

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti - Bullying Policy for Harold's Cross NS

Rationale:

The role of the school is to provide an appropriate education for all its pupils. A stable secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour by its very nature undermines and dilutes the quality of education. It can have short and long term effects on the physical and mental well-being of pupils, on engagement with school, on self-confidence and on the ability to pursue ambitions and interests. Harold's Cross N.S. recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on pupils and we are therefore fully committed to implementing the key principals of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour .

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB and legislation laid down in the 2015 Children First Act, the Board of Management of Harold's Cross 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 published in September 2013.

The policy will apply to all staff and pupils under the care of the school. The policy on Anti-Cyber-Bullying will apply to actions occurring on the school premises only. The school acknowledges the fact that cyber-bullying which occurs outside of the school may have implications whilst pupils are at school and that the policy may apply in those situations. The school wishes to point out that it is limited in what it can or may do in relation to outside bullying activities over which it has no control.

Children First National Guidance 2017 and the Anti-Bullying Procedures provide that in cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, a referral may need to be made to Tusla or An Garda Síochána as appropriate. Where school personnel have concerns about a child arising from alleged bullying behaviour but are not sure whether to report the matter to Tusla, the designated liaison person shall seek advice from Tusla in accordance with the procedures set out in chapter 5 of these procedures.

The following are key in our policy-

1. Creating a positive school culture and climate which -

- welcomes 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. (See Appendix 2)

2. Effective leadership which

- supports a school culture and climate that celebrates difference
- engenders an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable
- involves staff, pupils and parents in developing and implementing a vision of the school where diversity is accepted and celebrated.

“All adults in the school (staff and parents) have a responsibility to model the school’s standards of behaviour, in their dealings with both pupils and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for children.”(N.E.W.B.)

3. A school-wide approach which

- involves the whole school community (school management, staff, parents and pupils)
- discusses bullying openly
- operates a high degree of school vigilance
- promotes relevant home/school/community links and provides a consistent response

4. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact. (See below)

5. Implementation of education and prevention strategies that

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying.

6. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils (See below)

7. Supports for staff which

- ensure the staff has sufficient familiarity with the school’s policy
- enable them to apply the policy effectively and appropriately.

8. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

9. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

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.”**

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.

The following are examples of the above

Physical aggression: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of a severe physical assault.

Intimidation: may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice or facial expressions being used as a weapon.

Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying (when a person’s attempts to socialize and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined) Example “ Do this or I won’t be friends with you anymore”

Cyber bullying: Bullying through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mails, instant messaging, apps, gaming sites, chat rooms or other on-line technologies

Name Calling; causes hurt, insults or humiliates. It can refer to physical appearance, accent, a distinctive voice characteristic, academic ability (at either end)

Damage to property: -clothing, books, mobile phones or other devices.

Extortion: Demanding money or a person's belongings.

Negative behaviour, 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 **will** 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.

Education and Prevention Strategies:

In Harold's Cross NS, space is given within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all, to promote diversity, address people's prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight that bullying behaviour is unacceptable. However SPHE (Social & Personal Health Education), a mandatory component of the primary curriculum, specifically promotes the health and well-being of the child. Its aim is to enable the child to learn about him/herself, to care for themselves and each other, to make informed decisions and to develop skills and competence and to build resilience.

The following programmes which come under the umbrella of SPHE contain a number of components which are particularly relevant to the prevention of and promotion of respect and diversity.

The Stay Safe Programme

The Walk Tall Programme

Relationship and Sexuality Programme

These are other programmes used by staff which are also relevant to the above -

The S.A.L.T. Programme The Grow in Love Programme, Friends for Life Programme

Kidscape Programme for Primary Age Transitioning to Secondary School Bí Folláin

Teachers in Harold's Cross also promote positive self- concepts among the children through the use of their teaching styles, team teaching and the use of meaningful rewards.

Other Activities/Events to Promote Tolerance, Diversity and Respect:

Raising awareness at Assemblies

An Annual Anti-Bullying Day

Production of an Anti- Bullying Magazine

Anti-Bullying poster/creative

writing /poetry competitions , Using media and ICT based activities.

Friendship Day/Week, Buddy System, Worry Box, Circle Time, Playground Pals

Signing of an Anti-Bullying Pledge by parents and pupils.

