

# SCOIL BAILE AN DROICHID

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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### ***Statement on Bullying:***

- Every person in the School is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- The School will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- The matter will be dealt with seriously.
- The School has a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied.
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

### **1. INTRODUCTION:**

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 Bridgetown National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

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

The *aims* of Scoil Baile an Droichid's Anti-Bullying policy are to:

- raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- develop procedures for noting, investigating, reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

## **2. KEY PRINCIPLES OF BEST PRACTICE**

The Board of Management is fully committed to the following 9 key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

***(a) 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
- promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members
- identifies aspects of the curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values

***(b) Effective leadership***

- The Principal has a key role in dealing with bullying behaviour in school.
- The principal and teachers strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable.
- Both staff and pupils are involved in developing and implementing a vision of the school where diversity is accepted and celebrated.
- The Principal and teachers will act as good role-models and not misuse their authority. They will ensure to be fair, firm, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.
- Parents will also be expected to model the standards that pupils are asked to respect

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

- A school-wide approach (involving school management, staff, parents and pupils) in dealing with the problem of bullying behaviour is a key element of effective practice in our school.
- In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils have a 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.
- Parents should also recognise that a school that openly discusses bullying is acting positively and that they need to work with their school to ensure there is a coherent, school-wide approach to tackling the issue.
- In certain cases, it may be necessary for the school to seek the assistance of local persons and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE social workers, community workers, Gardaí etc.

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

- The school strives to ensure that all relevant members of the school community have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour.
- The definition of bullying, the various types of bullying behaviour and the impacts of bullying is communicated and explained to the school community through the school newsletter, school website, school information meetings and through the Parents Association.

***(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) See point 6***

The school will implement strategies that will:

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- ensure effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

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

The school will ensure that all pupils are supervised and monitored. (See point 9)

***(g) Supports for staff***

All members of the school staff have a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy. They are encouraged to become familiar with the policy and to ensure its consistent application. Temporary and substitute staff will be made aware of the school's code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy by the principal/deputy-principal.

***(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour***

- A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school.
- The individual class teacher or relevant teacher has a responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying.
- The relevant teachers in Bridgetown NS are the individual class teachers
- Teachers on yard duty also have a role in dealing with bullying

***(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy***

- Our school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in light of bullying behaviour encountered.
- There will be a periodic examination of the prevention and implementation strategies in place.
- Analysis of bullying behaviour reports will be conducted by the principal and deputy principal. This analysis will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management

### **3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying
- 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.

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.

#### 4. TYPES OF BULLYING AND BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

##### Examples of bullying behaviours

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Persistent name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group</li> <li>• Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>• "Bitching"</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b></p> <p><b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>• Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

## 5. IMPACT AND INDICATORS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Pupils who are being bullied, who witness bullying and who engage in bullying behaviour all face impacts and consequences as a result of the bullying behaviour.

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy;
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

### ***Characteristics associated with bullying:***

It is important to recognise that any pupil can be bullied or can engage in bullying behaviour.

The pupil who engages in bullying behaviour:

- A significant proportion of bullying is not merely behavioural but is rooted in a lack of respect for diversity and in social inequalities. "Prejudice-based" or "identity-based" bullying can be a significant factor in bullying behaviour.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self-discipline. They may lack any sense of remorse
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour can be attention seeking
- It is of note that pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour often suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem.
- 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.
- It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may also have been bullied themselves.

The pupil who is bullied:

- Any pupil through no fault of their own may be a target of bullying.
- It is common in the course of normal interaction for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour.
- The pupils who are at risk of being bullied are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner.
- Pupils who are bullied often experience difficulties in speaking up about the bullying

More vulnerable pupils:

- It is known that some children may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying.
- Such vulnerable groups include pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, those from ethnic minority and migrant groups, pupils from the Traveller community, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) pupils and those perceived to be LGBT and pupils of minority religious faiths.
- There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying amongst pupils with special educational needs and particularly those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating.

### ***Where does bullying happen?***

Bullying can happen anywhere at any time but there are certain times and places which particularly facilitate bullying.

**Cyber-bullying:** Access to technology means that cyber-bullying can happen around the clock and the pupil's home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Pupils are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. While cyber bullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

**Areas of unstructured activity:** Bullying in schools may take place in the schoolyard. Toilets, corridors and the halla may be the scene of bullying and behaviour is monitored in those areas.

