Bunscoil Gleann Sidheáin

Anti-Bullying Policy

Roll No 20157V

Reviewed 15/06/2022

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 Bunscoil Gleann Sidheáin 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.

This policy also endeavours to take account of ongoing guidance and directives on anti-bullying policies in schools, including Children First National Guidance (2017) and guidelines on codes of behaviour issued by NEWB/Tusla. When reviewing our anti-bullying policy, the school will ensure that it is consistent with updates in our other policies, including the code of behaviour.

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 or staff and is therefore fully committed to the following **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; and

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

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

(e) 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.

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) 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 bullying based on gender or sexual orientation, 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 <u>not</u> 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.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying:
- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- Slagging
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- The "look"
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber Bullying
- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight
- Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages
- Abusive email
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.

Identity Based Behaviours
Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look" • Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

The Relevant Teachers in this school are: PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL & ALL CLASS TEACHERS

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

Sample Education and prevention strategies

School-wide approach
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of **respect** for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Friendship Week.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s.)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, 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 and for any online lessons with teachers like zoom lessons during Covid for example.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy on enrolment as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- 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/Positive Behaviour Week parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; student surveys; regular school assemblies.
- Some of the class teachers are trained in in the NEPS Friends For Life programme and those teachers teach it as part of the SPHE curriculum.

- 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.:
    o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
    o Hand note up with homework.
    o Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf. The parent/guardian can contact the teacher/school via Aladdin or by phone call.
    o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula
- The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme etc.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe-Be Web wise, Web wise Primary teachers' resources).
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level if available. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-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.

Links to other policies
- The Anti- Bullying Policy is linked to school policies on Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Admission Policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance etc.

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:-

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.
Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the **relevant teacher.**
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), 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.**

<u>Follow up and recording</u>

- 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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

<u>Recording of bullying behaviour</u>

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. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book or as a note recorded on Aladdin. All incidents must be reported to the **relevant teacher.**

- While 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 Protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher is to ensure that all records are input or scanned on Aladdin.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 1 (From DE Procedures)
The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 1** (please see at end of this Anti-Bullying Policy**)** 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) 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. Discretion and sound professional judgement to be used by all teaching staff.

When the recording template is used**, it must be retained by the relevant teacher** in question and **a copy maintained by the principal**. The template to be retained in school for duration of primary school years of pupil(s) mentioned on recording template.

Established intervention strategies
- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Questionnaire

Restorative Practice
Restorative Practice in our school provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as

to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where suspension occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.
Restorative Questions to respond to Challenging Behaviour

What happened?
What were you thinking about at the time?
What have your thoughts been since?
Who has been affected by what you did?
In what way have they been affected?
What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

To help those harmed by other actions
What did you think when you realised what had happened?
What have your thoughts been since?
How has this affected others?
What has been the hardest thing for you?
What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

7. 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
  - Buddy system
  - Group work such as circle time/social skills groups etc.

- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies regarding 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.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

- The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment

- The Board of Management 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.

10. This policy was discussed, reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management on Wednesday 15th June 2022.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, be otherwise readily accessible to parents on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:_____   Signed;_____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: 15/06/2022   Date: 15/06/2022

Date of next review: Summer term 2023

Appendix 1 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____Class_____

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

_____

_____

_____

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*		**4. Location** of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned		Playground	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		School Bus	
		Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		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 _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

<u>* Note:</u> The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.