

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 Gneeveguilla 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;

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; 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) **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*.

4. The **relevant teachers** for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- ☐ The class teacher (teachers) initially
- ☐ The principal thereafter if necessary

5. The education and prevention strategies, at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by the school are as follows.

- ☐ Staff at all times will endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- ☐ The Stay Safe Programme has been fully implemented in the school. This programme is taught to all pupils in the school. It aims to prevent child abuse by equipping parents and teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect the children in their care. This is in line with Child Protection procedures. Parents are more than welcome to view materials at any time.
- ☐ Parents are encouraged to visit the Stay Safe website and a link is provided from the school website.
- ☐ The SPHE curriculum provides opportunities for role playing bullying incidents and conflict resolution.
- ☐ Extra- curricular activities are encouraged to help develop pupils' self esteem and experience the discipline of following rules in sport.
- ☐ "Friendship Stops" will be in use in the Junior Yard.
- ☐ Speakers will be invited to address staff and parents' groups in relation to cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- ☐ Information relating to cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying will be made available on the school website.
- ☐ The holding of a friendship week each year in conjunction with the Stay Safe Programme and Health Promoting schools.

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.

- ☐ Each teacher will record any serious incident of negative behaviour within the classroom. If a pattern of bullying emerges then this will be dealt with by the class teacher with the help of the principal if necessary and reported to the principal.
- ☐ The teacher supervising the yard will record any incident of intentional negative behaviour and these will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of discipline.
- ☐ The yard folders will be examined and recorded incidents will be investigated. These incidents will be dealt with under the school's code of discipline.
- ☐ Any other incidents will be reported to the principal.
- ☐ Any pupil involved in two incidents of intentional negative behaviour will receive guidance.
- ☐ If a pupil is involved in three incidents of intentional negative behaviour then the child's guardian/s will be informed.
- ☐ A further incident will involve guardians/s coming in to speak with the principal.
- ☐ If matters aren't resolved at this stage it may be necessary to consider suspension.
- ☐ At all stages records will be kept of any intervention used to resolve the difficulties.

Code of Discipline

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Communications with parents
- Temporary separation from peers, friends and others, removal of privileges.
- Detention during break.
- Prescribing additional work-educational.
- Referral to Principal
- Suspension

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows.
- ☐ All staff dealing with a bullying incident will, as well as reasoning with the pupil perpetrating the negative behaviour, also offer support and comfort to the victim.
 - ☐ In more serious incidents the victim will also receive guidance and guardian/s will be informed.
 - ☐ In order to build self esteem some children may be invited to assist in the organisation of, or participate in extra- curricular activities at break time.

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 published on the school website and is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. 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, published on the school website and be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:
(Chairperson of Board of Management)
Date:

Signed:
(Principal)
Date:

Date of next review: