Scoil Naomh Eoin

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Principal: Stephen Donovan
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Scoil Naomh Eoin, Killenard - 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 Scoi Naomh Eoin, Killenard 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

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- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour. Such incidents will be dealt with, as appropriate within the school's Cyber-Bullying Policy (Appendix 1)

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*.

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4. *The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):*

☐ The principal/deputy principal and the relevant teacher(s)

> **5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):**
>
> ☐ Prevention and awareness-raising measures across all aspects of bullying and strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
>
> ☐ Prevention and awareness-raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and informing pupils how to stay safe while online.
>
> There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.
>
> • The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
>
> • The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.
>
> Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour. This work can be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. GAA coaching is offered to some classes from outside agencies and class teachers are also involved in coaching the school's football teams.

> **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 (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. With this in mind the schools procedures are as follows:
>
> ☐ When investigating and dealing with alleged incidents of bullying, the principal/ deputy principal or relevant teacher will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
>
> ☐ All reports, including anonymous reports of alleged bullying must be investigated and dealt with. 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, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher
>
> ☐ 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, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

□ Initial investigations of alleged bullying will be conducted in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

□ All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity & with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way.

□ When analysing alleged incidents of bullying behaviour, the principal/deputy principal or 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 will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

□ It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the alleged incident(s).

□ 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

□ Where it is 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.

□ In cases where it has been alleged that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the allegation and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways they can reinforce or support actions being taken by the school to address the situation.

□ It must 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 or her parents and the school.

□ Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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.

□ An additional follow-up meeting with parents of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily.

□ 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.

RECORDING:

Reported allegations of bullying behaviour will be documented using a specified template (Appendix 2) . These records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

☐ Parents/guardians need to be aware that any allegation of bullying they make to the principal, deputy Principal or teacher must be recorded on the specified template and following this the parent /guardian of the alleged bully must immediately be informed about the allegation

☐ All reports, including anonymous reports of alleged bullying behaviour must be investigated.

☐ Records will be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

☐ If it is established that bullying has occurred, appropriate written records will be used to assist efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved

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7. ***The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :***

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals from appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families if needed.

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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 adopted by the Board of Management on 8/9/21 [date].

11. 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.

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 (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: Deirdre Doyle   Signed: Stephen Donovan
       (Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: 8/9/21   Date: 8/9/21

Date of next review: May 2021

Appendix 1: Cyber-Bullying Policy

Scoil Naomh Eoin, Killenard aims to ensure that students are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. <u>Students are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school under any circumstances. The students do not have access to any social networking sites etc. while at school.</u>

However, it should be noted that primary school children should not have access to these sites at home either. <u>Therefore, it is the parents' responsibility to monitor their child's access to the internet outside school hours.</u>

Understanding Cyber-Bullying:

- Cyber-bullying is the use of ICT to abuse another person

- While bullying involves a repetition of unwelcome behaviour the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013,** states: *2.1.3.*

  In addition, in the context of these procedures 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.

AIMS OF CYBER-BULLYING POLICY:
- To ensure that students, staff & parents understand what cyber bullying is & how it can be combated

- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

Procedures for dealing with Cyber-Bullying
If the Principal/Deputy Principal/a teacher/SNA etc. is informed by a student or a parent/guardian that the student, their child or that another child in the school is being subjected to cyber-bullying
the reported allegation will be documented using the specified template provided by the Department of Education & Skills. These records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.
- The victim's parents/guardians will be notified about the allegation of cyber-bullying
- The parents of the alleged bully/bullies will also be notified that an allegation of cyber-bullying has been made.
- The school staff /relevant class teachers will monitor the situation making sure

that the victim feels secure within the classroom and on yard.

➢ If the victim has any evidence in the form of a text message, on-line message etc. he/she will be advised to save it and show it immediately to his/her parents/guardians.

➢ Parents will be strongly advised to remove their child from any further access to the offending sites, change mobile number etc.

➢ The relevant class teachers will speak to their class groups about cyber-bullying.

Appendix 2: Template for Recording Alleged Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

1. **Name of pupil being bullied /victim and class**		
2. **Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) who it is alleged are engaged in bullying behaviour** 3.		
4. **Location of incidents**	Playground Classroom Corridor Toilets Other	
5. **Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern** 6.		
7. **Type of Bullying Behaviour**	Physical Aggression Cyber-bullying Damage to Property Isolation/Exclusion Intimidation Name Calling Malicious Gossip	

		Other
8. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**	Homophobic Disability/SEN related Racist Membership of Traveller community Other	
9. **Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**		
10. **Details of actions taken**		
11. **Signature of relevant Teacher**		

12. **Date:**	
13. **Date Reported to Principal/Deputy Principal**	
14. **Principal /Deputy Signature**	

Appendix 3: 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 ignored.

- 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, 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.

: **What does the term BULLYING mean?**

When it comes to bullying, no one would disagree that bullying behaviour is unkind.

