

Anti-Bullying Policy Gaelscoil Inse Chór

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 Gaelscoil Inse Chór 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.

- 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.

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(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

The class teacher will be deemed the relevant teacher. In certain cases support may be sought from the Special Education team particularly where children in question are linked in with the Special Ed. Team.

- 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

- The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.
- All of the themes discussed in this section will be part of school life from a very early age through the Aistear programme which runs in both Infant classes.

- Children’s self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school.
- Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff.
- Teachers will be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidence of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying. Reports of misbehaviour will be documented by the teacher and kept on file for future reference.
- Teachers will discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils and use behavioural management strategies which focus on problem solving and enable pupils to take an active role in finding a solution to problems.
- The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school religion programme, the Social Personal and Health Education programme, the Stay Safe Programme, the Arts and/or Circle time. This area will be primarily address during the second school term.
- A strong emphasis is placed in junior classes on speaking out/ informing a teacher or parent around behaviour of others that impacts negatively on them.
- Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support bullying behavior described in this policy. This can be done across a wide spectrum- phone texting, on-line, social media, e mail etc. This behaviour will be treated as very serious at Gaelscoil Inse Chór. In instances occurring outside of school , the school will endeavor to support the victim by notifying any parent/guardian around any suspected behavior of any child reported to the school.The school takes seriously any reports of bullying carried outside of school hours and is obliged to investigate accordingly in cases where the perpetrators and victims attend Gaelscoil Inse Chór.This policy highlights that it is the duty of parents/guardians to ensure rules/conditions around accessing social sites are checked and adhered to prior to children accessing them.Education on this issue will be provided with support from www.webwise.ie, www.childwatch.ie and speakers will be invited to address parents and children as part of this.
- Initiatives and programmes focused on developing pupils’ awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects, will deal explicitly with the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying. We plan for the inclusion of LGBT posters/issues on educational programmes for Fifth and Sixth classes, discussions with parents about specific statements of welcome and respect for LGBT members of the school community, teaching the Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE) resource, Growing Up LGBT and participating in LGBT awareness events are just some of the ways in which a school can address homophobic and transphobic bullying.

- 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

- Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their relevant teacher,

- A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.
- Tá child/children accused of bullying will be spoken to by the relevant teacher. This will be done individually and as a group. Reports will be sought from the children as to what happened.
- The teacher will document the report using Appendix 3A. This completed form will be used to decide as to whether the event is dealt with under Anti Bullying or Code of Behaviour.
- In the event that bullying is determined by the relevant teacher, parents/guardians of the perpetrator(s) will be notified immediately. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the issue and to draw up a plan aimed at resolving the issue. Every effort is made to enable the child to see the side of the victim and to understand the implications of their behaviour. No one plan/strategy is devised to solve all issues and this should be understood.
- Once plan is activated, regular contact is made with parents/guardians in order to monitor and to measure progress made.
- If the issue is unresolved after 20 days, the relevant teacher will complete Appendix 3 attached and submit it to the principal. All Appendix 3 forms are reported to the Board of Management on a termly basis
- The relevant teacher may at times begin the process with Appendix 3 depending on the severity and nature of the issue.

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

- The school recognises that support is needed by both sides- the bully and the victim.
- Classwork will visit reasons behind bullying and its implications. If necessary this can be done in small groups and with support from the Special Ed. Team.
- Each class may conduct surveys termly in order to identify pupils who may be at risk of bullying.
- Programmes focussing on self respect and self control may be used to support such children. *Socially Speaking* and *Talk About* are in use at GSIC.
- Teachers may use other resources from **Anti-Bullying Campaign, S.A.L.T. or Sticks and Stones.**
- Support may be sought from outside agencies such as HSE-Linn Dara in Cherry Orchard Hospital and from NEPS.
- **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.

Other Relevant Policies

- Certain aspects of this policy may be strengthened in the following policies:-
 1. Code of Behaviour
 2. Acceptable User Policy
 3. Health/Safety Policy
 4. SPHE Plan
 5. Data Protection Policy
 6. Child Protection Policy

- **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 _____ [date].
- 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.
- 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: _____

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for

bullying in the school.

- Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Appendix 3 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 (Please tick)

Pupil Concerned
Other Pupil
Parent
Teacher
Other

4. Location of incidents (Please tick)

Yard 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 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 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 _____

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

Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

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 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?

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

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:

o 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].

o 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 3A Template for recording alleged bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil targetted and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (Please tick)

Pupil Concerned
Other Pupil
Parent
Teacher
Other

4. Location of incidents (Please tick)

Yard Classroom Corridor Toilets School Bus Other

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

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

Physical Aggression On-line issues Damage to Property Intimidation
Isolation/Exclusion Malicious Gossip Name Calling
Other (specify) _____

7. Brief Description of behaviour, its frequency and its impact :

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

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