Cyber Bullying: The school has drawn up a Cyber Anti- Bullying Policy (See Appendix 6)

The school's I.T. network blocks access to popular social network sites. It is a school rule that those pupils (fifth and sixth) who are allowed to bring their phone into school must power it down before they enter the school grounds and on entering the classroom hand it over to the class teacher to be secured until the end of the school day. In light of these provisions, pupils' ability to engage in any form of cyber-bullying on school premises within school hours is extremely limited at all times. It needs to be recognised that pupils' online activities which emanate from outside of the school can have an impact on the school. Thus in order to promote the positive and appropriate use of the internet and in particular, the use of social media, the school will put in place an educational programme on digital citizenship(individual rights and responsibilities) for pupils in fifth and sixth.

Investigation and Dealing with Bullying Incidents:

In Harold's Cross NS, the relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

The class teacher

The teacher/s on yard duty

The principal and deputy principal

Investigation of Bullying Incidents (Appendix 1)

- (1) The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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 apportion blame)
- (2) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- (3) All reports including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In this way pupils will gain confidence in "telling". 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.
- (4) Non- teaching staff such as SNAs, secretaries and caretakers, hygiene staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the relevant teacher.
- (5) Parents and pupils will be required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- (6) Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying.
- (7) Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure privacy to all involved.
- (8) All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils.
- (9) When investigating an incident, a non-blame stance will be adapted. The relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where when, who and why.

- (10) If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter all involved will 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.
- (11) Each member of the group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face
from the other members of the group.
- (12) When possible students may also be asked to put their report in writing.
- (13) It will be made clear to the child that he/she has been in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy. Efforts will be made to get her/him to see the situation from the perspective of the other child.
- (14) Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has taken place, the parents of both parties will be contacted at an early stage to inform them and to explain the actions being taken. The school will give the parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their children.
- (15) Where disciplinary sanctions are required, this will be a private matter between the child, his parents and the school.
- (16) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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.
- (17) In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been appropriately addressed within twenty school days after she/he determined that bullying took place, it must be recorded in the recording template.

The following factors must be taken into account when deciding-

Has the bullying ceased,

Have the issues between the parties been resolved-

Has the relationship between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable and

Has there been feedback from any of the parties involved.

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a 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.

Reporting Procedures: (Appendix 3)

All records will be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, 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 will keep appropriate written records which will assist in efforts to resolve the issues and restore the relationship of the parties involved.

The relevant teacher will use the recording template to record the bullying behaviour.

On completion of the record, the relevant teacher will retain a copy and provide the Principal or the Deputy Principal with a copy.

Where the incident is of such a serious level and where the bullying is regarded as potentially abusive, the school as per Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response.

Data will be gathered, collated and analysed at least once a term with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour.

A report of same will be provided to the Board which will contain -

- a record of the number of bullying cases reported (using the recording template) and
- confirmation that all these cases are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

Bullying will appear as an item on every staff meeting agenda so as to ensure that concerns around policy, procedures or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

Supports for Pupils affected by Bullying:

In order to provide support for those affected by bullying, all members of the school community of Harold's Cross NS will endeavour to -

- * Raise awareness as to all of aspects of bullying among the school community so that all relevant members have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviours.
- * Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
- * Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- * Provide pupils with strategies to assist them in addressing problems as they arise.
- * Educate pupils on appropriate on-line behaviours, how to stay safe on-line and on developing a culture of reporting concerns around cyber-bullying.
- * Promote relevant home/school/community links to counter bullying behaviour involving members of the wider school community such as local shopkeepers, traffic wardens, gardai, etc.
- * When necessary, seek the assistance/advice of other local persons and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE social workers, Gardai, etc.
- * will implement the educational programmes, actions listed in the Education and Prevention Strategies section of this policy
- * provide counselling/and or opportunities to develop friendship and social skills.

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.

Hot-spots and hot – times have been identified throughout the school.

One teacher and at least three other adults supervise each yard area in the school during break times.

On rainy days one teacher will supervise the junior/senior corridor. There will be an SNA presence in all junior classes from Junior infants to second class when staffing allows. The teacher will pay a visit at regular intervals to these classes. However the main focus of their supervision will be those classes with no SNA/teacher presence. A second teacher will supervise classes in the middle school corridor.

When Bullying Occurs-

A graded approach is adopted where the measures employed match the gravity of the misbehaviour. The main sanctions to be implemented in instances of bullying will be drawn from the school's Code of Behaviour, up to and including the maximum sanction of expulsion (in consultation with the Board of Management). Parents will have the right to appeal this decision. Where the school deems it necessary, it may suggest to parents/guardians that a referral for professional help be made.

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.

Ratification: This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on March 25th, 2014. An amendment was made in April 2018 to take account of legislation in relation to Child Safeguarding.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association. It is published on the school website, and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested. Copies will be provided to temporary and substitute staff and to all outside personnel working in any capacity with the children.

