

Table of Contents

Anti-Bullying Policy	2
Mission Statement.....	2
Purpose of the Policy	2
The Definition of Bullying.....	2
When the policy applies.....	3
Types of Bullying.....	3
Physical Bullying	3
Identity Based Bullying	4
Cyber Bullying.....	4
Relational Bullying.....	4
Potential Teacher Behaviour(s)	5
Our Positive School Policy on Countering Bullying.....	5
Preventative Strategies.....	6
Whole School Approach	6
Parental Support	7
Staff Support	7
Student Support	7
Procedures and Interventions	7
Reporting Procedures.....	8
Investigation Procedures.....	8
If Bullying is deemed to have occurred	9
Conclusion of the intervention.....	9
Student Involvement	9
The Rights of Students with Respect to Bullying	10
The responsibilities of Students who witness incidents of bullying	10
School Involvement	10
Conclusion	11
Appendix 1: Our Lady’s Grove Student Community Charter	12
Appendix 2: Template for recording bullying behaviour	13
Appendix 3 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy.....	14
Appendix 4 Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy.....	16
Appendix 5 OLG Parents’ Charter on Anti-bullying	17
Appendix 6 Sociogram Template.....	18
Appendix 7 List of supports.....	20
Appendix 8 Parental Confirmation	21

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement

Our Lady's Grove Secondary School is a Catholic Community in keeping with the educational philosophy of St. Claudine Thevenet and the stated ethos of the school. We are committed to providing a quality education in pursuit of excellence. We endeavour to provide a teaching and learning environment which encourages the school community to develop to its full potential cognisant of all its talents and skills. We aim to work together in a safe, respectful, caring and just environment. We value the principles of mutual respect, equality and tolerance encouraging positive self-image, confidence and pride in all achievements.

Purpose of the 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 Our Lady's Grove Secondary 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.

Bullying is contrary to the ethos of Our Lady's Grove as expressed in our Mission Statement. Everyone in our school community has a right to a safe, inclusive, learning and working environment and we are all responsible for ensuring that each person is valued, listened to and protected. Bullying undermines and is detrimental to the well-being of the whole school community. We do not accept it and we take action if bullying occurs. Our school atmosphere is characterised by understanding, respect, inclusiveness, and equality.

The Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, psychological, physical, or otherwise, conducted by an individual or group against another or others. This may be carried out offline, online or employing a combination of both. When behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour while not bullying will also not be condoned in our school.

Oppression of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons may be bullying even if it only happens on one occasion.

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

- A 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 students and
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy

When the policy applies

- During school day including breaktimes
- While in school uniform
- During school-based activities
- During school activities off site
- Any behaviour of a bullying nature that impacts on student’s participation in school.
- School reserves right to apply policy at location, activity, function or programme non-school related where the alleged bullying incident has created a hostile environment in the school.

Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

- Intimidation
- Assault
- Extortion
- Insulting and/or offensive gestures

- Damage to personal property
- Unwanted invasion of personal space

Relational Bullying

- Exclusion
- Rumour spreading
- Staring at (Dirty Looks)
- Making hurtful comments
- Insincere laughter
- Inciting conflict within a group

Identity Based Bullying

- Homophobic bullying
- Racist bullying
- Ethnic group membership bullying
- Disability bullying
- SEN Bullying

This includes, but is not limited to prejudicial behaviour, unwanted undermining comments, mimicking, using a second language to exclude, ridicule and/or rumour spreading.

Cyber Bullying

- Rumour spreading
- Harassment
- Impersonation
- Soliciting (Seeking compromising images or information)
- Outing of personal information
- Exclusion
- Stalking
- Abusive communication

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 our school's Code of Behaviour.

Placing a once-off offensive/hurtful/undermining message on a public forum where that message can be viewed repeatedly will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

In conjunction with the school, Parents/Guardians should remind their children that the internet is not a private place and remind them of the four characteristics of Digital Media:

1. It is searchable: Anyone, anytime, anywhere can find it
2. It is forever: Anyone can find it today, tomorrow, thirty years from now
3. It is copyable: once they find it they can copy it, share it and change it
4. It has a global invisible audience: You cannot tell who is sharing your pages. Even if your page is private, you have no control over what "friends" will do with it. (From Integrating Internet Safety into Teaching + Learning, NCTE)

If a student encounters cyberbullying the following are the steps to take:

