

Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore NS

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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 **Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore National School** 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;
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

See Table A (6.1.5. Procedures): Key elements of a positive school culture and climate, and also Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a school culture and climate.

(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 (including awareness raising measures) that-

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils;

- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- provide for effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

(g) Supports for staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) 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:

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

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

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

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

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013*.

Examples of bullying behaviours

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
<p>Identity Based Behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	

Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion based on any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person’s disability • Setting others up for ridicule

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Refer to section 6.8.3. and 6.8.4 in the Procedures.

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

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

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, 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*):

Sample Education and prevention strategies

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect and kindness among all members of the school community and the introduction of the monthly 'Spirit of Rathmore' pupil Certificates in 2023/2024 to acknowledge kindness shown by children in every class as part of the *Cineáltas Action Plan on Bullying 2023-2027*
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of 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.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention. (Completed May 2021 PDST)
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community. Complete FUSE Anti-bullying Programme in 4th-6th classes each year. Share details of Anti-bullying workshops/webinars with parents organised by the NPC and Webwise.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Promotion of the Anti-Bullying code for the school through public displays in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with pupils and all parent(s) /guardian(s) of new students to the school are given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and the Anti-Bullying Policy.

- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; school assemblies by Principal / Deputy Principal.
- 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.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Health Service Executive (HSE).

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, FUSE Programme (DCU Anti-Bullying Centre) for 4th-6th classes, Webwise Resources, Weaving Wellbeing, Friends For Life Programme and the HSE Zippy's Friends Programme in Senior Infants classes.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

Links to other policies

- School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying include: Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance Policy/SPHE Policy.

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 2013):

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)

- 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. (See Appendix 3)
- Teachers should use the "Is it Bullying?" questions based on the DES definition of bullying checklist to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred. (See Appendix 4)
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) 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;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what?, where?, when?, who? and why?. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

- Irrespective of the stages decided on for the resolution of the bullying behaviour the following key questions using a restorative approach are utilized to ensure a fair process for all concerned:

Questions for the pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

Questions for pupil(s) who is bullied?

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time?
- How have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen next to make things right?

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) 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; (See Appendix 5)
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- 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;

-Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. on the Aladdin computer software programme. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must 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 school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 5 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 5** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) 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 Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. Decisions around record keeping should be noted in this policy.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby; [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf)

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Support for pupils who have been bullied

- It is helpful to lend supportive words and gestures in private (further damage may be done by lending too much support in public).
- Spend time with the pupil. Learn about what's been going on. Listen. Get the facts and assess the student's feelings about the bullying. Recognise that this discussion may be difficult for the pupil. Assure the pupil that the bullying is not his / her fault.
- Praise the pupil for their courage in discussing the bullying incident with you. Explain how helpful they are being by providing important information, not only for themselves, but also for the rest of the students and staff.
- Ask the pupil what he or she needs to feel safe. Those who are bullied may feel powerless, scared and helpless. Give this pupil a voice. Follow through and grant their requests, when

possible. Emphasise the confidential nature of the discussion and be clear about who will and will not be given this information. Get additional facts about the incident(s) from other pupils or adults so the bullied pupil doesn't feel that he or she could be easily identified as the sole reporter of abuse. Protect this pupil in conversations with the pupils who bully. Don't reveal his or her identity, if possible. Rather, explain that you've learned about bullying from a number of sources, including other adults.

- Communicate with colleagues about the bullying incident. Other staff members may have contact with the pupil who was bullied and can also lend support and assistance. Ask them to continue their observations to be sure that the bullying has stopped. Also encourage them to communicate progress or further incidents to all the appropriate staff members.
- Don't force a meeting between the pupil who is bullied and the student who bullied them. Such meetings can cause much further harm. Forced apologies don't help.
- Provide as much information as you can about your 'next steps'. Information is helpful for the pupil who is bullied to regain a sense of safety and control. Urge the pupil to report any further incidents of bullying that involve the same or different students.
- Encourage and support the pupil who is bullied in making friends. One of the most important prevention tools in helping each pupil at school to have a good friend to be with and talk to.
- Explore how the pupil's parents may be of support to them. Many children keep incidents of bullying to themselves and don't tell their parents. Explain that if their parents know, more support will be available. Talk with parents, if appropriate, about your concerns.
- Make a referral, if necessary to the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Assess, or have another professional assess, how much support and assistance this pupil may need. Bullying can be traumatic, just as other forms of abuse can be.
- Make sure to follow up with a pupil who has been bullied. Let the student know that you are a resource for him or her and that you plan to 'check in' with them in two or three days or beyond.
- Where a bullying incident is serious and the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services and/or Gardaí with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan. If the school are unsure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

Support for Pupils involved in bullying behaviour

- Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an on-going basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth.
- The learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

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.

