

**Scoil Eoin Baisde Cailíní Naoidh**

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Scoil Eoin Baisde Cailíní Naoidh has adopted the following Anti-Bullying Policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013. This policy is specifically designed to address bullying incidents of pupils by pupils. Other forms of bullying or complaints about school staff are dealt with by the school's complaint procedures communicated to parents in the school's introductory booklet.

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 following key principles of best practice:

1. Creating a positive school culture and climate which:
  - a. Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
  - b. Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
  - c. Promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
2. Effective leadership.
3. A school-wide approach.
4. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
5. Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness-raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
6. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
7. Supports for staff.
8. Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).
9. Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Definition of Bullying**

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

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

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

1. Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying.
2. Cyber-bullying.

3. 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 message, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with as appropriate with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

### **The Relevant Teacher for Investigating and Dealing With Bullying**

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 for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher. However, a pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school and individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour, in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. A visual aid to assist the pupils in identifying teachers/staff members whom they can approach with any concerns about bullying will be displayed in each classroom.

### **Procedures for Investigation, Follow-Up and Recording of Bullying Behaviour**

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.

In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.

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 relevant teacher must use the recording template 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 had 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.

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

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, and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the School Principal or Deputy Principal.

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

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complain to the Ombudsman for Children.

**The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows:**

1. Prevention and awareness-raising measures across all aspects of bullying.
2. Strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise (strategies to build empathy, respect and resilience).
3. Provide pupils with opportunities through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

4. Programmes that develop pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects. (Walk Tall; Stay Safe; SPHE; RSE programmes).
5. Cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.
6. Raising the awareness of bullying, so that all members of the school community understand what bullying is and how the school deals with bullying behaviour.
7. In the teaching of all subjects, there is space to foster an attitude of respect for all to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

**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:**

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

Pupils who have been bullied may need 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. These pupils may need counselling as well.

Pupils involved in bullying behaviour may need opportunities to improve their 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.

### **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.

### **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.

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

This Policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this Policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, 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 Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Department and the patron.

Signed: *PAUL NOLAN*  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 4 February 2014

Signed: *PATRICIA O'DONOGHUE*  
School Principal

Date: 4 February 2014