Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa

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Bullying

1.	Introductory Statement

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013, the Board of Management of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa reviewed its policy and 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.

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.

This policy is linked to the school's Code of Behaviour. The policy was formulated by the Teachers, Ancillary staff, Pupils, Parents and the Board of Management in 2014.

2.	Rationale

This is the second review of the Anti-bullying policy. The existing Anti-bullying policy was reviewed and a draft was prepared by the staff. It was sent for discussion at a parent association meeting and a representative met with the Principal to propose amendments. Amendments were submitted to the Board of Management for their consideration.

2.2 Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The school fosters a positive school ethos among pupils, staff and parents. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying.

Policy Aims

1. To produce a safe and caring environment in which all children can develop to their full potential.
2. To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
3. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
4. To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
5. This policy guides action and organisation within the school for preventing and responding to bullying

By reviewing this policy the school hopes

1. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
2. To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
3. To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
4. To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
5. To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
6. To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti bullying behaviour.

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;

- Acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- Acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- Promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- A clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.

- 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.
- Take particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- 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 the children being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are ignored.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- 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.
- Recognise the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills.
- Recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- 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.
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.
- 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.

Effective leadership

The school does not tolerate or condone bullying of any form or at any level of the school community. The Principal and Deputy Principal will be responsible for the implementation and on-going monitoring of the policy in consultation with the Board of Management. The Parents Association will liaise with the Principal should concerns arise.

The school maintains awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by

- Using assemblies to remind pupils of the school's anti bullying policy

- Use of both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable... visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, cooperative games...
- Special events such as a Friendship Week or similar
- Devising a school charter for display in classrooms and other prominent locations

A school-wide approach

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community, pupils, staff, and parents, are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.

The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. 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. Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied. Teachers will discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils and use behavioural management strategies that 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.

Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other. Pupils should report incidents of bullying to their parents and teachers.

Parents will encourage positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour both at home and at school. They will encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression. Children will be encouraged to share, to be kind, to be caring, and to be understanding towards others. Parents will watch out for signs and symptoms that your child is being bullied or is bullying others. Parents will not dismiss their instincts as being wrong and will discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with their child. Parents will support the school in its efforts to prevent and treat bullying.
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A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
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.

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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;

Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
The school's supervision practices act as a strategy for prevention of bullying behaviour. All sections of the playground are supervised at break times. Corridors, cloakrooms, toilets are not accessed by children without permission

Supports for staff
We access and will continue to access Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies) Procedures detailed in Section 6

On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents, pupils
- Observation of behaviour in class rooms, corridors, playground
- Staff meetings and Board of Management reports.

3.	Content of 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:
- 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.

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	• **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, 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. Relevant Teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying

All staff should be vigilant for signs of bullying. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

All class teachers
Principal/Deputy Principal

 Some of the indicators that may suggest that a pupil is being bullied are anxiety about travelling to and from school, unwillingness to go to school, deterioration in educational performance

5. Education and prevention strategies

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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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.   • 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.   • The school will use Buddy systems/ Lunchtime Pals and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.   • 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 is available on the school website and in hard copy on request.   • 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 and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; termly student surveys (2nd-6th); regular school assemblies by principal, deputy principal and different class groups.   • 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;
    - o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
    - o Hand note up with homework.
    - o Concerns box
    - o Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
    - o Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
    - 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.
- Refer parents and pupils to the Mobile phone and Electronic Games Policy and Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- Regularly updating the list of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. www.antibullyingcampaign.ie www.bully4u.ie www.watchyourspace.ie (Senior pupils) www.webwise.ie www4.dcu.ie/ABC www.staysafe.ie www.ispcc.ie

Implementation of curricula
- We implement the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- We access and will continue to access 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
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression**, **Cyber Bullying Diversity and Interculturalism. Regarding Homophopic and Transphobic Bullying** we will develop a strategy for responding to children who have questions about sexual orientation or who are taunting others about being gay. This will be done in the context of the school's ethos and RSE policy and with the awareness that primary school children are probably too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity. Resources related to the SPHE curriculum will be collated and listed. These will include Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Webwise Primary teachers' resources, Anti-bullying campaign material, Prim-Ed Cyber bullying material.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. 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
- Other school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying are; Code of Behaviour, Child Protection policy, Acceptable Use policy. SPHE plan, Record keeping, Home / School links, Health & Safety, Special Educational Needs

6.	Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with 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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

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.

