Gaelscoil de hÍde

DÚN EALA, DÚN TEACHAÍN, MAINISTIR FHEARMAÍ,CO. CHORCAÍ

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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 Gaelscoil de hÍde has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils, and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate (See Appendix 1) 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; involves collaboration among and between staff & pupils and promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective leadership
- A school-wide approach
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

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- 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 ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti- bullying policy.

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

'Unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeatedover 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
- ✓ 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.

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Isolated or once-off incidents do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Appendix 2 of this document.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- The class teacher(s) initially
- The principal thereafter if necessary

5. The following education and prevention strategies, at the appropriate and relevant level for eachclass, will be used by the school:

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- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. To achieve this school staff will make full use of those curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter- related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other social, health and media education programmes will be used as a further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour, particularly *Friends for Life*, *Circle Time* and *Keep Cool* which are other programmes used in the school.
- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online. To achieve this school staff will constantly remind pupils of the dangers associated with online material. Webwise.ie will be used to inform both pupils and parents of the proper use of the internet.
- Various speakers will visit the school.
  Garda Community Liason Officer/ /Fermoy Friendship Week.

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- Strategies suggested in Appendix 1 will be used to rovide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

- Teachers will avail of opportunities to influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner. (See Appendix 1)

- The work will be extended as appropriate into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise will be promoted through team sports, school clubs as well as through practical subjects.
- Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. GAA coaching is offered to some classes from outside agencies and teachers are also involved in coaching the school's soccer and gaelic teams. Coaches and teachers involved in such activities will avail of these opportunities.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

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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). With this in mind the schools procedures are as follows:

(i) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type, if it has, and how best the situation might be resolved

(ii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). In that way, pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor isof vital importance. It will 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

(iii) Non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned tothem, to the relevant teacher

(iv) 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

(v) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset

(vi) Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents

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(vii) Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved

(viii) All interviews will 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 and such information will be sought where and as appropriate.

(ix) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner

(x) If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements

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

(xii) Where the relevant teacher(s) has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will 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

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

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(xiv) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will 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

(xv)It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situationwhere disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school;

(xvi) 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

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

(xvi) Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, that parent must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Parent/Teacher Communication Guidelines

(xvii)In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

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RECORDING: Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the *template for recording bullying behaviour* (Appendix 3). All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

(i) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by therelevant teacher(s). A written record will be kept by the relevant teacher(s) of all reports.
(ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher(s) will 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
(iii) The relevant teacher(s) will use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour which is available on the server.

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

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.

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9. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16ú Márta 2016.

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

11. 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 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.

Sínithe: Máire Uí Riain .(Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bainistíochta)

Dáta: 19 - 9 - 2023 .