SCOIL CHROI NAOFA ANTI BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy is being currently drawn up as a result of consultation between staff, Parents Council and Board of Management. This policy is also linked to the following policies; Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Daily Routines, Attendance E-Learning, Intercultural policy, Social Personal and Health Education, English, Drama, Religion and Visual Arts and Special Education

RATIONALE

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Naofa has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the DES Circular 045/2013 and the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013), along with the support of Anti Bullying Support Materials (2014) issued by the PDST. The policy also complies with the DES *Circular 22/2010 (Primary) and 23/2010 (Post Primary) 'Social Personal and Health Education, Best Practice Guidelines' which* outlines the requirements of schools with regard to inviting visitors or guest speakers to work with pupils.

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 (Please see Appendix for key elements and practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate.)
  - ➤ welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
  - ➤ encouraging pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - ➤ promoting respectful relationships across the school community
- Effective leadership supporting a school culture and climate that celebrates difference, is key to good practice. Leaders strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable
- A school-wide approach to tackling bullying (management, staff, pupils and parents have a role and responsibility in helping to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere).
- 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 issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

The prevention of bullying is an integral part of our Code of Behaviour and discipline. Our active school policy is most effective because it is integrated in a climate which encourages respect, trust, caring, consideration and support for others. Teachers act as role models. Disciplinary measures are firm, clear and consistent. Staff use techniques based on positive motivation and recognition, which are most effective in promoting desired behaviour.

WHAT CONSTITUTES BULLYING?
In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, bullying is defined as follows:
Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, physical, social, emotional, psychological or cyber 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:
- **relational bullying** such as deliberate exclusion,
- isolation, malicious gossip, ignoring, taking someone's friends away, spreading rumours, breaking confidence, talking loud enough so that the victim can hear, giving the "look", use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
- **cyber-bullying** - bullying by means of phone call, text, email, and social network sites
- **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

Examples of bullying behaviours
- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping or "mess" fights
- Damage to property: items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- Intimidation: use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Extortion: demands for money or victims forced into theft of property for delivering to the bully
- Abusive Telephone Call: abusive anonymous telephone call and messages
- Name Calling: persistent name calling directed at the same individual which hurts, insults or humiliates
- Slagging: extends to personal remarks about hygiene, clothing, appearance, family etc
- Offensive graffiti
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- The "look"
- Invasion of personal space

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 will be dealt with in accordance with our school 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.

IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE VICTIM
Physical Indicators
- Unexplained bruising or cuts etc.
- Loss of/ damage to personal property
- Hunger or thirst,
- Frequent minor illnesses, headaches, tummy, vomiting
- Bedwetting, difficulty sleeping, nightmares
- Loss of appetite
- Obsessive behaviour, physical appearance, weight
- Stammering,
- Crying,
- Requests for extra money

Emotional/ Psychological Indicators
- Outbursts of anger, temper, irritability at home
- Bullying brother and sisters, parents
- Well behaved child suddenly troublesome
- Signs of depression
- Changes in: mood, appetite, sleep pattern
- Tiredness, neglect of appearance
- Expressions of sadness, worthlessness
- Nightmares, crying at night
- Restless, dangerous, wild, disruptive behaviour
- Cynicism, black mood
- Anxiety about travelling to and from school, requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school.
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching
- Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of self-esteem.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Spontaneous out of character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE BULLY
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self-discipline.
- They may lack any sense of remorse convincing themselves that the other person deserves the treatment they are receiving.
- They can be attention seeking: setting out to impress bystanders and responding to the reaction their behaviour provokes.
- They can lack the ability to empathise. They can appear unaware or indifferent to the other person's feelings.

- It is of note that pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour often suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem.
- A significant proportion of bullying is not merely behavioural but is rooted in a lack of respect for diversity and in social inequalities.
- It must also be recognised that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or may not recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others.
- It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may also have been bullied themselves.

IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE BYSTANDER
- Children who witness bullying may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. For example, children who witness identity based bullying and share that identity can experience anxiety and feel that their identity is not welcome.
- Some children do not help when another classmate is in distress for the following reasons:
  - Seeing an incident as insignificant or normal
  - Feeling that it has nothing to do with them because they weren't involved in the incident or aren't friends with the victim
  - Not wanting to add to the embarrassment of the victim or to incur personal embarrassment
  - Not getting involved because no one else is doing anything
  - May be afraid to appear uncool in front of peers
  - Wanting to get on with their own work
  - Compliance with existing routines or behaviours
  - Because they feel it is someone else's responsibility
- Children understandably have all kinds of fears about intervening to stop someone bullying.
  - Many witnesses to bullying may feel embarrassed or powerless, overcome by feelings of guilt or distress for not helping the person being bullied.
  - Some are afraid if they intervene the bully will turn on them.
  - Some who witness or participate in repeated bullying may become desensitised and lose the ability to recognise the detriments to aggressive behaviour.

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES
Building Self Esteem
- The staff endeavour to foster and enhance 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.
- Individual, class or school achievements are acknowledged and celebrated (e.g. Presentation of prizes, Green School Flag Award, Viewing of our School Website/Blog/YouTube videos.)
- Principal and staff acknowledge and affirm children on their achievements.
- Staff encourage children to use their talents.
- Staff encourage children to share their talents.
- If children comply with rules, they are rewarded with golden time on Fridays.
- Our pupils have many opportunities for extra curricular activities e.g. music lessons, sports club, camogie, basketball, guitar, choir, Spanish, Art, dance, Science club and Quizes.
- Every child from 2nd up to 6th class is a member of our school band.
- Children in the senior classes have opportunities to be involved in choral events, e.g. Peace Proms, Hallelujah Choir, School Choir, etc.
- New pupils and parents are welcomed into our school by the Diversity Committee. Every year we have an open night for new parents of new children and an open afternoon for new junior infants.
- If children are upset or worried they are encouraged to tell someone they trust. This message is taught in the Stay Safe & Walk Tall Programmes

- The staff will endeavour to build empathy, respect and resilience in children so as to empower them to deal with situations effectively
- During school year 2020 / 2021 the school introduced the "Weaving Wellbeing" programme. It is the first Irish designed positive mental health programme of its kind which aims to enhance wellbeing in children aged from 8-12 years within the framework of the SPHE curriculum
- The staff implemented this programme from 2nd class up to 6th class in school year 2020 / 2021 and it was rolled out to all classes from Junior Infants to 6th class in school year 2021 / 2022.
- The programme consists of 10 lessons for each class level and is grounded in evidence-based interventions from the rapidly expanding field of Positive Psychology
- It is underpinned by the concept that a state of wellbeing is not simply the absence of the negative, but the presence of the positive
- The Weaving Wellbeing programme give children the opportunity to weave positivity into their daily lives through a range of activities in a variety of areas e.g. resilience skills (including mindfulness) and developing self-efficacy through empowering beliefs

Promoting and Maintaining an Anti Bullying Culture
- The staff will encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. 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. Bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- The staff may adopt the following recommended initiatives (forms available in Anti Bullying Support Materials by PDST) :
  - A confidential pupil survey on bullying or an anti bullying/friendship questionnaire which can help the school discover the extent, location, frequency, & nature of bullying behaviour.
  - A confidential questionnaire which can help create a climate where pupils can believe that it is safe to tell, that bullying is clearly seen as unacceptable, that teachers take bullying seriously and that those involved in bullying will receive help.
  - A bullying sociogram which is a series of questions to uncover the social dynamic in a class. The teacher is better placed to identify strengths within the group, empower bystanders, and encourage mutual support between pupils.

We hold a No-Bullying/Friendship/Anti-Bullying Awareness Week twice every year to educate our students on:
- The definition of Bullying
- The different types of Bullying
- The role of the Bully, Bystander and the Victim
- Impact of bullying on the Bully, Bystander and the Victim
- How to respond to bullying behaviour
- Strategies to cope in a bullying situation
- How to treat others respectfully

The following activities have taken place during these weeks: class teachers teach lessons each day on some aspect of bullying from the Prim-Ed Bullying resources and Stay Safe & Walk Tall programme. Bullying posters are displayed in the hall. At assembly the staff focus on definition of bullying, types of bullying, the role of the Bully, Victim and Bystander. The children sing a Respect Rap and recite the No Bullying Pledge. Children participate in a poster competition. The Student Council drafted a No Bullying Charter. The senior classes knitted friendship bracelets for all the pupils and staff. The Diversity Committee presented "no bullying badges" to the staff and anti-bullying book tokens to all the children. The Diversity Committee created a power point on No Bullying for sharing with the school community. They also buddy children in the yard and in the classrooms during breaks. A kindness tree is erected where the children have the

opportunity to draw or write about kind people and kind deeds. Friday is called Blue Friday where staff and children wear blue as a sign of peace, safety, happiness and friendship. The Caring Kid Awards are presented to children who make a special effort in being extra kind during Anti Bullying week.

