

School Position on Bullying

The Dangan National School community believes that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation. As individuals, we have a responsibility to ensure other people's rights are valued and respected by us. Each person in Dangan National School is expected to respect the integrity of the child's family, be it two parent, single parent, foster parent, grandparent, guardian, significant other or LGTB parents.

The school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the self-esteem and self-confidence of targeted pupil(s). **Therefore it does not tolerate bullying of any kind.**

Every report of bullying is treated seriously and dealt with, having due regard for the well being of the targeted pupil(s) and the perpetrator(s).

The immediate priority, should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, (*thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted*) and resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved insofar as is practicable using a "Reform, not Blame" approach.

All pupils are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance a safe environment in the school. On becoming aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community they should notify a trusted responsible adult. Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report.

Pupils' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing school structures. Awareness of bullying, and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* and the code of behavior guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Dangan National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behavior. 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 recognizes 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 behavior:

- 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 behavior in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- Models respectful behavior to all members of the school community at all times
- A school-wide approach;
- Explicitly teaches pupils what respectful language and respectful behavior looks like, acts like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Displays key respectful messages in the classrooms and around the school.
- 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 behavior (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 behavior, 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 behavior 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 behavior, 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 behavior.
- 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 behavior.
- Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. This definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.

Appendix 1 gives a list of specific examples of bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.

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 in this school will be the class teacher of the pupil(s) involved. This will be made clear to all teachers at the beginning of the school year. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it. The Principal will be involved in investigating and dealing with bullying cases.
5. The education and prevention strategies (including **strategies** specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity based bullying) used by the school are as follows:
 - A school wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
 - The anti-bullying module of the SPHE programme as it applies during each school year. The Stay Safe and RSE programmes at primary level are personal

safety skills programmes which seek to enhance child's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behavior.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The implementation of whole school awareness measures e.g. displays in the school/classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; Wellness Week in November/December and Buddy Week
- 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.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
 - Worry Box in each classroom
 - Using a school approved social media platform e.g. Seesaw
 - Emailing
- Pupils are helped to examine the issue of bullying in a calm rational way, outside of the tense context of particular bullying incidents. In the process they are made more aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms that it can take.

- Pupils are made aware that the consequences of bullying behaviour are always bad for those who are targeted, even if this is not always obvious at the time.
 - Pupils are encouraged to recognise, reject and report bullying behaviour spontaneously.
 - 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, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones and social media platforms in so far as possible.
 - The full implementation of the SPHE, 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. Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, FUSE
 - School wide delivery of lessons on Cyber Bullying (Webwise Primary Teacher's Resources).
 - Visits by The Community Guard to talk with children in 5th and 6th Class
 - 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.
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 behavior 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 or principal.

Investigating and Dealing With Incidents

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher will exercise his/her professional judgment 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.
- 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.
- The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to ask any pupil to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.
- 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.**

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 where deemed appropriate.
- 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.

Recording Of Bullying Behaviour

- 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. A separate recording template will be used for this purpose (Appendix 2).

- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- 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.
- Records retained by the relevant teacher will be stored securely in pupil files within the school office.
- The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
 - 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.
- When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

7. 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, for example:
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling or 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.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

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. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps as 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 22/09/2022

11. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 14th September 2023

12. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and a copy has been provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to 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, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

Signed: Bernard Donohue
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Clare Caslin
(Principal)

Date: 14/09/2023

Date: 14/09/2023

Appendix 1

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of bullying behaviours:

<p>General Behaviours Which Apply To All Types Of Bullying</p>	<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• The "look"• Invasion of personal space• A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Denigration: Spreading rumors, 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 or messages on any social media network/platform • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Whatsapp/Ticktock Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p><u>Identity Based Behaviours</u> 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>	
<p>Homophobic And Transgender</p>	<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,

	<p>lesbian, homo, ...used in a derogatory manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <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"> • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves

	<p>against bullying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
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Appendix 2

Template For Recording Classroom/Yard Incidents Of Possible Bullying Behaviour

Name Of Pupil Being Bullied: _____ Class: _____

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behavior:

Sources Of Bullying Concern/Report

Pupil Concerned	Other Pupil	Parent	Teacher	Other

Location:

Playground	Classroom	Corridor	Toilets	School Bus	Other

Brief Description Of Suspected Bullying Behaviour And It's Impact:

Details Of Actions Taken:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

