Scoil Naomh Fiachra Clontubrid Roll No. 16865D	

Scoil Naomh Fiachra
Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by TUSLA, the Board of Management of Scoil 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. The school community believes strongly that respect for all must be promoted at all times and become intrinsic in the ethos of society. No bullying can therefore be tolerated and discrimination based on the nine stated grounds included in equality legislation, ie gender including transgender, civil status , family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, can be allowed.

The Board of Management and the staff of Scoil Naomh Fiachra are 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;
- fosters mutual and self-respect;
- raises awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour;
- 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
- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment;
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members;

(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;

  ➢ effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
  ➢ All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.

  ➢ Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school, including language which is racist and homophobic or belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.

  ➢ Ensure that there is adequate yard supervision.

  ➢ Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.

  ➢ The staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying 'hot spots' for bullying in the school.

  ➢ The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.

(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. 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 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 Appendix A of this policy.

4. The Relevant Teacher:

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class-teacher. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it. The primary 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);

5. Education & Prevention Strategies:

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that are used in the school are:

➢ A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

➢ 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.

➢ 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, for example after class.
- Hand note up with homework.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- 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 Stay Safe Programme
- ➤ Aistear
- ➤ SPHE
- ➤ RSE Programme
- ➤ Walk Tall Programme
- ➤ Friends for Life Programme
- ➤ Anti-Bullying website (to be set up by the DES in conjunction with this initiative)
- ➤ Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes covering issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- ➤ Other school policies relevant to bullying: Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Supervision of Pupils, Internet Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance, Sporting activities, Excursions

6. Procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour:

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.

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:

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 must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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;

- ➤ Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs (N/A), caretakers, and cleaners, Lollipop ladies (N/A) are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents:
- ➤ In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

- ➤ Parents 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;

➤ It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;

➤ Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;

➤ Incidents are generally best 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.

➤ 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 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 they may face from the other members of the group after 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 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;

➤ Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him 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 parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his parents 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; 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 complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Procedures for recording 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:

1. 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;

2. If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will keep appropriate written record which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

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

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

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

7. Programme of Support:

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.

  - Group work such as circle time
  - Participation in an after-school activity e.g. Sport

- ➢ 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.

8. 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. 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 adopted by the Board of Management on ___22/10/2020___

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council. 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, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _Kieran Costello_ Signed: _Pete Madden_
(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: _22|10|2020_   Date: _22|10|2020_

Date of next review: _October 2021_

Appendix A: Types of Bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

Physical aggression: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Intimidation: Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".

Cyber-bullying: This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Name calling: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

Damage to property: Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or

bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

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))

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

4. Location of incidents
(tick relevant box(es))

Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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		Other (specify)	
Name Calling			

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of the 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 _____