Our awareness weeks help give the parents of a pupil who may be experiencing bullying the confidence to approach the school and may also help to send a clear message to the parents of a pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a major responsibility in addressing their child's behaviour.

Professional Input
- The staff attended a seminar on Intercultural Awareness in 2013. Topics included diversity, racism and stereotyping.
- One of our teachers attend two RSE workshops every year in the Education Centre.
- Principal has attended an I.N.T.O. Workshop in October 2013 and a PDST Workshop in March 2014 and October 2015 on Anti Bullying.
- Guest speakers such as Brendan Smyth have been invited to speak to the children, staff and parents about bullying in particular cyber-bullying.
- The Gardaí have also been invited to discuss types of bullying with the children in the senior classes especially cyber bullying.
- Our guest speakers strongly advise privacy settings on online accounts and to teach children
  - ➢ that the best way to address cyber-bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place.
  - ➢ appropriate online behavior
  - ➢ how to stay safe while on-line
  - ➢ about developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying.

Safety Measures
- The Student Council assist the teachers in all the classes during recreation times.
- The Diversity Committee contribute to a happy safe school environment as they buddy new children settling into school.
- 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. Children are supervised at all times in the classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. A supervision rota is in operation for recreational times. The Special Needs Assistants monitor closely the children assigned to them. All staff are aware of children with behavioural difficulties. The following are the routines for recreation periods

Outdoor recreation
  - ➢ Junior and Senior Infants play on the lower yard and 1st up to 6th class play in the top yard. Games are painted on both yards. Playground games have been taught to children. Children from 1st up to 6th classes are provided with long class skipping ropes. Children are encouraged to bring in their own skipping ropes. Senior classes can play basketball.
  - ➢ Children are supervised by two or three staff members in both yards.
  - ➢ Pupils who have a note from parents requesting them to stay in at breaks will be supervised by the secretary.
  - ➢ If a child is injured in the yard, first aid is provided by a Special Needs Assistant in the yard or in sick bay depending on injury
  - ➢ Children are allowed to use the toilets with permission from staff

Indoor recreation

➢ If the children are having indoor recreation, the class teachers suggest activities for the children. The Student Council assist the staff in all classes except 5th class during small break, lunch time and indoor recreation. Certain arrangements are made for children who have behavioural problems, medical problems or special needs during the above periods, e.g. buddy system, a child is supervised more closely by Special Needs Assistant either in the classroom or in another room, or a child may go to another classroom for this period

➢ Supervision also applies to monitoring pupil use of communication technology within the school. The "Acceptable Use Policy" includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored. We have measures in place to ensure that children cannot access inappropriate material on laptops or iPads in classrooms or post offensive remarks on online sites:

  ➢ The Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites.
  ➢ Websites are filtered
  ➢ Staff laptops are password protected
  ➢ Children from 4th up to 6th class sign an Internet Permission Form in order for these pupils to access the internet under the supervision of the teacher.
  ➢ Pupils must ask permission before accessing school laptops, iPads or other technology
  ➢ Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones and other media devices to school. However in exceptional circumstances, if a child needs to bring a phone to school, their parent must write a note and the teacher will mind the phone until home time.

Curriculum Links

Staff influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular subjects. Pupils will be given an opportunity to act out bullying situations and to discuss appropriate responses to such situations and to look at the situation through the lens of the person being bullied, the person who is bullying and the bystander.

