

Mid West School for the Deaf

www.midwestschoolforthe deaf.com



Mid West School for the Deaf
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Anti-Bullying Policy 2021 2022

Rationale

The role of the Mid West School for the Deaf is to provide the highest possible standard of education for all its pupils and students. A stable secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour by its nature undermines and dilutes the quality of education. Research shows that bullying 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.

As such, it is an issue which must be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school-based measures and strategies, through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour.

Bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved, it affects everyone in the classroom, in the school community and ultimately in the wider community. It is recognised internationally that bullying behaviour is not confined to pupils in schools alone; it is prevalent in society, in the workplace and in the home. Parents and pupils have a particularly important role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere. In this document, any reference(s) to parent(s) can be taken to refer also to guardian(s) where applicable.

International research clearly indicates the crucial importance of the existence of and implementation of a school policy setting out the school's approach to preventing and tackling bullying. An anti-bullying policy, when developed and implemented across the school community can be the cornerstone in countering bullying behaviour in schools.

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 all schools are required to have in place a code of behaviour. The Act requires that this code must be prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). The NEWB's publication "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" was issued to schools in 2008. In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 and the guidelines issued by the NEWB, all schools are required to have an anti-bullying policy within the framework of their overall code of behaviour.

Aims

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils and whole school community.
 - To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
 - To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
 - To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
 - To facilitate ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy.
 - To implement support for those affected by bullying, for those involved in bullying and for staff dealing with this issue.
 - To work with local agencies in countering bullying behaviour.
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1. 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 the Mid West School for the Deaf school has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.
 2. The Board of Management of the Mid West School for the Deaf 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.

3. 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.

It must also be recognised that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or may not recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others.

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.

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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", belittling or mocking • The production, display or circulation of written words,
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	<p>pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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/Ask.fm/ Twitter/YouTube, class Dojo, MS Teams 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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" • Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: the Principal, Deputy Principal and all class teachers.

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy. In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". The relevant teacher will normally be the class teacher. The relevant teacher will liaise with the Principal to determine if negative behaviour is to be classed as bullying.

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

A school-wide approach

- 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, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils 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 develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, toilets, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- 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 Behaviour of the school.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. Hero of the Week award every week, annual Friendship Week, regular school assemblies by principal.
- Encourage a culture of **telling**, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.: speak to the class teacher in private. This can be modelled in drama, SPHE and CSPE classes.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the relevant teacher with any concerns if they think their child is being bullied. In instances where the child states that the relevant teacher is accused of bullying, the teacher should contact the school Principal.
- All children and staff will be reminded of the school's Acceptable Use Policy which outlines the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of deaf pupils and pupils with additional SEN with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from programmes deemed suitable by staff for deaf pupils and pupils with additional needs.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Relational aggression, Cyber Bullying, Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying, and Interculturalism.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE programmes at primary and post- primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

Links to other policies

- The following policies are also relevant to the Anti-Bullying policy: Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance policy and Complaints Procedure.

Responsibilities of Our School Community

All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

Responsibilities of the Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The Board is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The Board will ensure that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

Responsibilities of School Staff

- To acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the school
- To implement prevention and intervention strategies which build and maintain safe learning environment for the whole school community
- To empower students to deal with conflict in constructive ways
- To take all reports of bullying seriously and to report them to the Principal if warranted
- To document any serious bullying incidents using the Bullying Incident Report Form
- Engage thoroughly on Anti Bullying Week each year

Responsibilities of Pupils

- To show consideration, respect and support towards others
- To be able to identify bullying behaviour
- To not bully others
- To tell if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied
- To engage in responsible reporting when witnessing or experiencing bullying behaviour
- To develop a sense of empathy for targeted members of the school community and as a result take safe and sensible action as a bystander

Responsibilities of Parents

- To support the school in the implementation of the policy
- To watch out for signs that their child may be being bullied
- To speak to the class teacher if their child is being bullied or they suspect that this is happening
- To speak to the class teacher as soon as they are aware that issues are arising which are affecting their child
- To instruct their children to tell if they are being bullied or if they have seen other pupils being bullied
- To notify the school if they think that their child is displaying bullying behaviour and to work with the school in addressing this problem. They should not defer letting the school know of any issue, in the hope that the problem will go away
- To abide by the school's Acceptable Use Policy
- To ensure that if their children are online that they are using social media in a safe and responsible manner; parental supervision is very important in this area as there are risks associated with internet/website access
- To never directly approach a student, or the parent of a student, to intervene in behavioural issues

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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

The primary aim 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);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher in consultation with the Principal will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner. Each teacher has a copy of Restorative Practice Questions in their anti-bullying pack: 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What have you thought about since? 4. Who has been affected and in what way? 5. How could things have been done differently?
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. The relevant teacher will help the individual student to write their account of what happened before attending the group session. This will support our pupils who have language difficulties. 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 may face them from the other members of the group after the 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the 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 parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

Informal

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

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 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. These records

are to be kept in hardback notebooks with the relevant teacher's plans. The Deputy Principal and Principal must have access to these notes at any time.

