

# **Scoil Naomh Proinnsias**

## **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 Scoil Naomh Proinsias 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. A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
  - b. Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - c. Promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
  - d. Effective leadership;
  - e. A school-wide approach;
  - f. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
  - g. 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.
  - h. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
  - i. Supports for staff;
  - j. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
  - k. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

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

*Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:*

- a. *Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,*
- b. *Cyber-bullying and*
- c. *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*.

4. The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is as follows:
- a. A class teacher will deal with the bullying behavior following the school's 'No Blame' approach, and by utilizing the resources available from the 'Antibullying campaign'. The principal will be informed about the situation.
  - b. If the situation cannot be resolved at class teacher level, the principal will then become involved. Parents will also be informed, as appropriate.

5. 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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- a. Promoting values of self respect, friendship and responsibility.
- b. Developing children's self esteem through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behavior and manners.
- c. Bullying will be explicitly addressed, both informally and in lessons on good behavior, especially through SPHE lessons and from the antibullyingcampaign.ie website.

For 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes a minimum of four awareness raising exercises per year for each classroom in a two year cycle ( [www.antibullyingcampaign.ie](http://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie) ) pro actively explaining the nature and variety, causes, consequences and unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

- Pupils are helped to examine the issues of bullying in a calm, rational way, outside of the tense context of particular bullying incidents. In the process, they are made more aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms it can take.
- Pupils are made aware that the consequences of bullying behaviour, either spontaneously or through questionnaires that are regularly used in the school. **This survey should take place each term.** Pupils should be informed that they can tell their class teacher or any other trusted adult about bullying.

- d. The teacher will act as a good role model for the pupils.
- e. Establishing class rules with children involved.
- f. Supervision.
- g. Mobile phones are not allowed to be brought to school by the children. Should a phone be needed, the school phone may be used at the discretion of the teachers.
- h. The problem of cyber- bullying will be discussed in the senior classes. Should there be a problem with cyber bullying, the children are encouraged to tell a responsible adult.
- i. Leaflets / Booklets dealing with internet safety are distributed to parents in senior room parent/ teacher meetings.

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

bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the 'Dealing with Incidents' section of the *Anti-Bullying Campaign website*) :

- a. The class teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, whether these take place within the school or outside it, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end.
- b. The school, through the class teacher reserves the right to ask any pupil to give an oral or written account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that the pupil is guilty of misbehavior. Written accounts will be used as a last resort in the process of clarifying what has happened. The principal should be informed of any instance of bullying.
- c. The teacher will have a discussion with pupils who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour and any reasons for it. The teacher will take notes if relevant, often in the shape of the School Anti Bullying Resource Pack. Pupils should be identified using their first initial/ roll number as appropriate. In the event of that they have been involved in bullying behaviour, they will sign a binding promise that they will treat all pupils fairly, equally and respectfully, including the target pupil (s).
- d. The teacher does not apportion blame, but rather treats bullying behaviour as a 'mistake' that can and must be remedied. S/he emphasizes that the intention is not to 'punish' perpetrators, but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and honoured, there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.
- e. When an investigation is completed and/ or a bullying situation is resolved, the teacher will compile a file, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This will generally be the completed School Anti- Bullying Resource Pack, along with any other notes. Parents/ guardians of those involved will be informed. Other staff members will be informed on a need to know basis.
- f. If the interventions outlined above are unsuccessful, the following will apply. If a pupil has been found to be engaging in bullying behaviour, has formally promised to stop and has broken that promise, any of the following sanctions may be imposed:
  - S/he may be required to sign another promise, this time counter- signed by a parent/ guardian.
  - Parents/ guardians may be contacted and informed of the nature and extent of the bullying behaviour, with a view to agreeing a strategy whereby a promise to end the bullying behaviour would be honoured.

- Parents/ guardians may be invited to a meeting with the class teacher and the Principal and the pupil may be suspended if deemed necessary.
  - The case may be referred to the Board of Management and the pupil may be expelled from the school.
- g. All documentation regarding bullying incidents is retained securely and indefinitely, and is accessible to those named in the documents, in line with data protection guidelines.
  - h. The school code of behavior applies to bullying, if the above mentioned interventions prove unsuccessful.
  - i. Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school code of discipline.
7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :
- a. Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering him/her an opportunity to talk about his/ her experiences.
  - b. A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.
  - c. The school will inform parents of what has happened and of the measures being taken, and of the measures being taken to help them, and encourage them to report further incidents if they occur.

## 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.

## 9. Prevention of Harassment

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

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ .

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
12. 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 is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_