- *Inform your parent/guardian or a trusted adult.*
- *Do not retaliate. This feeds into cyberbullying and could make other people think you are part of the problem.*
- *Block the bully from your site. Change your password and contact details.*
- *Save the evidence (screen shot). Keep a record of every message but do not reply to any bullying messages.*
- *Show or give the record of the bullying messages to your parent/guardian.*

If the cyberbullying persists or gets worse, your parent/guardian can:

- *File a complaint with the website, ISP, or mobile phone company. There is generally a link on the website's homepage for reporting concerns.*
- *Contact the Gardai if the cyberbullying includes any threats.*

Potential Teacher Behaviour(s)

A teacher may, unwittingly or otherwise, engage in, instigate or reinforce bullying behaviour in a number of ways:

- Using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language when addressing a student; making negative comments about a student's appearance or background
- Humiliating directly or indirectly any student, specifically one who is considered vulnerable.
- Not being vigilant to any change in class atmosphere or behaviour

Our Positive School Policy on Countering Bullying

Staff Members share a joint responsibility, under the direction of the Principal to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community. Comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures, through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation, are in place to ensure a safe and secure environment for our students. A high degree of collective vigilance is needed throughout the school community if bullying behaviour is to be identified and dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.

Vigilance is concerned with identifying the following indicators of bullying as they potentially manifest themselves in our students:

- Psychological and Emotional (Anger panic, fear)
- Physical (Headaches, self-harm, sleep deprivation)
- Social and Interpersonal (Becoming withdrawn, avoidance)
- School related (Lates, school refusal etc)

Preventative Strategies

Whole School Approach

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):

- Our school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance, inclusivity and understanding among all its members, both in school and out of school
- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment and it is our intention to prevent rather than control bullying
- Each class takes place in an atmosphere of respect and teachers are aware of maintaining vigilance for any sign of a change to this respectful atmosphere.
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, mutual respect, self-discipline, responsibility and courtesy within the school community
- Students are made aware of Bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour during their induction programme in first year and through programmes such as SPHE and in their pastoral care classes
- As part of the national SPHE curriculum we target issues relating to identity based bullying
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming students' attitudes and values. As self-esteem is the single most influential factor in determining behaviour, teachers provide students with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth

- The school's Wellbeing Board promotes a range of activities and celebrations to champion inclusivity and belonging.
- 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.
- Counselling services are available
- The school employs the "Sociogram" strategy annually in junior years and in other years as required.

Parental Support

- Our school recognises the right of parents/guardians to share in the task of equipping the students with a range of life skills
- Our school recognises the need to promote cooperation and communication between school and home to consolidate relationships within the school community and to keep parents/guardians informed and where necessary involved in procedures

Staff Support

- Opportunities are provided to staff for professional learning in relation to anti-bullying. The school is registered with the Fuse Programme in DCU. This provides access to professional development and fourteen anti-bullying ready-made class resources.

Student Support

- Student Support groups meet regularly involving Year heads, Senior Leadership, Guidance Counsellor and SENCO.
- Student leadership including our Council, Prefects, Mentors and Class Captains are regularly canvassed on anti-bullying measures.
- Acceptable User Policy is signed by all students at the beginning of every year.
- All pertinent policies are published in the students' School Journal and on the school's website.
- Students are encouraged to identify "one safe adult" in the building at the start of each year.
- Induction is organised for all year groups at the start of the academic year with a specific focus on the promotion of interpersonal relationships.
- Students experience visits from An Garda Siochanna in relation to personal security and cyber bullying.
- Peer mentoring involving prefects and mentors is employed.
- The school specifically considers the needs of SEN students in the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to interact appropriately.

Procedures and Interventions

Reporting Procedures

- The student who is being bullied **must** tell someone. The student should talk to someone the student feels comfortable in telling i.e., their Dean, Year Head, Class Tutor, Principal, Deputy Principal, a Staff member, their Parents/guardians, a Prefect, or a senior student
- The person to whom the incident has been reported should refer to the relevant Dean/Year Head as the Dean/Year Head should be informed
- The staff member who has been informed, may talk to the student(s) involved and document the incident. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers

In cases of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should be raised with the staff member in the first instance and if necessary, with the principal.