Social Personal & Health Education

- Teachers address the different types of bullying and related themes such as belonging, integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships
- Teachers teach The Stay Safe & Walk Tall programme to all classes except junior infants. This programme seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.
- "Weaving Wellbeing" programme was rolled out to all classes in school year 2021 / 2022.
- The Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme is taught in all classes. An integral part of RSE is learning to respect others; this will include respect for families or individuals who are different from the majority of people. The programme is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues/topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral and spiritual framework. Teachers will use their professional judgement and discretion based on the content or spirit of the policy to decide how or whether to answer certain questions in the classroom context. Our school will adopt the following strategy for responding to children who have questions about sexual orientation. They will be told that topics such as homophobia and transphobia are not included in the primary school curriculum but will be addressed in secondary schools. However children will be taught the core message of respect for all.

  If children are using the word 'gay' in a negative fashion it will not be ignored in the hope that it will go away. Homophobic insults are treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable. A school could decide to explain sexual orientation to the senior classes in the following way if it arises 'The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called

being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay.' To give factual information like this in an open and straightforward way may help to remove the secrecy which is necessary for any bullying to flourish. This will be done in the context of the school's ethos and RSE policy and with the awareness that primary school children are too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity.

- There is the Garda Schools Programme geared for 5th class pupils. It promotes sensible and responsible behaviour and fosters a positive attitude towards the Gardaí. They visit the classroom and engage in discussion with the pupils on the role of the Garda, road/cycle safety, bullying, vandalism, personal safety, drugs, and crime prevention.
- In 2012, the Garda Primary Schools programme introduced another initiative called 'Respectful Online Communication'. This initiative addresses the personal safety issues that arise through communicating using media and technology. It aims to foster a sense of care and respect for others online and to equip students with the skills to deal effectively with cyber bullying.

Drama – Children will be given the opportunity to act out bullying scenarios and to explore appropriate reactions and responses to bullying situations
English – Teachers will use poetry and story to stimulate discussion.
Art – The Students' Council organise a poster competition during Anti-Bullying Week for each class in the school. Pupils contribute artwork to a communal 'Kindness Tree' erected in the school hall during Anti-Bullying Week

Information Technology
- Senior teachers have copies of the Be Safe-Be Web Wise programme. This Education Programme teaches pupils about the safe and responsible uses of the Internet and is available to download at www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources/.
- The PDST has developed the *Webwise Anti-Cyber Bullying Primary Pack* in 2014. The centrepiece of the resource are three animated case studies and associated lesson plans available to download at www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources/
- Anti Bullying Support Materials are available on the PDST website.
- The IT Co-ordinator recommended a video link for senior children only http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_o8auwnJtqE&sns=em

Fostering respect for diversity
- Our school fosters a culture that is accepting of difference and respect for all members. Children are encouraged to respect difference and to appreciate the contribution that difference has to offer. An integral part of our RSE is learning to respect others; this includes respect for families or individuals who are different from the norm. Our staff are aware of The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 which provides protection against discrimination on nine grounds, one of which is sexual orientation. The Acts obliges the school community to protect pupils and staff from discrimination or sexual harassment
- A Diversity Committee was established in 2013 to welcome new children from different backgrounds, countries and traditions.
- A world map representing the country origins of parents and children who have come from different countries has been erected in the hall.
- We welcome children with special needs and the Board of Management ensure that we have the necessary resources to meet their needs. Resource Teachers and special needs assistants are employed.
- We welcome families who have not English as their first language. A Language Policy has been drafted by the staff and a language curriculum has been devised. The support team provide support for children with E.A.L. (English as an additional language).

- We celebrate children's different cultural backgrounds by studying their countries. We also have an Annual Intercultural Day where children wear clothes representing different countries. They also bring in food that is popular in their country. One of the theme's of the Green School Programme is Global Citizenship where the community are advised to think globally and act locally.
- Teachers are also made aware of children who are not Catholics. Principal & class teacher discuss with parents the Grow in Love programme, attendance at school masses, prayer services and morning assemblies.
- Teachers select books free of bias.
- Gender equity is promoted at all levels.

