**Anti-Bullying Policy**

In accordance with the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, relevant legislation and the Guidelines for the development of codes of behaviour issued by the National Educational Welfare Board **(**NEWB), the Board of Management of DDLETB Youthreach has adopted the following Anti-Bullying Policy within the framework of centres’ overall Student Code of Behaviour Policy. The Policy 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 students and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

**(a) A positive centre culture and climate**

* Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
* Encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
* Promotes respectful relationships across the centre community.

**(b) Effective leadership**

**(c) A centre-wide approach**

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

**(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures)**

* Builds empathy, respect and resilience in students.
* Explicitly addresses the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of students**

**(g) Supports for staff**

**(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)**

**(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.**

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.
* 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 centre’s Student 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 centre’s Student Code of Behaviour.

The list of examples below is non-exhaustive.

**Examples of bullying behaviours**

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| **General behaviours which apply to all** | * 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 |
| **Cyber** | * **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 * **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 * Abusive email * Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Twitter/YouTube/TikTok/Instagram or on games consoles * Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures * Abusive posts on any form of communication technology |
| **Identity Based Behaviours**  **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). | |
| **Homophobic and Transgender** | * Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation * Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation * Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner * Physical intimidation or attacks * Threats |
| **Race, nationality, ethnic background & membership of the Traveller community** | * 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** | * This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: * 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” |
| **Sexual** | * Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching * Harassment |
| **Special Educational Needs,**  **Disability** | * Name calling * Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs * Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying * Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues * Mimicking a person’s disability * Setting others up for ridicule |

The relevant staff for investigating and dealing with bullying is/are:

* Coordinator
* Resource Person
* Class teachers
* Mentors/Tutors
* Care team personnel

Any staff member may act as a relevant staff member if circumstances warrant it.

The relevant staff member(s) in this centre is/are: Insert Name(s)

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

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| **Centre-wide approach**   * A centre-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the centre community. * 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 students through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Students 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 develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts students’ lives and the need to respond to it, both in prevention and intervention. * Professional development with specific focus on the training of relevant staff. * Centre wide awareness raising and/or training on all aspects of bullying, to include students, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider centre community. * Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, centre grounds, centre tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant staff. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the centre. * Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe centre environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support. * Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the centre-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the centre. * The centre’s Anti-Bullying Policy is discussed with students and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given the link to the online policy as part of the Student Code of Behaviour of the centre. * The implementation of regular whole centre awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the centre and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual or term or monthly student surveys etc. * Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way students gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales, but are behaving responsibly. * Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell: * Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class. * Make a phone call to the centre or speak to a trusted teacher in the centre. * Anti-bully or Niggle box? * Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on their behalf. * Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all students. * 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 centre if they suspect that their child is being bullied. * Acceptable Use Policy in the centre to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the centre is strictly monitored, as is students’ use of mobile phones. * The listing of supports currently being used in the centre.   **Implementation of curricula**   * The full implementation of the SPHE and RSE curricula * Continuous professional development for staff in delivering these programmes. * Centre wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. #UP2US, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet. * Centre wide delivery of lessons on relational aggression (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed) Cyber Bullying (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before You Click, Let’s Fight It Together) Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying(Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack) Diversity and Interculturalism. * Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at post- primary level. Delivered by Community Gardai, covering issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying. * The centre will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN students with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately. |

**Each centre’s procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the centre for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour will be created by each centre and the process must involve all relevant stakeholders and agreed by the Regional Manager.**

**Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the centre will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students or staff under any of the nine grounds of gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy has been made available to centre personnel, parents/guardians, students and published on the DDLETB Youthreach website at - <https://www.ddletb.ie/youthreach-policies/>

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.



Date: January 2022

Date of next review: January 2024