Anti-Bullying Policy

Scoil Naomh Eoin, Clonmagadden Valley, Navan, Co. Meath.
Roll No. 20180Q

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 Naomh Eoin 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 Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin, 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 -
  o is welcoming of difference and diversity and based on inclusivity:
  o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  o promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

- **Effective leadership;**
  o Effective leadership, supporting a school culture and climate that celebrates difference, is key to good practice.
  o The Principal and other leaders in the school, including all teachers, strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is inacceptable.
  o The Principal and teachers act as good role-models. They are fair, firm, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

- **A school-wide approach;**
  o A positive school-wide attitude and involvement can assist considerably in countering bullying behaviour in schools. In addition to the role of management and staff, parents and pupils have a role and responsibility in helping our school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within the school.
  o Parents should also recognise that a school that openly discusses bullying is acting positively and that they need to work with our school to ensure there is a coherent, school –wide approach to tackling the issue.
  o In certain cases, it may be necessary for the school to seek the assistance of other local person and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE social workers, community workers, Gardaí etc.
  o Guest speakers may be invited to speak with parents and the school community in relation to bullying.

- **A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;**
  o All members of the school staff should have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as outlined in our school policy.
  o From time to time, time may be taken to discuss bullying at staff meetings or guest speakers may be invited to speak with staff.

- **Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-**
  o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils: and
  o explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying **(see school Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy)** and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, it is generally acknowledged that not one intervention works in all situations. A variety of some of the methods of intervention which teachers may use in our school include:

  o Each class being aware of our school rules which complement the school's Code of Behaviour.
  o A "worry box" attached to the wall outside the Principal's office for pupils to avail of.
  o A friendship/respect week may be held once annually during the year.
  o Anti-bullying posters and an anti-bullying display visible on the school corridors.
  o A recording form available to teachers to be used to record reports of bullying. Teachers will keep their own copy of completed reports for their own records and the original report will be stored in the Principal's office in a folder. **(see Figure 1)**
  o A sensory room for classes to use to take time out to reflect.
  o Ensure supervision at all times when pupils can access the internet **(see School Internet Policy)**
  o To focus on the topic of bullying on at least one school assembly in Junior Classes and Senior Classes.
  o Walk Tall programme is implemented in our SPHE classes.
  o Stay Safe programme is implemented in our SPHE classes.
  o Circle Time may be used to address feelings and actions.
  o Drama in class may cover topics such as self-esteem, feelings, bullying etc.
  o From time to time, guest speakers may be invited to speak with pupils.

- **Supports for staff;**
  o Members of the school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required and enable the staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and where appropriate, intervene in bullying cases.
  o Temporary and substitute staff should have sufficient awareness of the school's code of behaviour and its anti-bullying policy. Ms. Murtagh will create a folder with the relevant information for such teachers.
  o A copy of the policy is available to teachers on the school website, the shared network for teachers and in the school office.
  o Staff have access to the Walk Tall and Stay Safe Teacher resources which cover topics relating to self-esteem, bullying and telling an adult who pupil's trust.
  o From time to time, guest speakers and Continuing Professional Development talks on Bullying, the Stay Safe Programme and the Walk Tall programme, may be invited to speak with the school staff.

- **Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of intervention strategies);**
  - The primary aim of for the relevant/class teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
  - The teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
  - All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the class/relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. It must be emphasised that reporting incidents of bullying are not considered to be telling tales, but behaving responsibly.

  - Non-teaching staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to the, to the relevant/class teacher.
  - Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues, restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
  - It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.
  - Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
  - When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant/class teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
  - If it is established that bullying has occurred, the relevant/class teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
  - Teachers must use the relevant recording template at **Figure 1**, in cases where the relevant/class teacher considers the bullying behaviour has taken place so as to record it and report it to the Principal, Mr Lydon or Deputy Principal, Ms Murtagh.
  - It may be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
  - In cases where it has been identified by the relevant/class teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the teacher should make it clear to the pupil that he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and parents of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter.
  - Disciplinary sanctions may be required **(see School Code of Discipline & Behaviour policy.)**
  - 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.
  - In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed, the class/relevant teacher should, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
1. Whether the bullying has ceased;
2. Whether *any issues* between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable; and
3. Whether *the relationships* between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable; and
4. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
  - Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures **(see School Complaints Policy).**
  - 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.

- **On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy:**

A checklist will be used in undertaking the annual review of our Anti-Bullying policy. **(see Figure 2)** and our school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review. 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 will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

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

<u>**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.**</u>

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 or transphobic 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. **(see School Code of Behaviour & Discipline Policy)**

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 our school's code of behaviour (**see School Code of Behaviour & Discipline Policy).**
The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:
  - o **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault.
  - o **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon.
  - o **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in the bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected and undermined,
  - o **Cyber-bullying:** Bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies.**(See school Anti-Cyber-Bullying policy)**
  - o **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme, there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.

- o **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's property. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- o **Extortion:** Demands may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand).

The following signs and symptoms _may_ suggest that a pupil is being bullied:
- o Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her;
- o Unwillingness to go to school or refusal to attend;
- o Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- o Patterns of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- o Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- o Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- o Spontaneous out-of-character comments about wither pupils or teachers;
- o Possessions missing or damaged;
- o Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- o Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- o Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs **do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied** but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

4. The **relevant teacher**(s) for investigation and dealing with bullying is/are:
- o The class teacher
- o The Principal, Mr. Lydon
- o The Deputy Principal, Ms. Murtagh *(in the unlikely event of the Principal not being present/available)*

5. The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows:
- o School Rules and D.F.L (Discipline for Learning)
- o Assembly Time & Golden Awards
- o Drama lessons
- o Circle Time
- o Anti-bullying posters and displays throughout the school
- o Stay Safe Programme
- o Walk Tall Programme

8. The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in April 2015.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on our school website, is accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the school patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management o*nce in every school year using the standardised checklist in Appendix B.* Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request 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: _____   Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: _____   Date: _____

Scoil Naomh Eoin
Clonmagadden Valley, Navan, Co. Meath
Roll No: 20180Q

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

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_____        _____
_____        _____
_____        _____
_____        _____
_____        _____
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3. **Source** of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
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		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic / Transphobic etc	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Member 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: _____

Scoil Naomh Eoin
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Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin 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

Scoil Naomh Eoin   Principal: Mr. Lydon   Deputy Principal: Ms. Murtagh
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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