However, we need to remember that not every unkind behaviour is bullying?

In order to protect children **parents** <u>and</u> **teachers** need to help children to understand what bullying <u>is</u> and, just as important, what it <u>is not.</u>

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When someone says or does something hurtful to you

<u>without thinking</u> and they do it <u>once</u> –

that's   <u>RUDE</u>

When someone says or does something hurtful to you

<u>on purpose</u> and they do it <u>once</u> –

that's   <u>MEAN</u>

When someone says or does something hurtful to you

<u>on purpose</u> and <u>they keep doing it,</u>

<u>even</u>

when you tell them to stop

or show them you are upset –

that's BULLYING

Appendix 6:
Types of Bullying Behaviours

Physical Aggression:
Repeated - pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students over time.

Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:
Repeated - and deliberate isolation of a student by some or the entire class group. This practice is can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing and passing around notes about or drawings of the student or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with their 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'.

Name-calling:
Repeated - and persistent name-calling directed at the same student(s) that 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. 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

Intimidation:
Repeated - 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

(i) **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 materials or interference with a student'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

(ii) **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats

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, email, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat rooms and other online technologies.

Appendix 7:
Types of Behaviours that are often mistakenly considered Bullying

I don't like you" –

Let's be honest, this is very common remark for children to say to one another at home and at school. Children cannot be expected to like everyone around them and, as unpleasant as it may be to know someone does not like you, oral and unspoken messages of "I don't like you" are not acts of bullying. Children, especially <u>primary</u> school children, often are very open and honest with their thoughts and feelings. And although it may be uncomfortable for another child to hear what another child thinks, it is not always bullying to share thoughts and feelings. For example, young children often speak the truth without even thinking about the consequences. They might make a one-time comment about someone's hair being messy or ask why a child's teeth stick out.

These unkind remarks and incidents usually come from a place of innocence and should not be labelled immediately as <u>bullying.</u> Instead, the children who make these types of remarks need adults (parents and teachers) to tell them what is appropriate and what isn't. It's also important for children on the receiving end of an unkind remark to learn how to communicate their feelings with the offending child. For instance, it is healthy to say "I felt hurt when you laughed at my new braces" or "I don't like it when you call me names."

"You can't play" –

It is also very common for children to say this to one another at home or at school. Remember, it is natural for kids to be close friends with certain children and want to spend time with them. Although children should be friendly and kind toward everyone, it's unrealistic to expect them to be close friends with every child they know. It is also normal that a child won't be invited to every function or event. There will be times when they are left off the list for birthday parties, outings and play dates. This is not the same thing as ostracizing behaviour. When your children are the ones feeling left out, remind them that sometimes they too have to choose not include everyone at their own birthday party. Being left out is not bullying. Only when someone is deliberately excluded on an on-going basis, does being left out become bullying.

Arguments –
Arguments are heated disagreements between children. It is natural that children have different interests and disagree on many things. In fact, conflict is a very normal part of growing up. The key is that children learn how to solve their problems peacefully and respectfully. A fight or a disagreement does not represent bullying – even when unkind things are said. A spat or disagreement here and there is not bullying. Think about it; most of us have disagreements with others, so it is very understandable for children to have disagreements with each other. The argument itself is not a form of bullying.

Bumping into or hurting someone –
It is very important for teachers and parents to explain that some accidents happen without any bad intention and it is important not to create a big conflict if it was not done intentionally and is not then an act of bullying.

Telling jokes about someone /teasing –
Most children have been teased by a friend or a sibling in a playful, friendly or mutual way. They both laugh and no one's feelings get hurt. However, making fun of another child is not always fun for the child being made fun off. It is important for parents and teachers to teach kids that things they say as jokes should also be amusing for the other child. If not, they should stop. Unless it happens over and over again and is done deliberately to hurt someone, telling jokes about other children is not bullying. Teasing is not bullying as long as both children find it funny. But when teasing becomes cruel, unkind and repetitive, it crosses the line into bullying.

Making other kids play things a certain way –
Again, this is very natural behaviour especially with younger children. Wanting things to be done their way is normal and is not an act of bullying. All children, at one point or

another, will want to play a game according to their "rules." To their friends, they may appear "bossy." Although playing with someone like this can be unpleasant, it is important to remember that children are still learning how to play fair. They need adults (parents <u>and</u> teachers) to help them learn how to take turns and how to cooperate with others.

To make sure children do not fall into considering it as an aggressive or bossy behaviour, parents and teachers need to teach children assertiveness. For example, your child could say: "Let's play your way, the first time. Then, let's try my way." Remember, wanting games to be played a certain way is not bullying. Only when a child begins to consistently threaten other kids or physically hurt them when things don't go his/her way does it start to become bullying.

Advice for Pupils:
If you are being bullied –

- Remember, bullying is **never** your fault.

- It can be stopped.

- Don't ignore bullying.

- Tell someone you trust, such as a parent, a sibling, or a teacher.