

SCOIL MOCHEALLÓG

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. POLICY FORMULATION
3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE
4. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH
5. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR
 - 5.1 PUPILS
 - 5.2 STAFF
 - 5.3 PARENTS/GUARDIANS
6. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR
7. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR
8. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS
 - 8.1 SUSPENSION
 - 8.2 EXPULSION
9. NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL
10. RECORDS
11. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
 - 11.1 BEST PRACTICE IN THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING
 - 11.2 DEFINITION OF BULLYING
 - 11.3 SCHOOL CONTACT PERSONNEL
 - 11.4 EDUCATION & PREVENTION STRATEGIES
 - 11.5 INVESTIGATION & FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES
 - 11.6 WORKING WITH PUPILS AFFECTED BY BULLYING
 - 11.7 SUPERVISION & MONITORING
 - 11.8 PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT
 - 11.9 POLICY ADOPTION
 - 11.10 COMMUNICATION
 - 11.11 IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW
12. POLICY RATIFICATION

Code of Behaviour

Scoil Mocheallóg

1. INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of *Scoil Mocheallóg* has been developed in accordance with 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

2. POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- i. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- ii. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the Principal.
- iii. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
- iv. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's Approval.

3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
 - To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
 - To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
 - To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
 - To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
 - To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
-

4. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

5. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

5.1 Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- do his/her best both in school and for homework.

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- remain – on school grounds at all times
- obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils
- avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – in the school corridors
- etc.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
 - remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
 - behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
 - observe – the rules of general good behaviour
-

5.2 Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive Behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

5.3 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive Behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

6. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive Behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive Behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor Behaviour so that not only good Behaviour but also improvement in Behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include;

- 'Congratulations' and 'Good News' postcards sent to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Personalised letters to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Special privileges
- Etc.

7. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Ignoring staff requests

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Open Circle or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
 - Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
 - Intentionally damaging school or personal property
 - Stealing
 - Cheating
 - Use of profanity
 - Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
-

- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal, and include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

- In school supervised detention
- Report submitted to the Board of Management
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the Behaviour
- Implementation of extensive Behaviour management plan

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**
-

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

- **Expulsion:**

Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

8. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

8.1 Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an ‘**Immediate Suspension**’ to the Principal Teacher. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an ‘**Automatic Suspension**’ for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An ‘**Immediate Suspension**’ will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An ‘**Automatic Suspension**’ is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg*, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur ‘Automatic Suspension’ as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
or
-

- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
- or
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

8.2 Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Expel:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
 - iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than **5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
- b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management
-

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
 - ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
 - iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
 - ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
 - iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing
- The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

9. NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by *letter / using the school journal*
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register

10. RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Scoil Mocheallóg

11. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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 Mocheallóg* 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 by the Department of Education & Skills in September 2013.

11.1 Best Practice in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour

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 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;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- 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.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

11.2 Definition of Bullying

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.

11.3 School Contact Personnel

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

Each class teacher. Overall responsibility rests with the Principal and Deputy Principal.

Non-teaching staff such as Secretaries, Special Needs Assistants, Caretakers and Cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behavior witnessed by them or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher. A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behavior in accordance with the schools anti bullying policy. Each member of the teaching staff has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying and is referred to as the relevant teacher.

11.4 Education & Prevention Strategies

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:

The prevention of bullying is an integral part of this policy.

Education and prevention strategies will be implemented to explicitly address the issues of cyber bullying and identity – base bullying including in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying. These strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. Self-esteem is a major factor in determining behavior. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth. Programmes will focus on developing pupils awareness and understanding of bullying, its causes and effects (i.e. SPHE programme).

The best way to address cyber bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place.

Awareness raising measures will focus on educating pupils on appropriate online behavior, how to stay safe while online and also developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber bullying. All online access within the school will be closely monitored by the teachers. The school wide approach, involving school management, staff, parents and pupils is a key element in preventing bullying. Parents need to work with the school to insure there is a coherent approach to tackling the issue.

Tackling and preventing bullying will take particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN. Programmes will deal with inclusion, focus on developing social skills and cultivate a school culture that respects all children.

The teachers will influence attitudes to bullying behavior in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives and promote respect for diversity and inclusiveness. SPHE explores bullying as well as personal safety, integration, conflict and communication. The Stay Safe programme enhances children's ability to recognize and cope with bullying. The R.S.E. programme provides opportunities to explore human sexuality and relationships which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying.

11.5 Investigation & Follow-Up Procedures

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:

It is very important that all involved including staff, ancillary staff, parents and pupils understand the procedure from the outset. The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with

bullying is to resolve any issues and restore relationships (rather than apportion blame). The teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred. It will be made clear to children that reporting incidents of bullying is not telling tales but rather behaving responsibly. Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving issues and restoring relationships as quickly as possible.

Teachers will take an unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying. Interviews will be conducted outside the classroom in a sensitive manner with due regard to the rights of all involved. The relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why? If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first, thereafter, as a group where each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened. If the relevant teacher deems it appropriate the child/children may be asked to write down their account of the incident.

In cases where the relevant teacher has determined that bullying behavior has occurred, it will be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and he/she faces disciplinary sanctions. The parents of the parties will be contacted to inform them of the matter and give them an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions being taken by the school. Follow up meetings with the relevant parties will be arranged if the child who has been bullied is agreeable.

In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behavior has not been adequately addressed within 20 days after he/she has determined that bullying behavior has occurred it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the template at appendix 3. The teacher must take the following into account

- a. Whether the bullying behavior has ceased.
- b. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
- c. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as practicable.
- d. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the schools complaints procedures. In the event that the parent has exhausted the school's complaint procedures and is still not satisfied the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for children.

Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

All reports will be maintained in accordance with data protection legislation.

All reports including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. He/She will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussion with those involved regarding same. If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred he/she must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore as far as possible the relationship of the parties involved. As stated the relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behavior in cases where he/she considers that the bullying has not been appropriately addressed within 20 school days. The form must be completed in full and retained by the teacher and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal. At any stage throughout the process the relevant teacher may consult with the Principal. In some cases behavior may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. These will be dealt with through the schools code of Behavior or if necessary referred to relevant external agencies (i.e. NEPS)

Referral of serious cases to the HSE

Serious instances of bullying behavior will in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools be referred to the HSE Children and

Family Services and/or Gardai as appropriate. If school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the DLP will seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

11.6 Working with Pupils Affected by Bullying

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

Children who have been bullied will receive all the help and assistance which the school can provide. Counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills will be provided whenever this is needed.

Pupils who engage in bullying behavior may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

11.7 Supervision & Monitoring

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.

11.8 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.

11.9 Policy Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 13th January 2014.

11.10 Communication

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

11.11 Implementation Review

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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

12. POLICY RATIFICATION

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of *Scoil Mocheallóg* at its meeting held on

Date: 13th January 2014.

Signed: Canon Fitzmaurice, Chairperson, Board of Management.



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 absent.
 - 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 4 CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Yes /No

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	

Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed: Canon Fitzmaurice.

Date: 13/10/14

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Mr. Michael O'Connor

Date: 13/01/14

Principal

NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

To: _____

The Board of Management of Scoil Mocheallóg wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 13/01/14.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed Canon Fitzmaurice

Date 13/01/14

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Mr. Michael O'Connor

Date 13/01/14

Principal

APPENDIX 3 TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

--

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es) *)

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN	Racist	Membership of	Other (specify)
------------	----------------	--------	---------------	-----------------

	related		Traveller community	

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

* **Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.