Review:

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year using the standardized checklist in the procedures. The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified in the review. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____ Date: 25.03.14 Signed: _____
Date: 25.03.14
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date of next review: Every March

Amendment made on April 18th to take account of new Child Safeguarding legislation.

Appendix 1. HOW TO ACCEPT REPORTS OF ALLEGED BULLYING

When dealing with an incident involving individual pupils -

- All reports of bullying should be noted, investigated and dealt with. In this way children gain confidence in telling.
- Attend to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Do not ask “leading” questions e.g. “*What did he/she do next?*”, instead ask open questions such as “*anything else to tell me?*” or prompts such as “*Yes*”, “*and*”.
- Accept what is said, keep an open mind.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator in personal terms, criticise only their behaviour, e.g. “*bullying is not acceptable*”.
- Jot down notes (take photos if necessary). Record statements and observe things rather than “*interpretation*”.
- Praise child for telling.
- Allay fears, but do not promise confidentiality.
- Assuage any guilt. Pupil has a right to tell.
- Explain what you will do next.
- Offer support.
- Victim and bully should be interviewed separately.
- Each can write their own account.
- Having clarified what occurred and providing the pupil accepts responsibility, implement sanctions and follow up. Remember the bully must atone in some way. This “atonement” must fit the incident.

APPROACHES TO TAKE WHEN TALKING WITH PUPILS

The Common Concern Approach (Anotol Pikas)

- A non-blame stance towards those who have been bullying. Very useful where pupils know each other well or with children who have not turned to sustained vicious or violent bullying.
- An individual approach, which starts with those suspected of bullying and ending with the victim.

- A conflict resolution problem solving approach rather than a blame punishment orientated approach.
- Short therapeutic talk - children try to work out a mutually agreeable way to deal with the incident.
Example :
 - Non-blame start, "I would like to talk to you because I have heard (understand) that you have been mean towards"
 - Request information, "What do you know about it? or what happened?"
 - Close and move forward, "Alright, we have talked about it long enough"
 - Resolve conflict/problem, "What can you do to improve things?" or "What can you suggest?"
- Agree some approach (apology and atonement), "That's good. We will meet again in a day, week or whatever, then you can tell me how you have been getting on"

WHEN DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT INVOLVING A GANG

- If a gang is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then the gang should be met as a group. Each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.
- Do not accept false excuses, e.g. "It was only a joke", "I only hit him once", "I was only messing". Omit the "only" and have the pupil repeat the sentence.
 - If it was an accident did anyone help the victim, get help or offer sympathy.
 - If it was just a laugh, was everyone laughing?
 - If it was just a game, was everyone playing?
 - If a child is injured take photographs. If the injury is serious contact the gardai.
- If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the *Code of Behaviour and Discipline* and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view. Reiterate to all pupils that they are all responsible if someone is being bullied. There are no innocent bystanders.
- Each member of the gang should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from other members after interview by the teacher.
- Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, meet with the parents or guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate. Explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy. Discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the action taken by the school.
- Arrange follow-up meetings with the two parties involved separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the victim is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.

POSITIVE ACTIONS/SANCTIONS

Once an incident of bullying has been reported and investigated, the following actions/sanctions are put in place:

Less Serious incidents of bullying (Steps 1-5)

1. The child admits his role in the incident.
2. The child acknowledges the hurt and pain he/she has inflicted on the other (as in 1 above).
3. The child apologises to the victim (as in 1 above).
4. The child atones in some manner.
5. The child signs a contract of behaviour promising not to engage in bullying behaviour again.
6. Depending on the seriousness of the incident or if a child refuses to engage in steps 1-5 then his/her parents are called as soon as possible to the school and the child will be obliged to explain his/her behaviour to them.
7. The child will be placed "On Report" (see Code of Behaviour) for a period decided by the Principal.
8. When a child engages continuously in bullying behaviour and depending on the seriousness of the incident the child and parent may be requested to appear before the Behaviour Committee.
9. The Behaviour Committee will make a decision regarding sanctions
10. Child is suspended if warranted.

Serious incidents of Bullying

1. A severe physical or verbal attack on another child.
2. Blatant isolation or exclusion of another child.
3. Formation of a gang whose sole purpose is to bully and intimidate.
4. Cyber/texting bullying.

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- 1. Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- 2. Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- 3. Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- 4. Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- 5. Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- 6. Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- 7. Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- 8. Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- 9. Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- 10. Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- 11. Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- 12. Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- 13. All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- 14. Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- 15. School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
 - o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - o Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- 16. Support the establishment and work of student councils.

