Scoil Cholmcille

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 Scoil Cholmcille has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy complies fully 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 recognizes 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 behavior:

KEY RRINCIPLES OF BEST PRACTICE:

(a) A positive school culture and climate which

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

- Includes developing appropriate communication and encourages and strengthens open dialogue between all school staff and pupils.

(b) Effective leadership:

- Supporting a school culture and climate that celebrates difference, is key to good practice;

- The principal in particular has a key role in dealing with bullying behaviour because he/she is in a strong position to influence attitudes and set standards in dealing with such behavior. Principals, and other leaders in the school, including all teachers, should strive to promote and develop an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable;

- All staff needs to act as good role models and not misuse their authority. All staff should be fair, firm clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

(c) A school-wide approach:

- In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils have a role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school – based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school from bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere.

- Parents should recognize that a school that openly discusses bullying is acting positively and that they need to work with the school to ensure there is a coherent school – wide approach to tackling the issue.

- The promotion of relevant home/school/community links in regard to countering bullying behaviour should be encouraged.

- In certain cases, it may be necessary for the school to seek the assistance of other local persons and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE , Social Workers, Gardaí.

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

- All members of the school community must have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy. See pages 6,7 and 8

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils;

- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying by utilizing web wise and myselfie online resources, and identity – based bullying including in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying Respect Guidelines from INTO Different family, same love????

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils:

- Identification of "hot spots" and "hot times" are beneficial in preventing and dealing with bullying in the school

- Non teaching staff also contributes to and are part of the process to counter bullying behaviour in the school.

- The BOM. Confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring is put in place to prevent and deal with bullying behavior and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

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(g) Supports for staff:

- BOM. must ensure that all members of school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to apply effectively and consistently the policy when required

- Supports for staff should be appropriate to the individual's role and should enable staff to recognize bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and intervene effectively in bullying cases.

- The BoM. Must make appropriate arrangements to ensure temporary and substitute staff have sufficient awareness of the School's Code of Behaviour and Anti – Bullying Policy.

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour:

- The Relevant Teachers are the Class Teacher/ Principal /Deputy Principal..

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

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), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, **to the Relevant Teacher;**

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the **(relevant)teacher** will exercise his/her professional judgment to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

- Parents/guardians and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved with two relevant teachers present.
- 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 analyzing incidents of bullying behaviour, **the Relevant Teacher** should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to **write down** their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the **relevant teacher** that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/ guardians 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/guardians an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy, and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents/guardians that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents/guardians and the school;
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behavior has occurred, it must be recorded in the recording template at **Appendix 3.**

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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 judgment, 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 parents/guardians 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 parents/guardians are not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents/guardians must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that parents/guardians have exhausted the school's complaints procedures and are still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents/guardians 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. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the **Relevant Teacher.**
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the **Relevant Teacher**, the **Relevant Teacher** must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The **Relevant Teacher** must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred:

- If it is established by the **Relevant Teacher** that bullying has occurred, he/she must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school, in consultation with the **Relevant Teacher**/s, should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the **Relevant Teacher.**

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)
The **Relevant Teacher** must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behavior 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.
The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's Code of Behavior.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question, .and a copy maintained by the principal. Records will be kept locked in a filing cabinet in the office for a period of ten years

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 parents/guardians to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews. No blame
- Restorative conferencing. No blame
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires – surveys for children regarding bullying.
- The Support Group Method – group of friends to support positive relationships

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 – no blame
- The Method of Shared Concern – not alone

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy:

- The anti – bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered.

- The provision will be made for periodic examination of the prevention and intervention strategies in place.

- The template **Appendix 3** for recording and reporting bullying to the School Principal/Deputy Principal will be a valuable and readily accessible source of data in relation to bullying behavior in the school.

- Data gathered from these reports must be regularly (at least annually) collated and analyzed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour.

- Implementation and effectiveness of the anti bullying policy will be included as an agenda item for staff meetings so as to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of the individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behavior, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person or persons and which is repeated over time. It includes relational bullying, cyber bullying and identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying (Respect Guidelines)

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

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,

- cyber-bullying

- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveler 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 one-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.

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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 emails • 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 rumors 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 traveler background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviors include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumors • 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 recognize and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

4. The **Relevant Teacher(s)** for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows **Class Teacher/Principal/Deputy Principal.**

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-Bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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, parents/guardians 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.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behavior of the school (every year).
- The involvement in Anti Bullying activities to promote whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, bullying prevention. Promotion of Anti-Bullying Week
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders, so that 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 whom to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
    - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, e.g. after class.
    - Hand note up with homework.
    - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
    - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
    - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness an incidence of bullying, 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. Parents will be informed of protocols.
- 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 use of Mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula:
- The full implementation of the SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying where available.
- 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.
- School will implement RSE. programme

Links to other policies
- Code of Behavior.
- Child Protections Policy.
- Supervision of Pupils.
- Acceptable Use Policy.
- Attendance.
- Sporting Activities.

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 e.g.
  - SPHE
  - STAY SAFE
  - RSE
  - NEPS
  - Respecting Difference
  - Buddy/Peer Mentoring
  - Circle Time
  - Cool School Programme

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- If pupils require counseling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organize same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behavior.

- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behavior 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 behavior and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

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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 Traveler community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [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.

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Cholmcille on

Date

27/3/17

Signed:

Br O'Haya, Chair