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 (see section 6.8.9)

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the class 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 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 class 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)

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- In cases where it has been determined by the class 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 class teacher will inform the Principal. 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 class 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;

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the class 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.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of 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:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred
- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. The records will be kept in a designated folder in the Rolla. All incidents must be reported to the class teacher and reports forwarded to the class teacher for their folder.

- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher, the class teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The class teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred
- If it is established by the class teacher that bullying has occurred, the class 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.
- These records will be retained by the class teacher and passed onto the following class teacher at year end. A copy of the records will be given to the Principal and will be stored in the office.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)
The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** 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.
This would apply to Cyber-bullying . These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. These records are kept in the Principals office, relevant teachers and parents have access to them when necessary and they will be retained until the children are 26 yrs of age.

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
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice

- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

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

(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

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
- Buddy system
- Group work such as circle time

If pupils require counselling of 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.   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. Supervision practises and 'danger spots' are discussed at staff meetings. Children are taught safety skills when using the internet and rules for usage are on display.

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.   Adult Bullying

The Board of Management of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa seeks to provide a supportive work place where staff is free from all forms of harassment/bullying.

For the purposes of the adult bullying policy the following definition of bullying/harassment is understood:

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"Persistent offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour or abuse of power carried out by an individual or a group either directly or indirectly which makes the victim feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable or undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress".

All complaints relating to bullying/harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and promptly. All parties involved will be treated with respect.

Victimisation as a result of a member of staff raising a complaint will be treated as harassment/bullying and subject to disciplinary action. Similarly, staff will be protected from victimisation or discrimination for assisting in an investigation.

Who is involved?

Individuals or groups of people can be responsible for or be the victims of harassment/bullying. It can occur at any level in the school.

Forms of Bullying

Harassment/bullying can be verbal, gesture or physical bullying, exclusion or extortion. It can be sexual, ageist, sectarian or racial in form or in undertone, or it can offend because of a person's disability. Some examples could be: -

- Using terror tactics, open aggression, threats or staring, shouting abuse or obscenities towards a colleague.
- Subjecting a colleague to unreasonable scrutiny, and being excessively critical about minor things.
- Regularly taking the credit for another person's work but never taking the blame when things go wrong.
- Undermining a person's authority.
- Maliciously removing whole areas of work responsibility from an individual or reducing her/his job to routine tasks, which are below her/his skills capabilities.
- Setting individuals impossible objectives, or constantly changing the work requirements and then criticising or reprimanding the individual for not meeting those requirements or objectives.
- Deliberately withholding information, which an individual requires in order to do her/his job effectively.
- Ostracising and /or marginalizing an individual, dealing with an individual only through a third party, excluding the individual from discussions, decisions, etc.
- Spreading malicious rumours about an individual.
- Blocking another staff member's development.

Effects of harassment and bullying

Effects on the victim
It is generally accepted that individuals who are constantly bullied lose their self-confidence, their self-esteem and are at an increased risk of suffering stress. Stress is associated with a wide range of ill-health effects. The long-term exposure to harassment/bullying can have serious effects on an individual's health. This could include resignation in order to avoid contact with the bully, or absenteeism, which in turn can have a detrimental effect on the

person's career. In severe cases it can include nervous breakdown, heart attack or even suicide.

Effects on the School
Individuals working in a climate of fear and resentment do not perform to their capabilities. The adverse effects of harassment and bullying may result in increased absenteeism; staff turnover, low morale or poor performance levels.

What can you do if you think you are being harassed or bullied?
If you think you are being harassed/bullied at work, you should seek advice from any of the following "Contact people".