**Classroom:** Bullying may also take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks and sniggers but may take the more overt form of physical intimidation.

**Coming to and from school:** The area immediately outside the school, the local shops and local neighbourhood are often the scenes of bullying. Bullying can also take place at the bus-stop or on the journey to and from school whether the individuals are walking, cycling or on school buses.

## **6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

The education and prevention strategies that may be used by our school are as follows:

### **School-wide approach**

- A school-wide approach will be used to foster 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. Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop 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 for all staff as required
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians 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 to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school: to be discussed regularly and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school. A copy is also available on the school's website.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week; parent/guardian seminars; regular student surveys; regular school assemblies by principal, deputy 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.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time e.g. after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Thoughts and feelings box
  - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol involved in this is very clear. Parents/guardians must make an appointment to meet their child's class teacher to discuss concerns or suspicions they may have and do so at an early stage if possible
- The school has developed an Acceptable Use Policy in the school. It includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- The school Mobile Phone and Electronic Game policy has been reviewed and monitored.

***Maintaining awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour***

Scoil Baile an Droichid will emphasise and reinforce the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by

- Using school assemblies to remind pupils of the school's anti bullying policy
- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable through visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, cooperative games etc.
- Devising a school anti-bullying charter for display in classrooms and other prominent locations
- Devising an anti-bullying or class pledge

## Implementation of curricula

- Bridgetown NS implements the SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- The staff are informed of courses and continuous professional development programmes as they arise.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe-Be Web wise, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Diversity and Interculturalism**,
- The school has listed every resource related to the SPHE curriculum, and listed supports.
- The Community Gardaí may be asked to speak to pupils on issues around bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet)
- Cyber-bullying: Prevention and any 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. The school-wide approach and the role of parents are of importance in this regard.
- There is scope for integration across all subjects of the curriculum regarding the topic of bullying, value of diversity, addressing prejudices and stereotypes etc
- Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports and school clubs as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for dealing with others.

## **7. PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING AND DEALING WITH BULLYING**

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

**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);**

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 will exercise his/her 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;

- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. 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), 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**

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

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. These records will be made in the class incident book. Incidents in the yard will be recorded in the yard incident book and may be transferred to the class incident book once reported to the relevant teacher. All incidents must be reported to the relevant class teacher
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

### **Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

- 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.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** 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.

The school has listed behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These are in the school's code of behaviour.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at **Appendix 3** 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 3** 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.



## **Referral of serious cases to the HSE**

In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.

Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

## **Periodic summary reports to the Board of Management**

At least once in every school term, the Principal must provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- (i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at **Appendix 3**) since the previous report to the Board and
- (ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school’s anti-bullying policy and the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools*.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting must record the above but in doing so must not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

## **Annual Review by the Board of Management**

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the school’s anti- bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

A standardised checklist will be used in undertaking this review (**Appendix 4**)

The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents’ Association.

A standardised notification which will be used for this purpose is in appendix 4. A record of this review and its outcome will be made available to the patron and the Department, if requested.

## **8. PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR AFFECTED PUPILS**

### **Supports for pupils affected by bullying**

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied is in place. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour is also part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Pastoral care system
- Care team
- Group work such as circle time

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

## **9. 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.

The School operates a supervision rota whereby pupils are supervised in their classrooms and in the school yard. Pupils are also supervised on their entry and exit into the school building. School tours and trips are supervised in accordance with the school's supervision policy.

School staff are vigilant and mindful of the times when bullying may occur in the classrooms, corridors, school yard and during school activities. They will try and monitor these behaviours in so far as is possible.

The school's acceptable use policy has been reviewed. The use of the internet in school is closely monitored

## **10. 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.

## **11. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY**

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. It is also provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## **12. LINKS TO OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

The school's anti-bullying policy is linked to:

Code of Behaviour; Child Protection Policy; Supervision Policy; Acceptable Use Policy; Website Policy; School Attendance; Relationships and Sexuality; Substance Use Policy; Use of Images Policy; SEN Policy; Complaints Procedure; Mobile Phone & Electronic Games Policy; SPHE Policy

## **13. RATIFICATION & REVIEW**

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 will be accessible to parents and pupils on request. It will also be 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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_