

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

This policy is based on the DES 'Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools', September 2013. It aims to produce a safe caring environment.

The school does not tolerate or condone bullying in any form or at any level of the school community. The Board of Management is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community-pupils, staff and parents are enabled to act effectively to deal with bullying. This policy guides action and organisation within the school for the prevention of and response to bullying.

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 Wexford Educate Together 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. Board of Management

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 use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Communication of Policy:

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be communicated to the school community via Appendix 4. This Anti-Bullying Policy features within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour.

3. Definition of Bullying:

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.

(i) Types of Bullying:

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, 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.

The Board of Management recognises that bullying is not solely a child to child issue, and can incorporate all members of the school community.

Bullying of Pupils by Adults

The safety of all pupils is of paramount concern to the staff and B.O.M. Whether unwittingly or otherwise, an adult may instigate or reinforce bullying behaviour by:

- Using sarcasm or repeated negative comments.
- Humiliation of pupils.
- Using gestures, etc. which may be intimidating.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to leave issues of a contentious nature within school to school staff and not to approach a child to discuss such issues.

Bullying of Adults by Adults

The B.O.M. of Wexford Educate Together takes its obligation to create a safe and healthy working environment for its entire staff and other adults very seriously, and will take whatever action is appropriate to ensure that this is carried out. Teachers will endeavour to listen to, and where appropriate, act upon issues of concern regarding one adult's treatment of another. Parents/Guardians engaging in disputes with one another regarding the treatment of their child/children is not advised, and these matters are best left with the teaching staff and principal. It is not the remit of the school to adjudicate in matters of parental discord in matters unrelated to school issues.

Checklist for all Adults in the School

Treat all pupils and staff members with equal respect and courtesy.

Do not engage teachers and other staff members whilst they have pupils in their care, particularly if the issue is contentious. This may hinder the teacher or staff member in their duty of care to the pupils and can have a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching for the rest of the day. Parents/Guardians must make an appointment to meet with a teacher in the first instance. This affords school staff an opportunity to give such important issues the time they deserve.

4. Relevant Teachers:

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

Sinead Piper
Tasha Stephens

5. Education and Prevention Strategies:

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies aimed specifically at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

Please note that all school policies are available to view online at www.wexfordeducatetogether.ie or a hard copy may be obtained from the office.

(i) Whole School Prevention Strategies:

This policy recognises that a cornerstone in the prevention of bullying is a positive school culture and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect.

- *Communication to Parents*

The Board of Management will ensure that the relevant policies are made available to parents on our school website and in the school office. Parents are asked to read the policies and agree to abide by them in the Enrolment Registration Form prior to enrolment.

- *Supports for Staff*

The Board of Management will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that temporary and substitute staff has sufficient awareness of the school's Code of Behaviour and its Anti-Bullying Policy. This will be achieved by providing staff members with a "Policy Pack".

- *Social Personal Health Education (SPHE)*

This subject of the National Curriculum is taught in each class level and covers the themes:

- Myself
- Myself and Others
- Myself and the Wider World

- *Learn Together*

Our Ethical Education Programme is called 'Learn Together'. This programme is delivered to all classes for 30 minutes per day or its equivalent weekly. Its aim is to:

"..promote a philosophy of education in which no child is considered an outsider; which promotes the fullest development of ability, irrespective of gender, class or stereotype".

To read more about the programme please go to www.educatetogether.ie

- *Positive Language Policy*

Wexford E.T.N.S. operates a Positive Language Policy for all the school community. Parents, teachers, ancillary staff, visiting teachers/substitutes are made aware of our Positive Language Policy which aims to promote respect among all member of the school community.

- *Assemblies*
Assemblies are held on a fortnightly basis in order to create a positive whole-school culture. Discussion, presentations and role plays regularly take place which promote positive relationships and a positive school culture.
- *Code of Behaviour*
Our Code of Behaviour is based on positive reinforcement for positive behaviours. The following strategies are used on a whole-school and class basis to promote positive behaviour and prevent negative behaviour:
- *Word of the Week*
Positive traits/attributes are introduced to the children in assembly for example: respect, independence, friendship, co-operation, responsibility, positivity. Children who show these traits earn a “magic ticket” for their efforts. All magic tickets are entered in to a draw and tickets are drawn at assembly. Children whose name is drawn may choose a prize from their teacher’s prize box.
- *Buddy Squad*
The school operates a buddy squad at playtimes. Buddy squad members must apply to be part of the scheme. They are tasked with looking after children at the buddy stop who are alone or have nobody to play with. Buddy squad members help to promote a positive school culture.
- *Student Council*
We have an active student council in our school. The voice of every child is very important in all aspects of our school life. Children are encouraged to offer their opinions and suggestions via our Student Council meetings. This in turn helps children to feel that they are important members of our school community, that they are listened to and that their opinions are valued.
- *Social Skills Groups*
Some social skills groups operate in the school to support children who may need some help in initiating and maintaining positive relationships in the school. Parental permission is sought prior to inclusion in such groups.
- *Managing Behaviour in the Classroom*
Agreed steps have been devised for managing difficult behaviour in the classroom. These procedures are followed by all teachers to ensure fairness, transparency and continuity for the children. Please see Appendix 2.
- *Parent & Teacher Information Evenings*
From time to time, the school may invite outside speakers to address the parent body and staff on the topic of bullying, particularly cyber bullying, homophobic, transphobic and identity based bullying.