Formal -Appendix 1 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 1** 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 school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. This record will be kept in a file in the Principal's office. The relevant teacher, Deputy Principal and Principal will have access to these files. The files will be retained for a period of 5 years from the date when the matter has been considered closed with all involved.

It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 1 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.

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

The Mid West School for the Deaf takes a proactive stance on preventing the occurrence of bullying behaviour through the use of programmes such as Hero of the Week, the Golden Ticket programme, Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Healthy Minds, Friends for Life, Fun Friends and My Friends Youth. Given the varying language and cognitive levels among our cohort of pupils, the needs of each individual will be assessed and supported differently should a case of bullying occur. Supports will be employed for both the pupils who experience bullying and also for those who engage in bullying behaviour. The school has identified a number of strategies, interventions and resources which can be employed when required. Below is a list of some selected approaches which may be used in these scenarios (this list is not exhaustive):

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
- Mindfulness (and Meditation)
- Positive Affirmations and Self-Affirmations
- Counselling
- Input from NEPS Psychologists
- Circle Time
- Team-building exercises
- Self-esteem Building Exercises such as those from the Walk Tall Programme
- Drama – modelling, role-playing etc.
- NDCS Healthy Minds Programme

See Appendix 2 for further practical tips.

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 of The Midwest School for the Deaf 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. (See Appendix 5)

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 8th of May 2014. It is reviewed annually. The most recent review was on the 11th of November 2021
11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
12. 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 readily accessible to parents and pupils on request 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: _____



(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____



(Principal)

Date: _____

11/11/2021

Date: _____

11/11/2021

Date of next review: **November 2022**

Appendix 1 Template for recording bullying behaviour



1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

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.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- 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.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- 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.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, toilets, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - 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.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Appendix 3 Directory of Support Services and Useful Websites

Anti-Bullying Centre	(01) 700 9139
Childline Freephone	1800 666 666
Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy	(01) 230 3536
ISPCC	(01) 234 2000
National Parents Council (NPC)	(01) 887 4477
Parentline (Parents under Stress)	1890 927 277
Samaritans	(01) 671 0071
Sticks and Stones Theatre Company	(01) 901 5199

Anti Bullying Centre – www.antibullyingcentre.ie

Childline - Bullying, Abuse, Safety & your Rights www.childline.ie/bullying-abuse-safety-and-your-rights/

Online bullying – www.webwise.ie

Bullying in schools information – www.bully4u.ie

Information for students, parents and teachers - www.tacklebullying.ie

Parents Coping with Bullying
www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Parents_Coping_with_Bullying_d3.pdf

What Parents should know about Bullying – [www.schooldays.ie/articles/bullying](http://www schooldays.ie/articles/bullying)

Anti-Bullying Campaign Tools for Teachers - www.antibullyingcampaign.ie

Programmes for Parents – www.sticksandstones.ie

National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (you must join as a member to access supports. Supports mentioned here are for the UK but there is good general advice on this site)
www.NDCS.org.uk

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 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?	Yes
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? <i>Responsibilities for Staff, BOM + Parents</i>	Yes
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	immediate. <i>Completed</i>

Signed *[Signature]*
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 11/11/21

Signed *[Signature]*
Principal

Date 11th Nov 2021

contact list updated

Appendix 5 Steps for Parents that suspect bullying:

If you believe your child is the target of bullying follow these steps:

1. Contact their teacher to let them know your concerns.
2. Allow a teacher time to conduct an investigation and gather facts.
3. After a teacher has conducted an investigation a report is made and if bullying is taking place the school will deliberate a course of action.
4. If no resolution is found or is unresolved it is escalated to the Deputy Principal or Principal of the school
5. If you as a parent are not content with this you may wish to write to the schools Board of Management.
6. If no resolution is found or you are not happy with the course of action a school takes you may wish to contact the Ombudsman for Children.

Appendix 6 Sexual Orientation – Advice for Primary Schools

General points

- Schools can foster a culture that is accepting of difference. This can be expressed where appropriate, rather than making the assumption that everyone understands it.
- An integral part of RSE is learning to respect others; this will include respect for families or individuals who are different from the norm.
- The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 provide protection against discrimination on nine grounds, one of which is sexual orientation. The Acts oblige those who manage schools to protect students and staff from discrimination or sexual harassment.
- If children are using the word 'gay' in a negative fashion it is better not to ignore it in the hope that it will go away. The same advice would apply for any instance of bullying.
- Schools are advised to develop a strategy for responding to children who have questions about sexual orientation or who are taunting others about being gay. This should be done in the context of the school's ethos and RSE policy and with the awareness that primary school children are probably too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity.

Practical suggestions

- Depending on the context and the age group of the children, the teacher could ask a child or a class group what they mean by the word 'gay'
- A school could decide on a response to this question, such as 'The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay.'
- To give factual information like this in an open and straightforward way may help to remove the secrecy which is necessary for any bullying to flourish.
- Homophobic insults should be treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable.

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

To: Staff and Parents

The Board of Management of Mid West School for the Deaf wishes to inform you that:

o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 11th of November 2021.

o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in [Appendix 4](#) of the Department's

Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Signed 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 11/11/2021

Signed 
Principal

Date 11/11/2021