

SCOIL CHAÍTRÍONA SENIOR ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

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 Scoil Chaítríona Senior 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 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.

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.

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

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

All teachers are involved at stage 1 & 2 (See point 6 below) The principal is involved at Stage 3

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:

Role of Staff

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of misbehaviour. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour. Positive behaviour is always sought, recognised and affirmed
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
- The quick step guide will be used in cases of reported bullying (Stage 1 & 2 see point 6 below) (available on the server).
- When this fails the matter is referred to the principal using the reporting template

- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, at school assemblies, through pastoral care and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises.
- Pupils are taught skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying.
- Programs to be taught include the Webwise and Staysafe programs
- Staff will also implement the Anti-Bullying Campaign at least once a term
- Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by all staff
- Encouraging students to look out for each other and to be responsible for their own behaviour
- All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty- record all incidences- monitor repeat

Advice for Pupils

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG**.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout NO. Walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse– So don't fight back. REPORT to a teacher or parent instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the incident.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- TAKE ACTION – Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Advice for Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. They may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Policy concerning Bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help;

Displaying school's anti-bullying statement (*Bullying is wrong and is not tolerated in Scoil Chaitríona*)

Senior. We are a telling school) in school foyer and other prominent places around the school environment and going over aspects of bullying at morning assemblies. (What is bullying? What is not bullying? What to do if you feel you are being bullied? What to do if you see somebody else being bullied?)

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 :

Incidents of Bullying will be dealt with on a staged basis.

Stage 1

All reports of bullying must be dealt with initially by the class teacher.

- When a pupil tells a teacher s/he is being bullied, it is important to gather all of the facts from both sides (What, where, when, who, why?). This will involve an interview with the alleged bully using template in Appendices.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation.
- The aim for the class teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- Non teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.
- The Teacher should take calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional or judgemental language.
- Instances are investigated outside the classroom to avoid public humiliations.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regards to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way. (See Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post -Primary Schools 6.8.9 page 30-31) for further suggestions.
- Where possible, a witness is present.
- It is explained to the alleged bully how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to sign "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 1**".

Stage 2

If this child breaks promise and re-offends then the Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal with the class teacher will interview the child/children again. It is explained to them that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise. Again attempts will be made to resolve the situation. Once more students will sign the "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 2**". This time this has to be co-signed by their parents. They are now advised that if they break this promise again, they will have a meeting with the principal and their parents in the office and will face discipline.

- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigations and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Information spoken about should not become available, so that the victim would be further tormented. (Needs to know basis)

Stage 3

If a child breaks their promise twice then the matter is referred to the Principal using the recording template.

Recording of incidents: All incidents will be logged by class teacher and incidents which have not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days will be recorded by the class teacher on the recording template as in Appendix 3 (*Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*). This template will be completed in full and a copy given to the Deputy Principal and Principal. At least once every school term the Principal will provide a report to the BOM setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported by means of this template and confirmation that all cases are being dealt with in accordance with procedure.

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

Victims

- o Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- o Strategies for restoring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parents/guardians.
- o Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling.
- o Staged approach- class support, school support(as per Continuum -Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties- NEPS).
- o The parents of the pupils concerned will be advised to contact the local Gardai if appropriate.

Bullies

- o Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling. They may need to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Empathy awareness needs to be developed.
- o Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- o Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties- NEPS*)
 - Incidents of bullying can extend beyond the school and the journey to and from school is one which can provide particular opportunities for bullying to occur. The school's policy could be given to those who are closely involved at this stage (e.g. Lollipop Lady) so that if bullying behaviour is witnessed by them, that they may report it to the school.
 - In certain cases too it may be necessary to invite assistance from formal agencies such as Gardai,(J.L.O) Health Board, Local Youth Groups etc.

The school cannot be responsible for disagreements between pupils that happen outside the school grounds but will make reasonable efforts to cooperate with parents in assisting them to resolve the issues.

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.

7. 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.

8. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].
9. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
10. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____