Investigation Procedures

- Teachers will take a logical, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents/ guardians. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour answers to questions of what, where, when, who, why, will be sought. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict, in a non-aggressive manner. Written records of all incidents must be kept and submitted to senior leadership.
- Parents/Guardians are requested to engage with all parties as per our *Parents Charter on Anti-Bullying*. This is listed at Appendix 1.
- These incidents will be investigated in private, away from the classroom.
- The teacher will speak separately to the students involved, to get both sides of the story. If a group of students are involved, each member will be interviewed individually and asked to give a written account of what happened.
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned
- Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way
- All students involved will provide a written report of the incident
- The Deputy Principal will be informed
- Parents/Guardians may be requested to sign a photocopy of their child's incident report
- The Deputy Principal /Dean will contact the parents/guardians of all involved as quickly as possible
- The Guidance Counsellor may act as a support for all involved at any of the above stages

If Bullying is deemed to have occurred

- The relevant staff member must complete the bullying form below at Appendix 2 and submit to the Deputy Principal.
- The school will employ restorative practice/justice as the primary strategy for dealing with situations where bullying has occurred.
- If it is concluded that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them how the student is in breach of our Code of Behaviour and the student will be asked to try to see the situation from the victim's point of view. The student will be instructed to cease this unacceptable behaviour immediately.
- If a party feels unable to take part in restorative practice an adult proxy will be used to participate on their behalf. The adult proxy will communicate the experience of the aggrieved individual and will inform them of the alleged perpetrator's responses.
- Reporters and those accused will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation
- Parents/Guardians of both parties involved will be informed of the situation and the actions taken by the school will be explained to them. They will be asked to reinforce or support the actions taken by the school
- If the incidents continue parents/guardians will be asked to come to the school to discuss the situation with the Year Head/ Deputy Principal. At this meeting counselling or other intervention will be suggested to bring about a resolution to the situation

Conclusion of the intervention

Our aim is to bring about a change in behaviour, so bullying does not re occur. The wellbeing of our students is of paramount importance to us.

- At the completion of the school-based intervention, parents/guardians will be asked to indicate in writing that the school has intervened in the situation.
- If there are any further incidents after parents/guardians have met with the Year Head/ Deputy then further meetings will take place with the Principal where suspension or in exceptional circumstances expulsion may be discussed
- The Guidance Counsellor/Year head will meet with the students after a period of time to ensure that bullying has ceased.
- The Counsellor may meet with individuals to provide support for students affected by bullying.
- In the case of cyberbullying that may happen in the school, if the person responsible for the content is known, the student will be asked to remove it and their parents/guardians will be informed. If it continues it will be reported to the social networking site. A record of the cyberbullying will be kept as evidence and may ultimately be reported to the Gardai

Student Involvement

Bullying is not accepted or tolerated in our school. Students are a powerful channel of change and learning not to accept bullying and how to deal with bullying, if it occurs, is a life skill.

Students have a duty to make school and class a safe and happy place, which is inclusive of all.

The Bully

It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour. It is also of note that many bullies suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem. It is not uncommon to find that students who engage in bullying behaviour have been bullied themselves.

The Victim

Students are most at risk of becoming victims if they react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour is directly related to the victims continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression. It is imperative that any incident of bullying is reported as soon as possible so that it may be addressed quickly.

The Rights of Students with Respect to Bullying

- The right not to be bullied
- The right to report if bullied
- The right of a student to report that the student feels another/others is/are being bullied
- The right to be listened to in a sensitive and discreet way
- The right to expect a response
- The right to know about, understand and have access to a clear, defined procedure for dealing with bullying
- The right of both the alleged bully and victim to be heard

The responsibilities of Students who witness incidents of bullying

Students should realise that they have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of fellow students. If any student is aware that bullying is taking place the student/they have a responsibility to tell someone who is in a position to help e.g. Dean, Year Head, Class Tutor, staff member Parents/guardians, Prefects or senior students. Every student has the right to feel secure and safe for having the initiative to report, even if what the student reports turns out not to be bullying, the student has acted correctly.

School Involvement

A classroom atmosphere of discipline, based on mutual respect, courtesy and cooperation is created by teachers in all classes. Teachers are also aware of the importance of vigilance and monitoring, not only in class, but also going to or from classrooms and during breaks. Teachers have collective responsibility for ensuring our environment is a safe place for our students. In addition, school-based initiatives will reinforce positive behaviour and certain programmes such as SPHE and pastoral care reinforce appropriate behaviour.