Prevention of Racism

Racial or ethnic bullying has been identified as a distinct element of bullying in and around multi-ethnic primary schools. Racial bullying mainly involves ethnic name-calling and other forms of verbal taunting. Physical assault also occurs. All staff recognise that racism is a serious issue they can expect to arise in a multi-ethnic school. Ignoring it sends the wrong message to children.
- Racism is now included in our Code of Behaviour & Anti-Bullying policy
- Our staff are taking a whole school approach by creating a positive, inclusive environment for all children in the school.
- Discussing, recognising & addressing racism are important steps in the process of integration. Staff have created an awareness of racism by discussing incidences & responses to date.
- Staff will respond to racist incidents immediately.
- If tensions in the local community spill over into the classroom or other parts of school life, the principal will consult with anti-bullying specialists, teachers unions, children and youth service professionals and relevant community representatives

Special Educational Needs

In planning units of work in bullying teachers will cater for individual differences and for individual needs. Children with special needs may need the support of a buddy. Gifted children will be challenged and weaker children will be given extra support. Activities will be adapted to suit individual needs. Teachers provide for children of different abilities. Some children need a lot of help. Other children need a lot of enriching or more challenging work. Hence teachers vary their teaching to include
- Adapting teaching strategies
- Individual and group work
- Use of concrete materials
- Use of supplementary textbooks and worksheets
- Support from other staff

The children are reminded of the school rules on a regular basis in each classroom and also at assembly by the principal. At the beginning of each term the Principal and staff bring similar age groups together to go over the rules in a formal manner. Children with Special Educational Needs may need help to learn appropriate behaviour and skills. Staff will check regularly that these pupils can understand the rules. They will help them to understand the purpose of a sanction and the reason for unacceptable behaviour. Some children may need visual prompts or pictures and may need to practice observing the rules with feedback on their progress

Links with Home
- The school ethos affirms and supports close links between school and home. Parents are encouraged to play a meaningful role in the formation of our policies. Policy making is a shared responsibility involving partnership between parents, teachers and Board of Management. Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters.

- We have a very active Parent's Council in the school.
- Parents of children of different nationalities are encouraged to visit the classroom and to teach lessons on their countries and culture

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING, INVESTIGATING, DEALING AND RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

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). Our school's procedures are consistent with this approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent/guardian understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are the class teachers, support teachers, Deputy Principal and or the Principal.
- Any pupil or parent/guardian are encouraged to report a bullying incident to any teacher/principal in the school.
- At Reception Meeting all new families are informed of the Complaints Procedure. Parents are reminded again at our AGM and the first meeting of the Parents Council
- Pupils understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.
- Teachers, special needs assistants, secretary, caretaker, cleaner must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Our school adopts the following problem solving approach to inappropriate behaviour:
  - ➢ We gather information in order to understand the context and factors that may be affecting behaviour.
  - ➢ We generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening
  - ➢ We decide and agree on specific strategies
  - ➢ We implement the agreed strategy consistently
  - ➢ We review progress by evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the intervention
  - ➢ We keep the relationship with the pupil as positive as possible, involve the pupil and parent (where necessary)

- We have adopted the following whole school strategies:
  - ➢ We have agreed ways of describing behaviour, e.g. school and class rules
  - ➢ We have arrangements for recording behaviour, e.g. yard books, incident books, accident books, end of year school reports and template for bullying behaviour.
  - ➢ We apply the following ladder of intervention:
    - a. *Support for all* - Most pupils behave appropriately with consistent, clear rules and routines. Minor misbehaviours are attended to by the class or yard teacher
    - b. *Additional support for some pupils* – Some pupils need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Otherwise they may be at risk of failing, behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions include referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the pupil, set targets for behaviour (behaviour contracts) and monitor the pupil in a supportive way.
    - c. *Specialised support for a small minority of pupils* - A small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. They do not respond to low-level interventions and will need a sustained and systematic response involving school and home. The Principal may need support to assist in responding to pupils with behavioural difficulties, e.g. National

Educational Psychological Service, HSE Community Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education, Child Guidance Services or Adolescent Mental Health Services.

- Minor, serious or gross misbehaviours will be judged by the teachers and/or the Principal based on the common sense approach with regard to the gravity or frequency of such misbehaviours. The application of sanctions is a staged approach, which means that initially misbehaviour is dealt with by the class or yard teacher by way of warning or advice but if it is more serious or persistent the Principal will be involved and finally the parents.

