Anti-Bullying Policy

Gaelscoil na gCeithre Maol

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 Gaelscoil na gCeithre Maol 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. This policy covers incidents that occur within school time or those that occur outside at activities organised by the school.

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.

Create a positive school culture and climate which:

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- 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;
- A school-wide approach.
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- Implementation of educational and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures)
- Addresses the issues of cyber-bullying
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

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.

Indications of Bullying

a. Anxiety about attending school.
b. Deterioration in educational performance.
c. Pattern of physical illness.
d. Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour.
e. Visible signs of anxiety or distress.
f. Possessions missing.
g. Increased requests for money.
h. Unexplained bruising.
i. Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her.

These are all signs of a variety of problems as well as of bullying.

Procedures for noting and reporting incidents.

a. If parents have concerns about their child being bullied they should inform the class teacher.
b. Reports of bullying either from parents or Staff members should be recorded. The teacher should investigate and act appropriately. If the teacher suspects that bullying occurred the Principal/Deputy Principal should be informed.
c. Parents of those involved should be notified and given an opportunity to discuss the matter by the Teacher.
d. It should be made clear that children reporting incidents of bullying are acting responsibly.
e. A record should be kept of how the matter was handled and the outcome. When the class moves on the succeeding teacher should be informed of any problems that existed.

Anti-Bullying Strategy

- Discretion when dealing with the pupils in question.
- A note kept of the pupil's behaviour/bullying

Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying.

a. Calm, unemotional, problem solving approach.
b. Incidents are best investigated outside of the classroom situation.
c. Teachers should speak separately to the children involved.
d. Members of a gang should be met separately and as a group.
e. Parents should be informed where it has been determined that bullying has occurred.

f. Check with the child/parents of the child bullied later to check that no further difficulties have arisen.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying include the following:

· Anti-bullying campaign resources Sean Fallon handbooks & www.antibullyingcampaign.ie
· Stay Safe Programme
· RSE Programme
· Weaving Wellbeing
· Mindfulness Hour
· Friends For Life or Friends First
· Incredible Years
· Zippy's Friends
- Stop Think Do programme

Cyberbullying
· Webwise
· A speaker every year for Second to Sixth Class on cyber-safety - Barnardos.

Intervention from NEPS or counselling service may be considered if deemed necessary

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.

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.

Ratification of the Policy

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, is 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.

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' Association.

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Ghlac an Bord Bainistíochta an beartas seo an _____.

Sínithe: _____   Síniú: _____

(Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bhainistíochta)   (Príomhoide)

Dáta an chéad athbhreithnithe eile: