This involves manipulation relationships as a means of bullying, Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation and exclusion
- Ignoring
- Excluding from group
- Taking someone's friends away
- 'bitching'
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so the victim can hear
- The 'look'
- Use the terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
- Being dismissive of others sincerely held beliefs
- Unpleasant or nasty jokes in a group situation

D. Sexual:

- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment
- Invasion of personal space
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour in group situations

E. 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 so some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues
- Mimicking a person's disability
- Setting others up for ridicule
- Showing open hostility
- Isolation and exclusion

