SCOIL CHOLMÁIN TUAIRÍNÍ

13415D

Anti-Bullying Policy November 2022

1. *This is the Policy on Anti-Bullying of Scoil Cholmáin Tuairíní, Maigh Cuilinn, Roll no. 13415d. This policy has been drawn up by the staff of the school in consultation with the school community and Board of Management.*

2. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the TUSLA, the Board of Management of **Scoil Cholmáin Tuairíní** 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.

3. 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

4. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policyIn accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

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

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

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

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

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying:

5. A consistent and clear approach to dealing with bullying when it occurs is essential to effective practice. The member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying will normally be the class teacher. However, a pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

6. 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:

Please see below the specific education and prevention strategies that the school will implement including the measures being taken by the school to explicitly address the

issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

- Effective practice includes prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.

- As self-esteem is a major factor in determining behaviour, the school will, through both their curricular and extra-curricular programmes, provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth. Initiatives and programmes focused on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying, including its causes and effects, should deal explicitly with the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying. Programmes will be adopted in accordance with Department guidelines as these programmes become available.

- Prevention and awareness raising measures must also deal explicitly with cyberbullying. The best way to address cyber-bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. Prevention and any awareness raising measures should focus on educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying, taking into account the scope for cyber-bullying to occur as a result of access to technology from within the school. See our ICT Policy for more on prevention measures.

- The school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. Please see Whole School Policy on SEN for more. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

- The school's prevention and awareness raising measures will be appropriate to the type of bullying and take into account the age and gender of the pupils involved. The school will work to raise the awareness of bullying so that all members of the school community understand what bullying is and how the school deals with bullying behaviour.

Examples of Programmes currently used in the school: (Please note these programmes may be changed/added to as more material and resources becomes available.)
- ✓ Webwise www.webwise.ie
- ✓ Restorative Practice
- ✓ Mindful Matters
- ✓ Zippy's Friends
- ✓ Fun Friends
- ✓ Friends for Life
- ✓ Zones of Regulation
- ✓ Stay Safe
- ✓ Walk Tall
- ✓ Annual Anti-Bullying Week
- ✓ RSE Programme

The school staff will discuss strategies regarding anti-bullying etc. during staff meetings complemented by an awareness week for pupils and parents. An awareness week can help give the parents of a pupil who is being bullied the confidence to approach the school and also helps to send a clear message to the parent of the child who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a major responsibility in addressing their child's behaviour.

- Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. 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 programme at primary level, is a personal safety skills programme which seeks 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. Scoil Cholmáin Tuairíní uses the Friends for Life programme, the only evidence-based, WHO approved, programme shown to improve the mental wellbeing and resilience of children by encouraging the understanding of empathy in ourselves and others.

- There is space within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. In English, there is a wide range of literature available which could be used to stimulate discussion. In SPHE, the interdependence of people in communities at local, national and international levels is stressed. In Geography and History references to colonisation, exploitation and dictatorships could be used to illustrate the negative aspect of power. The work could 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, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that may be used 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 and incorporate the tenets of Restorative Practice into everyday school life.
- 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

- 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 Coiste 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, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured investigating supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

Procedures for and dealing with bullying:
- The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved using the principles of restorative practice;
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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), bus escorts, 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, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
- Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

(i)   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;

(ii) When analysing 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;

(iii) 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;

(iv) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;

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

(vi)   In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents 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 an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;

(vii) 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;

(viii) It must also 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;

(ix)   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. This can have a restorative and therapeutic effect;

(x)   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 behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 1.

(xi)   In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

☐ Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;

☐ Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;

☐ Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and

☐ Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the School Principal or Deputy Principal;

(xii) 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.

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

Supports for pupils affected by bullying:

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied is in place. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. These supports will take place in Seomra na Smaointe or Múinteoir Áine's room.

Ongoing assistance for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will be part of the school's intervention process and part of our restorative practice approach to repairing relationships. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. The learning strategies applied within the school will seek to allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Teachers will revise and reinforce programmes as outlined above as situations arise.

- Pupils who **observe** incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti- bullying policy

- The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered.
- The template in **Appendix 1** for recording and reporting bullying to the school Principal or Deputy Principal will be a valuable and readily accessible source of data in relation to bullying behaviour in the school. Data gathered from these reports will be collated and analysed yearly, with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis must be retained and be made available to the Board of Management. Appropriate responses to any issues identified should be drawn up and implemented.
- The 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 individual pupils can be shared and effectively

Board of Management:

1. At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

(i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at **Appendix 1**) since the previous report to the Board and

(ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools*.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting must record the above but in doing so must not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

2. Annual Review by the Board of Management

- The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

- A standardised checklist to be used in undertaking the review is included in **Appendix 2** to these procedures.

- The school must put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the review.

- Written notification that the review has been completed must 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 standardised notification which must be used for this purpose is included at **Appendix 2**. A record of the review and its outcome must be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

3. 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.

Prevention of Harassment

4. 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.

5. This policy was originally adopted by the Board of Management on _____

   _____

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website 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.

7. 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. 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: 24-11-22   Date: 24-11-22

 Date of next review: November 2023

Appendix 1 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1.	Code & Class of pupil being bullied		
2.	Code(s) & class(es) of pupil(s) engage in bullying behaviour		
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.	Code of person(s) who reported the bullying behaviour		

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	
		Disability/SEN related	
		Racist	
		Membership of the Traveller community	
		Other (specify)	
8.	Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact		
9.	Details of action taken		

Signed:_____Relevant Teacher: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal_____

Appendix 2: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti- bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose.

Yes/No

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, BOM

Signed: _____ Date:_____
Principal Teacher

Appendix 3:
Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of **Scoil Cholmáin Tuairíní** wishes to inform you that:

1. 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].
2. 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