- *Whole-School Projects*
The school, through its SPHE and Learn Together programmes, explore whole themes of Anti-Bullying, Equality and Minority Groups in a positive, inclusive children-centred way.
- *Children with Special Educational Needs*
Wexford E.T.N.S. prides itself on the inclusion of special needs children. In some cases, the individual education plan (IEP) for special educational needs may include an individual behaviour plan (IBP) tailored to the specific behaviour and social needs of the child.
- *Outside Agencies*
The school liaises with a number of outside agencies in relation to whole-school and individual behaviour. These services include:
 - NEPS: National Educational Psychological Service
 - NEWB: National Education Welfare Board
 - HSE: Health Service Executive
 - SESS: Special Education Support Service
 - ILSA: Irish Learning Support Association

(ii) In Class Prevention Strategies:

- *Class Charters*
Each class devises their class charter in September. The children themselves make their own rules for the class. All children agree to abide by the charter and it is displayed in each classroom.
- *Age-appropriate Reward Systems (Individual/Group)*
 - Token charts, points systems
 - Group rewards
 - Class Dojo
 - Reward days out at end of term, for example, a movie or baking.
- *Golden Time*
Golden Time is seen as a privilege earned for good behaviour. Children who have behaved well on yard and in class during the week, and completed all work appropriately, are entitled to Golden Time for a period of time on Friday afternoons. Children may choose an activity that they wish to complete as a reward for their good behaviour.
- *Individual Behaviour Plans (IBP's)*
Teachers may use individual behaviour plans and reward charts tailored to the specific needs of children in their class. Some children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties will receive additional support from the Learning Support/Resource team.

6. Procedures for Investigating and Reporting:

The procedures contained within this policy highlight the importance of a school-wide approach, (management, staff, pupils and parents), to preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils have a role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within the school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere.

The prevention of bullying forms an integral part of the Wexford Educate Together Anti-Bullying Policy.

Investigating and Reporting Alleged Bullying Incidents:

- The primary aim for the relevant 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).
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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.
- Non-teaching staff must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- Parents 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 when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Incidents are generally best 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 using sample

questionnaires available at Appendix 1. 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.
- Everyone involved will be asked to write down their account of the incident.
- If it is determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken.
- If 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.
- In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, it should be made clear to all parties involved, that it is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Follow up meetings should be arranged separately with the relevant parties with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- If the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher at Appendix 3.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the above procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. Recording:

The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

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, as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved.

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.

Appendix 3 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal.

Reporting to the Board of Management:

At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- The overall number of bullying cases reported, by means of the bullying recording template in Appendix 3.
- Confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying policy.

An annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school will be undertaken by the Board of Management. 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. If requested, a copy will also be provided to the Department of Education and Skills and the school Patron. A standard notification must be used for this purpose, i.e. Appendix 4.

8. Programme of Support:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- The class teacher regularly "checks-in" with the child to ensure they are safe and happy
- Children are encouraged to express their feelings orally or in written form in a diary
- The child may receive support through a social skills group

9. 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. Potential hot spots for negative behaviour have been identified and are well supervised.

10. 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.

11. Ratification:

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 1st April, 2014.

12. Communication:

The Board of Management must formally adopt and implement the Anti-Bullying Policy, and this policy must be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

A copy of this policy must also be provided to the Department of Education & Skills and the school Patron, Educate Together.

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.

13. Implementation:

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.

Ratification by the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: 1st April, 2014

Date: 1st April, 2014

To be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

Sample Questionnaire for Pupil

(Please be aware questions may vary due to a child's age or cognitive, emotional or social needs.)

Someone who is bullying somebody else is a boy or girl who does anything that would make other people feel uncomfortable.

Section A

Sometimes, people who bully like when other children watch them. Have you ever seen anyone do any of these things to someone in your school during the last month?