The following Prompt Questions may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots?
- How will the student support/care structures support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
- How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the students be involved?
- In relation to the Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
 - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
 - Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage?
 - Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
 - Have pupils been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

9. Prevention of Harassment

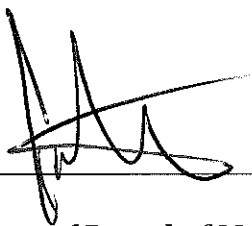
The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. 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 in May 2024.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is accessible to parents on request from the school secretary. A copy has been provided to the Parents' Association and 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 will be published on the school website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Parents' Association and, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____



Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

29/5/24.

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Appendix 1:

Key elements of a positive school culture and climate

- The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- 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.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
- 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.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are ignored.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
- Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Appendix 3:

Behaviour reporting Form: INFORMAL STAGE

Filled in by _____ Date _____

Name (s) of person reporting **alleged bullying** concern:

(May be anonymous)

Relationship to person being bullied, **allegedly** _____

Location of Alleged Incident _____

Name of pupil being bullied, **allegedly** _____

Class _____ Class teacher _____

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour.

Type of alleged bullying behaviour being reported (Tick as appropriate)

Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip	
Name Calling		Other (please specify)	
Cyberbullying			

Is this type of bullying identity based?

Yes		No	
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If YES, please tick the appropriate box:

Disability/SEN	Racist	Member of Traveller/Roma Community	Homophobic	Other (please specify)

Brief description of the alleged bullying behaviour and its impact:

Action Check List:

Who will be the relevant teacher? _____

Has the principal been informed yet? (Please tick as appropriate)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Is a parental meeting/contact required?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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RE: Meeting involving children.

When? _____ Where? _____

With whom present? _____

List of Actions taken:

Does this require an APPENDIX 5 form to be completed?

Yes		No	
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If not, please specify why?

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix 4 :

Checklist for Teachers...Is it Bullying?

Characteristic	Indicator	Yes/No
Effect	Is the person distressed/upset? (Hawker & Boulton 2000) Humiliated, In real fear, Angry, Sad, Depressed?	
Aggression	Is there physical, verbal or psychological aggression? (Olweus 1994)	
Imbalance of Power	Is there an abuse of power? (Craig et al 2000).	
Planned or Repeated	(Olweus 1993)	
Defencelessness	Does the person feel helpless? (Roland 1998)	
Unprovoked	Does the person ask 'Why me?' (Olweus 1994)	

Questions based on the DES definition of bullying.

	Consider...	Yes	No
1	Is the behaviour repeated? Only repeated incidents can be regarded as bullying. Once off incidents fall under the Code of Behaviour. However, see 2 below		
2	Have there been any offensive or hurtful public messages or images placed on a social networking site or other public forum? Can the bullying image, statement or message be viewed or repeated by other people? NB: One such incident qualifies as cyber bullying		
3	Is the behaviour planned?		
4	Is there unwanted negative behaviour inflicted on the victim?		
5	Is the unwanted negative behaviour of a physical, verbal or psychological character?		
6	Is the behaviour inflicted by one person, or is there a group involved?		
7	Is the victim deliberately targeted?		
8	Do the behaviours involve deliberate exclusion, isolation, malicious gossip or other forms of relational aggression?		
9	Are the behaviours targeting an aspect of the victim's identity? For example, physical, verbal or psychological aggression which is directed at their sexual orientation, their race, religion, ethnicity or traveller background.		
10	Are the behaviours targeting the victim because they have Special Educational Needs?		

Appendix 5

Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class: _____

2. Name(s) and class (is) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report -tick relevant box (is)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents -tick relevant box (is)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	

Toilets	
Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour - tick relevant box (is)

Physical aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip	
Name calling			
Other (specify)			

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____

Date _____