INVESTIGATING AND DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- The relevant teacher will inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- Parent/guardian and pupils are required to co-operate 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 will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity & due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
  - o When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
  - o 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 will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
  - o It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
  - o Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
  - o Teacher tries to resolve the situation.
  - o Teacher applies some of the following intervention strategies (Appendix 6)
    - ➢ The traditional disciplinary approach imposes sanctions where necessary.
    - ➢ Strengthening the victim approach is aimed at encouraging victims to be more assertive and hence raise their self esteem.
    - ➢ Mediation is an attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between the bully and the victim and is assisted by a mediator.
    - ➢ Restorative Practice is where time is given to both victim & bully after which an action is suggested, undertaken, accepted & monitored in order to restore their relationship.
    - ➢ The support group method is where the bully empathises with the victim and provides a solution, with the help of a group of pupils.
    - ➢ The method of shared concern is aimed at empowering pupils who have contributed to bullying behaviour, or who have become aware of bullying to act to resolve the problem.
- The staff may adopt the following recommended initiatives (forms available in Anti Bullying Support Materials by PDST) :
  - ➢ A confidential pupil survey on bullying or an anti bullying/friendship questionnaire which can help the school discover the extent, location, frequency, & nature of bullying behaviour.

- A confidential questionnaire which can help create a climate where pupils can believe that it is safe to tell, that bullying is clearly seen as unacceptable, that teachers take bullying seriously and that those involved in bullying will receive help.
- A bullying socio-gram which is a series of questions to uncover the social dynamic in a class. The teacher is better placed to identify strengths within the group, empower bystanders, and encourage mutual support between pupils.

- Teacher reports incident to the Principal.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent/guardian 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 parent/guardian 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 the pupil 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 will be made clear to all involved that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent/guardian and the school;
  - At this stage the pupil who has been bullied (if ready and agreeable) may wish to meet with the person who has bullied to put closure to the investigation and in the hope of moving on from the incident
  - Children concerned are subsequently monitored closely in class & during recreation periods.
  - A follow-up meeting / phone call will follow with the parents and the relevant teacher/principal at a later stage to review progress and ensure that bullying behaviour has stopped.
- 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
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the staff have dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the above procedures, the parents will be referred to the school's complaints procedures
- In the event that a parent exhausts the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to seek advice from the Ombudsman for Children and or the Health Service Executive.
- Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion are the same as in our Code of Behaviour Policy which is available for viewing on our website.

RECORDING OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR
- Recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.
- The investigating teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of reports of bullying behaviour, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher 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

- The relevant teacher will record the bullying behaviour in the template for recording bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  a) In cases where the investigating teacher has made every effort to address bullying behaviour, yet is still persists after 20 school days,
  b) In certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal as applicable
- Completed forms will be stored in filing cabinet in Principal's office until child has reached 21 years of age. Staff will have access to them if needed.
- Board of Management is informed of serious incidents without identifying the children, which are recorded in the Board of Management Minutes Book
- Formal written records are also kept of pupils on suspension i.e.
  a) The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
  b) The decision-making process
  c) The decision and the rationale for the decision
  d) The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension
- Principal keeps records of children who are suspended and expelled.
- Principal notifies Education Welfare Officer if there is an intention to expel a child
- All records are kept safe, secure, accurate and up to date.

FOLLOW UP OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR
The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows
- Staff will organise buddy/friendship groups for pupils who have been isolated and bullied
- Pupils will be encouraged to speak with a trusted nominated staff member if distressed or anxious in the aftermath of a bullying incident
- Pupils who have experienced bullying will be provided with opportunities to rebuild their self-esteem, e.g. being chosen to complete a task at morning assembly or jobs for the teacher/principal, being chosen to represent the school at an event, having their work displayed and praised etc.
- Similarly, pupils who have bullied will be encouraged to meet and talk with nominated staff member to talk through their behaviour and to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others
- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers
- 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. Pastoral care, Buddy system, Student Council, Diversity Committee, Group work, Circle Time
- Teacher and parents monitor the child very closely after a bullying incident. Teacher and parents will keep in contact until the whole incident has resolved
- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies such as NEPS, HSE, PDST, NCSE to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Serious instances of bullying behaviour will, in accordance with the Children First and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

Our Anti-Bullying Policy requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, pupils and parents.