Contact People
Principal, Deputy Principal, Teachers' Representative of the Board of Management, INTO Staff Representative, Chairperson of the Board of Management, Nominated Board of Management member.

Other specific actions you may take
- Log all incidents of bullying/harassment. Record dates, times and full details of the incident.
- Write down your feelings at the time and what your own response was.
- Speak to the alleged bully and make it clear that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and ask him/her to stop. If you cannot do this verbally, then do so in writing. Keep copies of any correspondence.
- Ascertain if there were any witnesses to the harassment/bullying.
- If possible avoid being alone with the alleged bully.

The purpose of the policy is to deter unacceptable behaviour and to create an environment where staff can work together free from harassment/bullying.

Procedures
There are two procedures for dealing with cases of alleged harassment/bullying, one *informal* the other *formal*. Individuals should familiarise themselves with the procedures below. Any of the people who are listed as 'contact people' can advise on both procedures. If the Informal Procedure is followed and the problem persists, the complaint can then be dealt with under the Formal Procedure
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(a) Informal Procedure
If an incident occurs which offends you, it may be sufficient to explain clearly to the person engaging in such behaviour that it is unacceptable. In circumstances where this is too difficult or too embarrassing to do on your own, you should seek support from one of the 'contact people'.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a type of behaviour is harassment/bullying, do not hesitate to approach one of the "Contact People" for advice, on an informal and confidential basis.
Many incidents of harassment/bullying can be dealt with effectively in an informal way, as often the harasser/bully may be unaware of the affect her/his behaviour is having on others.

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(b) Formal Procedure

Your complaint should be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management and should detail the nature of the complaint. Your chosen contact person may help you to do so. However, you have the right to initiate a formal complaint without reference to a Contact Person.

The Board of Management will make every effort to ensure everyone involved while the complaint is being investigated will observe confidentiality.

There will be an independent investigation carried out by the Board of Management.

The Board will set down a timetable for the completion of the investigation.

The Board may engage personnel outside the school to assist in the fact-finding investigation.

The victim will be interviewed as will the alleged harasser.

Separate interviews will be conducted.

Your Contact Person or Staff Representative will provide help and support during this process if you wish.

The investigation will be thorough, impartial and objective. It will be carried out with sensitivity and with due respect for the rights of the complainant and the alleged bully/harasser.

The complainant and the alleged harasser/bully will have the right to the accompanied at all interviews. The alleged harasser/bully will be given full details of the nature of the complaint and will be given the opportunity to respond. Every effort will be made to ensure that meetings are conducted sensitively.

Strict confidentially will be maintained throughout the investigation into the allegation. Where it is necessary to interview witnesses, the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised.

At the completion of the investigation, a report will be prepared, which will include the nature and details of the complaint, the response of the alleged harasser, the result of the investigation and the conclusion. A copy will be sent to both the complainant and the alleged harasser.

If the report concludes that harassment/bullying did take place, the harasser will be subject to a formal interview and the complaint will be treated as a disciplinary matter using the Board of Management's Disciplinary Procedure.

However, in some circumstances the use of the Disciplinary Procedure may not be appropriate. In such cases the outcome could result in training, counselling and a period of monitoring and appraisal.

If the period of appraisal is not satisfactory, then the Disciplinary Procedure may then be invoked.

There will be a right to appeal a decision using the agreed Appeals Procedure.

Nothing in the Formal or Informal procedure can override an employee's statutory rights.

Implementing and Monitoring the Code

The Staff of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa has a duty to ensure that their working environment is free from harassment/bullying. See also Working Together (INTO) www.into.ie

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (a hard copy is available to parents on request) 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 patron and the Department.

Signed:

      (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:

      (Principal)

Date: 4 June 2014

Date of next review: May 2015

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 (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 Calling		Malicious Gossip Name 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 _____
* 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 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

Reference Section

- Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994
- Anti-Bullying Unit. Trinity College. Dr. Mona O Moore.
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino
- Working Together for Positive Behaviour, Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 2006
- Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO, 2000
- Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying. HSA, 2002
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 S