



# Holy Family School for the Deaf

Navan Road, Cabra, Dublin DO7

T: 01 838 0058 | F: 01 838 0230 | E: [info@holyfamilydeafschool.ie](mailto:info@holyfamilydeafschool.ie)

Principal: Eimear O'Rourke, M. Ed | Deputy Principal: Mr. Eugene Doyle

## ***Anti-Bullying Policy***

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 Holy Family School for the Deaf 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 and was formulated in co-operation with both teaching and non-teaching staff under the leadership of the Principal and in consultation with parents and pupils.

### **Rationale**

All members of the Holy Family school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring learning environment, which promotes personal growth and develops self-esteem. As outlined in Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2013- bullying behaviour, by its very nature undermines and dilutes the quality of education. Research shows that bullying can have short term 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.

The rationale of this policy is therefore to ensure effective procedures to deal with bullying behaviour in the context of a school ethos, which encourages respect, trust, caring, consideration and support for others.

### **Objectives:**

- to increase awareness among the members of the school community of the emotional distress caused by bullying.
- to develop an understanding of the need for all members of the school community to take responsibility for establishing an anti-bullying ethos in the school.
- to develop measures which will help prevent bullying incidents.
- to develop procedures for noting, reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- to develop measures for supporting pupils who are affected by bullying behaviour.

The Board of Management of Holy Family School recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and staff and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:



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- 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
- 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

1. **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.



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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 conduct.

**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 conduct.

## Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviours that can occur amongst pupils:

**Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

**Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviours take the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice or signs being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

**Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person; non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".

**Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviours and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.



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**Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

**Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviours. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

**Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

## **Bullying Behaviours which Holy Family School for the Deaf has identified as relevant to our context:**

### **General Bullying Behaviours**

- Name calling
- Mocking
- Exclusion – purposefully excluding someone from conversations etc
- Damage to property
- Insulting or offensive gestures or signs
- Spreading rumours
- Physical aggression
- Aggressive invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed

### **Specific Types of Bullying**

#### **Relational**

- Manipulating relationships as a means of bullying:
- Excluding from the group or isolating
- Taking someone's friends away
- Breaking confidence
- Ignoring
- "Bitching"



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- Spreading rumours and malicious gossip
- The "look"
- Use of derogatory terms

## Cyber Bullying

- **Exclusion:** Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- **Outing:** Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- **Harassment:** Repeatedly sending vicious, mean or upsetting messages to an individual
- **Abusive text messages**
- **Abusive communication** on social networks e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter etc.

## Homophobic and Transgender

- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian etc. used in a derogatory manner
- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation
- A combination of any of the types listed

## Race, Nationality, Ethnic Background and Membership of the Traveller Community

- Comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
- Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

## Sexual

- Harassment: Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching

## Special Educational Needs

- Name calling
- Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs
- Mimicking a person's disability

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in Holy Family School for the Deaf are as follows\*:

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**Early Intervention**  
T: 01 868 9910

**Primary**  
T: 01 868 9910

**Post Primary**  
T: 01 868 0058



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- Post Primary - the Class Tutor, the Deputy Principal, the School Counsellor and the Principal
- Primary – the Class Teacher, the Deputy Principal and/or the Co-ordinator, the School Counsellor and the Principal
- Early Intervention-the class Teacher, the Co-ordinator and the Principal

*\*see Appendix 1 & 2*

## **5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows;**

- Our school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying will take particular account of the needs of deaf pupils and pupils with additional SEN with regard to the choice of programmes and how they are implemented.
- A school wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping in relation to identity based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources.
- School wide awareness training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s), guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues. Student use of communication technology will be monitored and students will not be allowed to use communication technology unless a teacher is present.



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- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Conduct of the school.
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per term/per year) whole school awareness measures and weekly assemblies by the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but acting responsibly.
- The school will implement prevention and awareness raising measures which deal specifically with cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying includes communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons. Cyber-bullying includes the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone. Prevention and awareness raising measures will focus on educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying.

## Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE, the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme provides opportunities to explore areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying.

## Links to other policies

School policies that are particularly relevant to bullying include the Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct and the Attendance and Complaints Procedure, IT Policy and Supervision Policy.