* Parents are requested to read policy and their suggestions are welcomed before policy is ratified by Board of Management
* Parents are requested to remind their children of the contents of this policy
* Teachers will implement the policy
* Staff review this policy regularly. If there are any areas of concern for parents, Parents Council will be consulted. Any amendments are ratified by the Board of Management.
* This policy will be reviewed in the light of incidences that may occur
* Reporting of bullying to the Board of Management on the overall number of bullying cases and confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being dealt with or have been addressed but not resolved. All incidences are recorded in the minutes of the BOM meeting

SUCCESS CRITERIA

* Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
* Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
* Feedback from teachers, parents, pupils and Board of Management
* Staff meetings are held regularly.
* Parent/teacher meeting will take place once a year and informal meeting will take place during the year if necessary.
* A school report is sent home to every pupil at the end of the school year.
* Whole school Evaluations take place every few years.
* Our Whole School Self Evaluation takes place every year.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

This overall policy will be reviewed in the light of incidences, challenges and on-going good practice.This policy has been made available to staff, parents and the Board of Management and will be published on the school website after the policy is ratified. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested. 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 and provided to the Parents' Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management on 11th of November 2014
Last reviewed 21/06/2021.

Signed: *Fergal Naughton*   Principal

Signed: *Bernie Ryan*   Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 21/06/2021

Please see appendices
* KEY ELEMENTS OF A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE
* PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE
* TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Appendix 1

KEY ELEMENTS OF A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

1. The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
2. The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
3. The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
4. The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
5. The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of it's functioning.
6. The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
7. The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
8. The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
9. The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
10. The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.
11. The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
12. The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
13. The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
14. Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

Appendix 2

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour:

1. Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
2. Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
3. Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
4. Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
5. 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.
6. Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
7. Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
8. Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
9. 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.
10. Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
11. Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
12. Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
13. All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
14. Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
15. School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
16. Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
17. Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
18. Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Appendix 3

<u>**Scoil Chroí Naofa Anti Bullying Pledge 2014**</u>
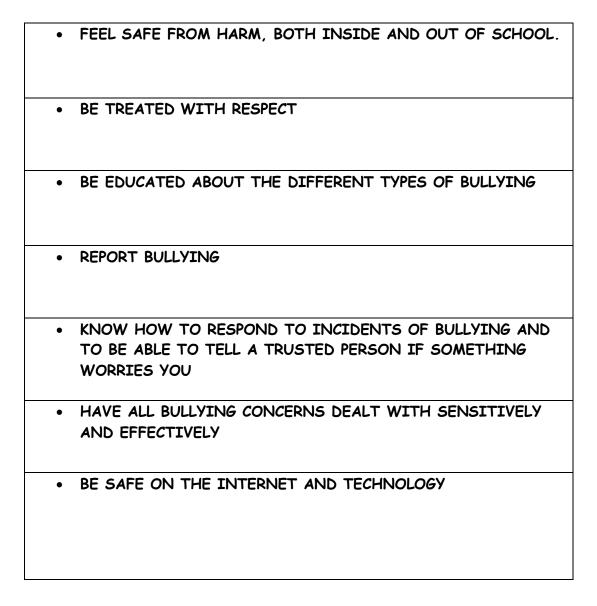
Bullying is Wrong!
- I will not be a bully.
- I will be kind, gentle and respectful.
- I will treat everyone fairly.
- I will always be helpful and friendly.
- I will always tell the truth.
- I will not stop any child from playing with other children.
- I will not hurt anyone.
- I will tell an adult if I see someone being hurt.

Signed_____Pupil

Signed_____ Parent

Appendix 4

<center>

**Scoil Chroí Naofa`s
Anti Bullying Charter of Rights**

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Bullying is kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings, name calling, taunting, mocking, offensive comments, making threats, excluding people, deliberately ignoring, gossiping and spreading rumours.

ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY HAVE THE RIGHT TO ……………

• **FEEL SAFE FROM HARM, BOTH INSIDE AND OUT OF SCHOOL.**
• **BE TREATED WITH RESPECT**
• **BE EDUCATED ABOUT THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BULLYING**
• **REPORT BULLYING**
• **KNOW HOW TO RESPOND TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING AND TO BE ABLE TO TELL A TRUSTED PERSON IF SOMETHING WORRIES YOU**
• **HAVE ALL BULLYING CONCERNS DEALT WITH SENSITIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY**
• **BE SAFE ON THE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY**

Scoil Chroí Naofa`s
Anti Bullying Charter of Responsibilities

Bullying is kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings, name calling, taunting, mocking, offensive comments, making threats, excluding people, deliberately ignoring, gossiping and spreading rumours.
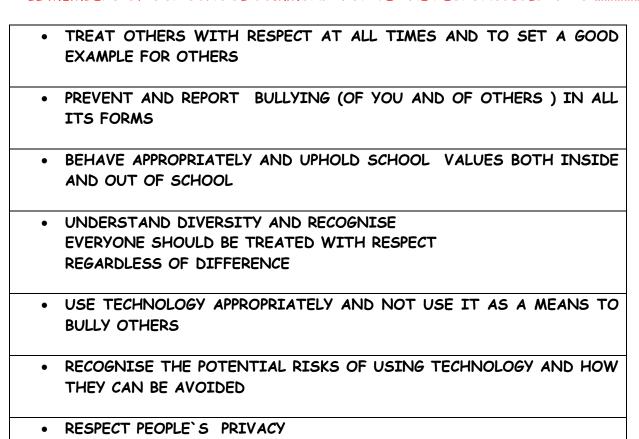
ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ……………

- TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT AT ALL TIMES AND TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS

- PREVENT AND REPORT BULLYING (OF YOU AND OF OTHERS) IN ALL ITS FORMS

- BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY AND UPHOLD SCHOOL VALUES BOTH INSIDE AND OUT OF SCHOOL

- UNDERSTAND DIVERSITY AND RECOGNISE EVERYONE SHOULD BE TREATED WITH RESPECT REGARDLESS OF DIFFERENCE

- USE TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATELY AND NOT USE IT AS A MEANS TO BULLY OTHERS

- RECOGNISE THE POTENTIAL RISKS OF USING TECHNOLOGY AND HOW THEY CAN BE AVOIDED

- RESPECT PEOPLE`S PRIVACY

APPENDIX 6

SIX RESPONSES TO ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. <u>The Traditional Disciplinary Approach</u> seeks to prevent bullying from continuing by imposing sanctions on the pupils who were engaged in bullying behaviour.

2. <u>Strengthening the Victim Approach</u>
This response helps the victim to cope more effectively in interactions with the bully. Victims learn to act more assertively and as a result, their self-esteem rises. Fogging is an assertiveness technique that can be taught to victims. The victim refuses to be disturbed or intimidated by the comments and reacts unemotionally so the intended insults are dissipated as in a dense fog.

3. <u>Mediation</u>
Mediation is an attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between the bully and the victim and is assisted by a mediator. A number of stages are involved. Each pupil speaks uninterrupted and the mediator summarises and guides them on to the next phase. Suggestions on how to improve matters are requested by the mediator and an agreed solution is reached. This is recorded in pupils own words by the mediator and signed by the pupils involved. The behaviour is then monitored and if necessary, further meetings are held.

4. <u>Restorative Practice</u>
In this response, the bully reflects on his/her unacceptable behaviour, experiences remorse and acts to restore a damaged relationship with the victim. The victim must be ready to accept the remorse or it won't work. Dialogue between the two is assisted by a third part. A restorative action is suggested, undertaken, accepted and monitored

5. <u>The Support Group Method</u> **(formerly the No Blame Approach)**
This response aims at getting the bully to move from one who behaves hurtfully by appreciating the suffering they have inflicted on the victim to one who is motivated, through empathic feelings, to provide a solution to the wrongdoing. This is done by means of interview with the victim and then a group of pupils, which will include the bully. Suggestions are made by the group as to how things can be made better for the victim and everyone takes joint responsibility to improve the situation.

6. <u>The Method of Shared Concern</u>
This is a method aimed at empowering pupils who have contributed or become aware of bullying, to act to resolve the problem. As it is assumed that bullying is strongly influenced by the relationships the pupils have with each other, an environment is provided in which the pupils engage in a negotiating process to bring about a peaceful and lasting outcome. This is done through one to one interviews with the suspected bullies and then victims followed by group meetings of the both sets of pupils and finally victim and bully, at which point they negotiate an agreement.