

Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa, Doon.

## 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 na Tríonóide Naofa, Doon has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013/
2. This policy aims to assist our goals at Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa in creating a safe and caring environment for all our students as outlined in our school mission statement.
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. 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;
  - b. Effective leadership;
  - c. A school-wide approach;
  - d. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
  - e. Implementation of education and prevention strategies 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.
  - f. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
  - g. Support for staff;
  - h. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour;
  - i. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

4. All members of the school community are subject to this policy. Bullying behaviour such as cyber bullying which breaks the law may be referred to the Gardai. The policy will be applicable during
  - a. School time including break/lunch time
  - b. Going to and from school
  - c. School trips and tours
  - d. Extra curricular activities
  - e. Any occasion when the student is in uniform
  - f. The school reserves the right to apply its Anti-Bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at any location, function or programme, if in the opinion of the school management the alleged bully has created a hostile environment at school for the victim. If the rights of the victim of the bully have materially or substantially disrupted the education process of the orderly operation of the school, the school also reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy.
  
5. 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:

- 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.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private 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 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 out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School*.

6. It is of the utmost importance that students tell if they are being bullied in school or if they know if another student is being bullied. The student may report bullying to any teacher or adult in the school community. Investigation of reports of alleged bullying are undertaken within our Pastoral Care programme.

7. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobia and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:
  - a. There is a space within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all in accordance with the ethos of Scoil na Tríonóide Noafa.
  - b. Management will inquire of any knowledge of bullying in Sixth Class in order to put preventative measures in place if they are so needed.
  - c. Incoming First Years are briefed on the Anti-Bullying ethos of the school during their orientation.
  - d. All year groups are informed about anti bullying during assembly.
  - e. The Anti Bullying policy operates in conjunction with the Acceptable Usage Policy.
  - f. We aim to facilitate a culture whereby students, teachers and parents are aware of their roles/responsibilities where bullying is concerned There is advice for students in Appendix 1 of this policy and for parents in Appendix 2.
  - g. CSPE/SPHE have significant roles in informing students about anti-bullying.
  
8. 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:
  - a. In 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. The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
  - b. Teachers will take a calm, unemotional and problem solving approach to incidents of alleged bullying.
  - c. All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
  - d. Should the relevant teacher establish that bullying has occurred appropriate written records will be kept. The record template (Appendix 4) provided by the Department of Education and Skills must be used when:
    - As stated above that the relevant teacher decides in his/her professional judgement has not been adequately addressed.
    - When the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that the bullying behaviour is recorded and reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
  - e. Non-teaching staff should report any incidents of bullying witnessed by or mentioned to them to Principal/Deputy Principal
  - f. Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving the issues.

- g. Incidents will usually be investigated outside of the classroom to ensure the privacy of all concerned.
  - h. If a group is involved each member of the group will be interviewed individually as far as practicable.
  - i. In cases where it is determined that bullying has occurred the parents of the parties involved will be contacted.
  - j. Where it has been determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour the school's Code of Behaviour will be applied. This will be a private matter between the parents concerned and the school.
  - k. In cases where the teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred and where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Deputy Principal or Principal. It must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template.
  - l. 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 practicable;
    - Whether the relationship between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
    - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the Principal or Deputy Principal.
  - m. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedure, the parents must be referred to the complaints procedure.
9. The school's proof of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
- a. Students who have been involved in bullying incidents will be advised by Form teacher/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal of the availability of the Guidance Counsellor/Pastoral Care team
  - b. The target of bullying may receive counselling to help him/her regain their self-esteem where affected.
  - c. The student involved in the bullying may also receive counselling to give him/her the opportunity to learn other ways of meeting his/her needs without violating the rights of others.
  - d. Students who witnessed bullying are encouraged to discuss it with a teacher and the reporter is made to feel safe and protected in disclosing the incident. If assistance with a Counsellor/member of the Pastoral Care team is required, their availability is ascertained.

- e. The victim of bullying will be informed on appropriate actions being taken following the disclosure. A follow up meeting with the parties involved will be arranged to resolve residual issues pertaining to the initial bullying incident.

#### 10. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils.

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

#### 11. 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 within legislation.

12. This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Trustees if requested.

13 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 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.

14. 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' Council. A record of the review will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

## *Appendix One - Advice for Students.*

### **Advice for Students on Bullying/Cyber Bullying.**

- It is essential to tell a teacher and your parents of any bullying. It is the only way it will be stopped.
- Always be aware of your online behaviour and how to protect yourself from cyber-bullies.
- Save messages or take a screen shot of abusive messages.
- Keep passwords private.
- Do not put too much personal information about yourself online.

- Do not reply to abusive messages/posts.
- If the bully is a “friend or follower” on Facebook or other social networking site, remove them. You should block unwelcome messages, videos, photos etc.
- Report the issue to the mobile phone or website provider. If sufficiently serious report the matter to the Gardai.
- If cyber bullying is impacting on your school life, tell a teacher.
- Always keep a detailed record of the bullying as evidence for the teacher.

### *Appendix Two- Advice for Parents on Bullying.*

#### **Advice for Parents on Bullying/Cyber Bullying.**

- Control the use of mobile phones/social media during homework and at bed time.
- Stress the importance of online responsibility and check your child’s history on social media sites.
- Prepare your child for the possibility of bullying and should it occur the importance of speaking about it to you.

- Continue to work on your child's self-esteem in order to build emotional resilience.
- Be aware of signs and indicators of bullying.
- Encourage your child to include others in their social group and be generally inclusive.
- Take time to understand the social networking sites your child uses.
- Use trusted websites for advice on keeping your child safe.
- Encourage your child to tell if they are being bullied.