**6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows**

**Procedures for dealing with cases of bullying behaviours:**

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**Early Intervention**  
T: 01 868 9910

**Primary**  
T: 01 868 9910

**Post Primary**  
T: 01 868 0058



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- (i) Claims of bullying of a pupil must be brought, in the first instance, to the relevant class teacher. At primary level this will be the class teacher and at post-primary level this will be the Class Tutor. If another pupil in the school is involved, 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 to apportion blame).
- (ii) 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; he/she will discuss the matter with the School Counsellor and Principal or Deputy Principal to arrange for appropriate supports for that pupil.
- (iii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- (iv) All school personnel will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- (v) 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.
- (vi) Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- (vii) Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- (viii) 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 and may be asked for their version of events.
- (ix) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will 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.
- (x) If a group is involved, each member will, where practicable, be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- (xi) If necessary, the group will be supported by the teacher in dealing with the possible pressures that they may face after interview.





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(xii) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s); this will be done at the teacher's discretion and taking pupil ages into account.

**It is very important from the outset that all involved, including each set of pupils and their parents, understand the approach outlined above.**

(xiii) 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.

(xiv) It should be made clear to the pupil how she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

(xv) It will 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, her parents and the school.

(xvi) 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. This can have a therapeutic effect.

(xvii) 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 will be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at **Appendix 1**.

(xviii) 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;*

(xx) Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Complaints Procedures.



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(xxi) 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. Support for Students who have been bullied or who bully.

- Both bully and bullied will be monitored by their class tutors as part of the Pastoral Care system.
- Assertiveness training for pupils who have been bullied, as part of S.H.P.E. programme. Planning of activities to promote self-esteem, friendship and social skills e.g. role play, trips, projects.
- If appropriate, in-school counselling will be provided.
- The principal may, with the permission of parents, contact the health boards or the Department of Education Psychological services for further support.
- Leaflets and web sites with advice for students who are being bullied, and their parents.

## 8. Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

- (i) 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.
- (ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. An example of a recording sheet used for this purpose Appendix 2.
- (iii) The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 2** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
  - b) where the bullying takes the form of physical aggression, intimidation, damage to property or extortion. In such circumstances, the bullying will be reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal.



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In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at **Appendix 2** must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at **Appendix 2** does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

*Following allegations by a pupil or parent that another child/children has/have been bullying their child and where - following investigation by the school it transpires that bullying incidents cannot be proven to have taken place and/or where the pupil or parent who made the allegation retracts it - the child/children who have been accused of bullying will receive an apology from the child who made the unproven allegation. Every effort will be made by the school to restore the classroom and school working relations between the pupils concerned in such incidents, so that the normal routine of the class can be resumed as quickly as possible. Such routine enables an environment that supports learning and helps each child succeed both academically and socially in school.*

## 8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

## 9. 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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. The Principal will provide a report at each Board of Management meeting setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported to the Principal or deputy Principal since the previous report to the Board.



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- confirmation that all of these cases have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and these procedures.

13. 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.



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## Appendix 3 Directory of Support Services and Useful Websites

Anti-Bullying Centre	(01) 6082573
CAB – Campaign Against Bullying	(01) 2887976
Childline Freephone	1800 666660
Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy	(01) 2300061
ISPCC	(01) 6794944
The National Association for Parents Support (NAPS)	(0502) 20598
Parentline (Parents under Stress)	(01) 8733500
Samaritans (Callsave)	1850 609090
Sticks and Stones Theatre Company	(01) 2807065
Trinity College Dublin – Anti-Bullying Research Centre	(01) 6601011
Victim Support	1800 661771

Bullying @ school information – [www.scrc.ac.uk/bully](http://www.scrc.ac.uk/bully)

Bullying information on Bullying Child/Parents/Teachers [www.lfcc.on.ca/bully](http://www.lfcc.on.ca/bully)

Bullying in schools [www.ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/banks97](http://www.ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/banks97)

What Parents should know about Bullying – [www.accesseric.org/resources/parent/bully](http://www.accesseric.org/resources/parent/bully)

Anti-Bullying Campaign Tools for Teachers - [www.antibullyingcampaign.ie](http://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie)



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