Conclusion

At the centre of our whole school response to bullying is the creation of a positive school climate which focuses on respect for the individual. We all have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of each other. It is important that we have a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and those involved in bullying behaviour if this occurs. Our school policy on anti-bullying is an influential measure in countering inappropriate or bullying behaviour as all partners in education i.e. students, teachers and parents/guardians have cooperated in its formulation.

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 students or staff or the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds, specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents School Association (PSA) . A Copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Le Chéile if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the PSA. a record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested to Le Chéile and the Department.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in September 2020

Signed: _____

Chairperson BOM

Date _____

Date of next review _____

Signed: _____

Principal

Appendix 1: Our Lady's Grove Student Community Charter

School is about learning and personal development. These are our priorities as an educational community. This learning and development is done in groups and classes. Our ethos demands that the social interactions in our school are "familial". This means that you should feel like you do at home with your family:

- Safe
- Secure
- Cared for/Supported
- Accepted/Included

All students should treat others in the way that they would expect to be treated themselves.

- There should be no name calling
- There should be no physical abuse
- There should be no exclusion or 'isolation' of fellow students
- Everyone should be treated with respect
- Property should be respected Problems should be shared

Of course even in our families there are people who we do not always get along with. We can also have a bad day. There is however no excuse for not being cordial, non-confrontational and empathetic to others lived experience. Repeated behaviour against the principles of this document would be considered bullying and will be dealt with accordingly. If evidence of actions contrary to the principles of this document comes to our attention it will be dealt with in the most serious manner.

We the undersigned commit to the principles of this document and promise to behave in a manner that is caring and supportive to all of our fellow students.

Signed by Student: _____

We the undersigned commit to the principles of the Parents Anti-Bullying Charter

Signed by Parent/Guardian _____

Appendix 2: Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of student being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class: _____

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

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

Student concerned	
Other Student	
Parent/Guardian	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Sportsgrounds	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression	
Damage to Property	
Isolation/Exclusion	
Name Calling	

Cyber-bullying	
Intimidation	
Malicious Gossip	
Other (specify)	

7. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-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**

9. **Details of actions taken**

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____

Appendix 3 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy

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> ?	
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 education 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 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?	
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 (by 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 require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal

Appendix 4 Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of _____ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].
- 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 _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal

Appendix 5 OLG Parents' Charter on Anti-bullying

We as Parents/Guardians:

- Accept that there are multiple perspectives to a bullying situation.
- Accept that our strategy in a bullying situation is formative and restorative, rather than punitive.
- Accept that as adults we must assist the school in restoring calm to the situation.
- Will concentrate on co-operation with the school authorities in seeking a solution to the bullying problem.
- Will, as far as is practicable, supervise our children's use of cyber platforms which can facilitate bullying. (For younger students Our Lady's Grove strongly urges parents not to permit them access to social networking sites).
- Will, as far as is practicable, record cyber material relating to a bullying incident.
- Will work to inform/educate our children about behaviour that could be interpreted by others as being of a bullying nature.

Appendix 6 Sociogram Template

Are you happy with the atmosphere in your class?

Who are your friends?

Are you being treated in a way that you do not like?

Is there anyone in the class being picked on or having a hard time?

Is anyone being left out or ignored?

Is there anyone spreading rumours or gossip, or using notes, phone calls or text messages to make others feel bad about themselves?

Is anyone being unfair to others?

Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?

Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in the class a hard time?

Can you give examples?

Who do you think is causing the problem?

What can you do to help students who are having a hard time?

Have you been treating other students in a way that you would not like to be treated?

Appendix 7 List of supports

Jigsaw www.jigsaw.ie free and confidential mental health service

Pieta House www.pieta.ie one to one counselling for young people at risk of self harm and suicide

Barnardos www.barnardos.ie Work with vulnerable children and families

Samaritans: Free Phone 116 123

CAHMS Child and Adolescent Mental Health: referral through GP Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Crosscare Teen Counselling: www.crosscare.ie

Aware: www.aware.ie support for those who experience anxiety, depression or mood disorder.

St. Patricks Mental Health Service: www.stpatricks.ie info@stpatsmail.com

Appendix 8 Parental Confirmation

Parental Confirmation that an alleged incident of bullying behaviour was investigated by the School.

I confirm that the alleged incident of bullying behaviour was investigated by the school according to the OLG Anti-bullying Policy.

Signed _____
Parent/Guardian

Date _____

I am satisfied with the outcome of the investigation

Yes ____

No ____

If No please state reasons for dissatisfaction
