

Scoil Eiltín Naofa

Lisselton

*Anti-Bullying
Policy*

1. Introduction:

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 Lisselton Primary School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the schools overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School which were published in September 2015.

2. Key Principles:

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 behaviour:

A positive school culture and climate which-

- a) 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
- b) Effective leadership:
- c) A school-wide approach
- d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying
- f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- g) Support for staff
- h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)
- i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. Definition

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 persons 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 the policy, placing of 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

4. Relevant Teacher/s for investigating Bullying Incidents

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher; however, any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. Education and Prevention

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 include:

School Wide Approach

- Implementation of our Code of Behaviour which promotes a positive, pro-active, respectful and consistent approach to behaviour management.
- Discussion of the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils.
- Conducting an annual audit of professional development needs, at the beginning of each school year, with a view to assessing staff requirements.
- Whole staff professional development, through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external source where necessary, to ensure all staff members develop an understanding of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and how to respond to it.
- Implementing school wide awareness raising and training for pupils, posters to target the wider school community, distribution of leaflets, booklets.
- Promoting the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and high light the unacceptability of bullying behaviour through posters and class lessons.
- Consistently recognising and rewarding positive behaviour.
- Fostering and enhancing the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Rigorous supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours, and extra-curricular activities. Encouraging non-teaching and ancillary staff to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- The implementation of our "Acceptable Use of IT" policy and ensuring that new parents sign this.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell and bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Using the Stay Safe Programme

Implementation of Curricula

- The full implementation of the S.P.H.E., RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- School Wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, using Walk Tall, Stay Safe
- Use Circle Time to enhance self-esteem and encourage an open discussion.
- Preparation and follow up lessons for pupils with SEN
- Ensuring consistent implementation of other relevant policies including Child Protection, Supervision of Pupils, Acceptable Use, Parent-Teacher Meetings, Attendance, Health and Safety and the Code of Behaviour.

6. Procedures for Investigation, Follow-Up and Recording

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 through meetings and class lessons to ensure that all involved (pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) understand this approach from the outset. However, the child/children may be also subjected to sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

- Any pupil or parent/guardian may bring an alleged 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 must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with Incidents

- In investigating and dealing with bullying allegations, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Parent(s)/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.
- Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of alleged 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
- The *No Blame and Shared Concerns* approaches will be used (**See Appendix 5**)
- It may also be appropriate 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 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 school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce and 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 them how they are in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts should be made to try to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- The child/children who have engaged in the bullying behaviour may also be subject to sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour, depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident(s).
- It must also be made clear to all involved (pupils and parent(s)/guardians) 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 relevant teacher must, as part of their professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 1. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
 2. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable

3. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable
 4. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(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(*Shared Concern and No Blame Approach*)
 - Where the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not satisfied that the school has dealt with the bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are referred, as appropriate, to the school’s Complaints Procedures.
 - In the event that a parent/guardian has exhausted the school’s Complaints Procedures and is still not satisfied, the school advises the parent/guardian of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of Bullying Behaviour

- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports.
- If it is established that bullying behaviour has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records (**Appendix 3: Record of Bullying Behaviour**) which will assist their efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- To monitor patterns of behaviour the **“Incidents Against an Individual”** template (Appendix 2) may be used. The incidents to be recorded may include those bullying behaviours which have been identified under the **“Examples of Bullying Behaviour”** already listed in this policy.
- The **“Incidents Against an Individual”** and **“Records of Bullying Behaviour”** will be stored in an A4 **“Tracking Behaviour File”**. This file will be securely stored in the locked filing cabinet of the office.
 - At the end of the year, this file may viewed by the next class teacher.

7. Programme of Support

In school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying and perpetrators to support their social and Emotional Development.

- Supports May include:
 - Monitoring
 - One to one work with the class teacher
 - Social Skills programme with the SET teacher
 - Peer/Buddy monitoring system
 - Group Work, such as Circle Time
 - Self-Monitoring such as a personal diary

If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies (e.g. CAMHS, ISPPCC) to organise same. This may be for the pupil who was bullied or the perpetrator(s) of the bullying behaviour.

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. These include consistent monitoring and supervision of behaviour and support in promoting an anti-bullying culture and a clear Acceptable Use Policy for IT.

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. Access to Policy

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

11. Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management, once in every school year. Notification that review has been completed will be made available to school personnel in the Policy folder. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department

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))*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Appendix 5

Shared Concern & No Blame Approaches

This approach focuses on action to remediate the problem and can also be used as a preventative early intervention approach.

Interview the victim:

The teacher starts by talking to the victim. She does not question him/her about the incidents but she does need to know who was involved.

Meet with the all parties accused and onlookers.

This group should not exceed 6 if possible with a maximum of 8.

Explain the problem as fact, not accusation.

The teacher tells them about the way the victim is feeling and may use a drawing/written piece if the victim has produced one. At no time, discuss the details of the incidents.

Stress the responsibility to change.

While not attributing blame, the teacher states that she knows the group are responsible and can do something about it.

Ask for suggestions.

Be positive. Each member is encouraged to suggest a way of making the situation better. The teacher does not push for a promise of improved behaviour.

Leave it to them.

Arrange a review meeting. The meeting ends with the teacher handing over responsibility to the group to solve the problem.

Hold a review meeting.

This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the students involved in the process. It may or may not include the child who has been bullied.

SHARED CONCERNS

The people who have been accused of bullying are interviewed individually.

The victim may be interviewed last depending on the level of information you have about the situation.

Each “chat” lasts 5 minutes and does not allow for any diversion from the situation to be resolved.

Meet with all for about 30 minutes or meet individually again for a review of what has been happening and how things have changed.

Language to be used:

Stage 1

“I hear unpleasant things have been happening to Tell me about it”

Stage 2

“It sounds as if is having a bad time” – Wait for agreement.

Stage 3

“What could you do to help in this situation – to improve things?”

Stage 4

“Good. I will talk to you next week to see how things are going”