

Mary, Mother of Hope JNS - Anti Bullying Policy 2024/2025



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 ***Mary, Mother of Hope JNS*** 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.

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.

Mary, Mother of Hope JNS Ant-Bullying policy is wholly in line with our School Ethos and Code of Behaviour

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 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*.

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

- Relevant Class Teacher; Principal Ms Alma Moran and/or Deputy Principal Mrs Jean Cullen
- Reporting incidents is vital: all students are taught that if they bully, they will be reported and all reports will be followed up. This in turn underpins the positive message that bullying will not be tolerated in this school. Teachers/parents impress on children that reporting incidents of bullying is acting responsibly and not telling tales. If pupils come forward to tell about bullying they are praised for telling.
- All reports of bullying even those which appear trivial are acknowledged, investigated, and dealt with by the class teacher so that pupils gain confidence in telling.
- Serious cases are referred immediately to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
- Parents are informed by either the Class Teacher, the Deputy Principal or the Principal earlier rather than later.
- Parents are informed of the appropriate person(s) to whom they can make their enquiries regarding bullying.

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (in accordance with Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

SPHE is timetabled in our school for 2 x ½ hrs per week. The lessons are timetabled as follows:

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1st Class	2nd Class	Other Resources
Substance Misuse (Walk Tall) R.S.E Stay Safe You Can Do It (2x 30 mins per week)	Substance Misuse (Walk Tall) RSE Stay Safe You Can Do It (2x 30 mins per week)	Substance Misuse (Walk Tall) Internet Safety R.S.E Stay Safe You Can Do It! Fun Friends (2x 30 mins per week)	Substance Misuse (Walk Tall) IV Problem Solving RSE Stay Safe You Can Do It! Internet Safety Transition Programme (2x 30 mins per week)	Listed below are other supplementary programmes which you may also choose to do with your class in addition to the compulsory programmes as outlined in our SPHE policy. Time given to these supplementary programmes must come from further discretionary time or from other curricular areas. Senior Infants: Mighty Mouth 1 st class: Seatbelt Sheriff 2 nd class: High Glow Silver RSA Safe cross code

- Under the Stay Safe programme the topic of bullying is dealt with. It provides an integrated, developmentally staged, and comprehensive approach to teaching children personal safety skills.
- The You Can Do It Programme is taught at all levels; Fun Friends is covered in 1st Class and the Problem Solving skills of the Incredible Years programme are taught at 2nd Class.

- In our school we also hold a “Friendship Week”. During this week children get the opportunity to pair up with another class i.e., a buddy system whereby they create new friendships. They also spend time discussing the topic of bullying, the different types, its effects and how to deal with it. It is taught through a range of media e.g., poetry, art, music, drama etc. There are special resources in our school e.g. friendship packs, Dino Might posters and storybooks to use during this week.
- Children are taught age-appropriate rules in relation to safety when using the internet at home and at school
- Clear guidelines regarding the use of the internet and social media at school are laid out in our AUP
- Children are not permitted to have Mobile Phones and other electronic devices in school

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

- A calm, unemotional problem-solving approach will be taken, with the aim of resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable the relationship between the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame.
- 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 will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher
- NTS and Link Teachers are encouraged to report any bullying behaviour witnessed or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher
- Parents & pupils are required to cooperate fully with any investigation and to assist the school in resolving issues restoring as far as is practicable the relationship between the parties as quickly as possible.
- Incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
- Interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for the age and rights of the pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved may be asked to provide information in the same 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 they may face from the other members of the group after 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 parents 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 parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their 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 parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together later if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template in Appendix 1. Copies are retained by the relevant teacher and Principal/Deputy Principal.
- 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 parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

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

- A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be put in place when an incident has occurred. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.
- A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be made available if it is established that bullying has occurred. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.
- The support of NEPS will be sought where there are serious concerns.

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.

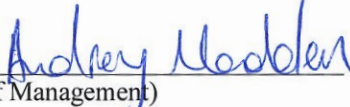
Prevention of Harassment

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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on Sept 17th 2024

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.

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.

Signed: Audrey Madden 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Alma Moran 
(Principal)

Date: Sept 17th 2024

Date of next review: Sept 2025



2024/2025 Mary, Mother of Hope JNS

Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	Yes
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N/A

Signed *Andrew Madden*
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: Sept 17th 2024

Signed *Helma Mora*
Principal

Date: Sept 17th 2024



Mary, Mother of Hope JNS

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To whom it may concern,

The Board of Management of Mary, Mother of Hope JNS 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 meeting of Sept 17th 2024
- 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 Andrey Madder
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: Sept 17th 2024

Signed Alma Mora
Principal

Date: Sept 17th 2024