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----|-----|
| a. Have you seen a pupil call someone nasty and hurtful names? | ___ | ___ |
| b. Have you seen a pupil laugh at someone and badly upset them? | ___ | ___ |
| c. Have you seen a pupil deliberately hurt someone? | ___ | ___ |
| d. Have you seen a pupil tease someone and/or make them cry? | ___ | ___ |
| e. Have you seen a pupil force someone to give them something? | ___ | ___ |
| f. Have you seen a pupil make someone do something they are frightened to do? | ___ | ___ |
| g. Have you seen a pupil making someone do wrong things? | ___ | ___ |
| h. Have you seen a pupil encouraging someone to bully others? | ___ | ___ |
| i. Have you seen a pupil refuse to allow others join in their game for no good reason? | ___ | ___ |
| j. Have you seen a pupil refuse to speak to others even when they wanted to be their friend? | ___ | ___ |
| k. Have you seen a pupil encourage children to ignore others? | ___ | ___ |

If you see someone being bullied, tell your teacher or your parents.

Remember: Wexford Educate Together N.S. is a "telling" school.

Section B

Has anyone in your school done any of these things to you during the last month?

	Yes	No
a. Has someone called you upsetting names?	___	___
b. Has someone laughed at you and made you cry or feel bad?	___	___
c. Has someone hurt you by pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or biting you?	___	___
d. Has someone forced you to give them something?	___	___
e. Has someone made you do something you were frightened to do?	___	___
f. Has someone made you do wrong things?	___	___
g. Has someone encouraged you to bully others?	___	___
h. Has someone refused to let you join in their games for no good reason?	___	___
i. Has someone refused to speak to you when you wanted to be their friend?	___	___
j. Has someone encouraged other children to ignore you?	___	___

If you are ever bullied, you should walk away and tell your teacher or your parents/guardians.

Section C

Have you done any of these things to someone in your school during the last month?

	Yes	No
a. Have you called someone names, e.g. Fatty, Skinny, Shorty?	___	___
b. Have you laughed at someone and upset them?	___	___
c. Have you hurt someone by pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or biting them?	___	___
d. Have you teased someone and made them cry or upset them?	___	___
e. Have you made someone give you something that they did not want to?	___	___
f. Have you made someone do something they were frightened to do?	___	___
g. Have you made a pupil do something you were frightened to do?	___	___
h. Have you made someone do wrong things?	___	___
i. Have you encouraged someone to bully others?	___	___
j. Have you refused to let someone join in on your game for no good reason?	___	___
k. Have you not spoken to someone when they wanted to speak to or play with you?	___	___
l. Have you encouraged other boys or girls to ignore someone who Tries to be their friend?	___	___

Section D

List 5 positive things that have occurred recently in school:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Section E

	Yes	No
✓ Will you try not to bully someone?	___	___
✓ Would you follow someone who bullies others?	___	___
✓ Will you stand up to someone who bullies others by telling?	___	___
✓ When you cannot have your own way, will you remember not to bully others?	___	___
✓ Will you help someone who is being bullied by telling?	___	___
✓ Will you be brave enough to tell on someone who is bullying others?	___	___

Bullying Behaviour is being selfish and cruel.

Appendix 2

Managing Behaviour in the Classroom

It is imperative that all teachers follow these steps when a child is not behaving appropriately in class. Please note some children may have an Individual Behaviour Plan which is differentiated to their needs. In this case, their individual plans are followed.

- 1) Non Verbal Cue (silently wait, eye contact, proximity to child).
- 2) Verbal Reasoning (Using positive language).
- 3) Move to another table in the classroom.
- 4) Move to a table on their own in the classroom. **Parents informed.**
- 5) Move the child to another class for a period of time. An age appropriate reflection sheet is sent home with parent. This is not publicly announced to the class teacher.

If steps 1-5 occur on consecutive days or weeks, the class teacher calls a **meeting with the parent**. In the meeting:

- State the specific behaviour causing concern.
 - State the steps you went through as above.
 - Devise a plan with parents on how to improve this behaviour, include the role of the parent.
 - Child placed on age appropriate daily report.
 - Progress reviewed at end of week.
- 6) If behaviour remains inappropriate, inform the principal. A meeting will be held with the class teacher, parents and principal. In some cases, it may be appropriate to involve the child. An Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) will then be drawn up and monitored by the class teacher and parents. The principal will see reports at the end of the week.
 - 7) Suspension.
 - 8) Expulsion (Board of Management).

Appendix 3

Record of Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es)) *

Pupil Concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))*

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN Related	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal

***Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.



Appendix 4

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

To _____

The Board of Management of Wexford Educate Together National School wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, and its implementation, was completed at the Board of Management meeting of _____ (date).
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____