APPENDIX 3 – TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incident
relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber Bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identify-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

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9. Details of action taken

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Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____

APPENDIX 4 – 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 exclusive 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> ?		
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the Parents' Association?		
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?		
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?		
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?		
Has the policy documented the prevention and educational strategies that the school applies?		
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?		
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?		
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?		
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?		
Has the Board discussed who well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early state and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?		
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?		
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?		
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?		
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (b the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?		
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that requires further improvement?		
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?		

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Appendix 5: Anti-Bullying/Cyber-bullying Pledge – Parents

We, the parents of _____ agree to join together to stamp out bullying/cyber bullying at our school and in our homes.

We believe that every child in our school, regardless of colour, race, gender, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality should feel safe, secure and accepted and equally so at home while using any form of digital or interactive technologies. We understand that bullying is any “unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological, or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person or persons and which is repeated over time. We are aware of identity based bullying such as homophobic and racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s membership of the Traveller Community or those with a disability or special need. We understand that "Cyber bullying" is when a child, or teenager is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, or teenager using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. Bullying and cyber bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," "just teasing" or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying or cyber bullying.

By signing this pledge, we agree to:

1. Keep ourselves and their children informed and aware of school bullying/cyber bullying policies.
2. Work in partnership with the school to encourage positive behaviour, valuing differences and promoting sensitivity to others.
3. Discuss regularly with their children their feelings about school work, friendships and relationships.
4. Inform staff of changes in their children's behaviour or circumstances at home that may change a child's behaviour at school.
5. Alert staff if any bullying/cyber bullying has occurred.
6. Read the school's Anti- Bullying policy and agree to abide by same.

Signed by: _____

Date: _____

Anti-Bullying/Cyber-Bullying Pledge – For students from fourth class up.

I _____, agree to join together with all the pupils in Harold's Cross NS to stamp out bullying and cyber bullying at our school. I believe that everybody should feel safe, secure and happy in our school and equally so at home while on the Internet regardless of colour, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality.

I am aware that bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. "Cyber bullying" is when a child or teenager is tormented, threatened, , humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child or teenager using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. Bullying and cyber bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," or "just teasing". The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying or cyber bullying.

By signing this pledge, I agree to:

- Value student differences and treat others with respect.
- Not become involved in bullying or cyber bullying incidents or be a bully or cyber bully.
- Be aware of the school's policies and support system with regard to bullying/cyber bullying.
- Report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying/cyber bullying to a staff member.
- Be alert in places around the school where there is less adult supervision such as in toilets, corridors, stairs or field.
- Support children who have been or are subjected to bullying/cyber bullying.
- Talk to teachers and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying/cyber bullying.
- Work with other children and teachers, to help the school deal with bullying/cyber bullying effectively.
- Encourage teachers to discuss bullying/cyber-bullying issues in the classroom.
- Provide a good role model for younger children and support them if bullying/cyber bullying occurs.
- Participate fully and contribute to assemblies dealing with bullying/cyber bullying.
- I acknowledge that whether I am being a bullying/cyber bullying bully or see someone being bullied/cyber bullied, if I don't report or stop the bullying/cyber bullying, I am just as guilty.

Signed by: _____
Print name: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 6: Resources:

The Stay Safe Programme
The SALT Programme
Lesson Plans on anti-bullying

The Walk Tall Programme The RSE Programme
Kidscape Programme
The Alive-O Programme Bí Folláin

Books to read:

- “The Willow Street Kids” by Michelle Elliot (7-11), Piccola/Pan McM.
- “Willy the Wimp” by a. Browne (7-11), Metheun
- “Bully” by Yvonne Coppard, Random House
- “Feeling Happy, Feeling Safe” by Michelle Elliot (4-6), Holder & Stoughton
- “Bullies at School”, Blackie Children’s Books
- “Lord of the Flies” by William Gildong (12+), Faber & Faber
- “School Bully” by June Considine, Poolbeg
- “I knock on the Door” by Sean O’Casey.

Poems:

- “Wee Joe”
- “Back in the playground blues”

Further Resources:

- DVDs “Sticks and Stones” “Stand by Me”

Useful websites

www.spunout.ie

www.childnet.int.org

www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart

www.antibullying.net

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying

<http://ie.reachout.com>

www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395

www.abc.tcd.ie

www.chatdanger.com

www.sticksandstones.ie

www.kidpower.org

Appendix 6: Cyber Anti-Bullying Policy

Harold's Cross N.S. aims to ensure that its children feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. This school is committed to teaching children the knowledge and skills to be able to use ICT effectively, safely and responsibly. This policy takes account of recent guidelines from the Department of Education and Science in relation to anti-bullying in Primary and Post Primary schools.

AIMS OF POLICY:

- To ensure that pupils, staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be combated.
- To ensure that practices and procedures are agreed to prevent incidents of cyber-bullying
- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

UNDERSTANDING CYBER-BULLYING:

- Cyber bullying is the use of ICT (usually a mobile phone and or the internet) to abuse another person
- It can take place anywhere and involve many people.
- Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff and parents
- It can include threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, vilification, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorized publication of private information or images etc.
- While bullying involves a repetition of unwelcome behaviour the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013**, states:

2.1.3. *"In addition, in the context of these procedures 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."*

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. The more common types are:

1. **Text messages** – can be threatening or cause discomfort. Also included here is 'Bluejacking' (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using bluetooth wireless technology)
2. **Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras** – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
3. **Mobile phone calls** – silent calls, abusive messages or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible
4. **Emails** – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name
5. **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
6. **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger), Yahoo Chat or similar tools
7. **Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal 'own web space' sites such as You Tube, Facebook, Ask.fm, Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

Explanation of slang terms used when referring to cyber-bullying activity:

1. **'Flaming'**: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language
2. **'Harassment'**: Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages
3. **'Cyber Stalking'**: Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating or engaging in other on-line activities that make a person afraid for his or her own safety
4. **'Denigration'**: 'Dissing' someone online. Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about

a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships

5. '**Impersonation**': Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material online that makes someone look bad, gets her/him in trouble or danger, or damages her/his reputation or friendships
6. '**Outing and Trickery**': Tricking someone into revealing secret or embarrassing information which is then shared online.
- 7.
8. '**Exclusion**': Intentionally excluding someone from an on-line group, like a 'buddy list.'
- 9.

This list is not exhaustive and the terms used continue to change.

PROCEDURES TO PREVENT CYBER-BULLYING:

- Staff, pupils, parents and the Board of Management will be made aware of issues surrounding cyber bullying through the use of appropriate awareness-raising exercises/reporting procedures.
- Pupils will learn about cyber bullying in Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) classes, in assemblies, friendship week activities and other curriculum projects.
- The school will engage a speaker to facilitate a workshop on cyber-bullying for 5th and 6th classes annually.
- Pupils in fifth and sixth will engage in an educational programme focussing on Digital Citizenship.
- Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) will assist in learning about current technologies
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat cyber bullying.
- Senior pupils from fourth up will sign an Acceptable Use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) contract.
- Parents will be expected to sign an Acceptable Use of ICT contract prior to enrolment and to discuss its meaning with their children. In signing the AUP policy, they will be acknowledging that they have read the school's Anti- Bullying and Anti-Bullying Cyber Policies. They will also be acknowledging that they are aware that the legal age for children using Facebook is 13.
- The school will have safeguards/procedures in place with regard to internet/website access at school. Parents must realize that use outside school falls under parental responsibility.
- Each parent will be made aware that there may be risks and dangers associated with the use of social media if not properly supervised.
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report incidents of cyber bullying to the school where they have an impact on pupils within the school.
- All reports of cyber bullying will be investigated where possible, recorded and reports stored in the Principal's office.
- Procedures/sanctions in our school Anti-bullying Policy shall apply.
- The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content.

This policy was drawn up in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils, parents/guardians and members of the Board of Management.

Ratification: It was first ratified on March 25th, 2014.

Review: It has been reviewed on a yearly basis, most recently in 2021.

Advice for Pupils:

If you are being bullied by phone or on the Internet:

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online – if you are in a chat room, do not say where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you to build up a picture about you.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender
- There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, ie.reachout.com and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips.

Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning-off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number
- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider about this.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages.
- Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.
- Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Useful Websites

www.spunout.ie

www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying

www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395

www.chatdanger.co

www.sticksandstones.

www.childnet.int.org

www.antibullying.net

<http://ie.reachout.com>

www.abc.tcd.ie

www.kidpower.org

Information sites on Cyber-bullying

The following is a list of websites which offer practical advice on how to identify, deal with and prevent cyber-bullying.

<http://www.netsmartz.org/cyberbullying>

• <http://stopcyberbullying.org/about.html>

• <http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/cyberbullying.html>

• <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/teens/get-info/hot-topics/cyber-bullying.php>

• <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/13906802>

• <http://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/>

• <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Bullying/Pages/Cyberbullying.aspx>

• <http://www.barnardos.ie/resources-advice/young-people/teen-help/bullying/cyberbullying.html>

• <https://www.childline.ie/index.php/support/internet-safety/cyberbullying/1639>

• <http://www.webwise.ie/Cyberbullyingaguide.shtm>

