***LISMIRE NATIONAL SCHOOL***

**Lismire, Newmarket, Co. Cork.**

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#### **Anti-Bullying Policy – date of review: 17th October 2023**

**Policy Statement**

The role of the school is to provide an appropriate education for all its pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education.

**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 Lismire National School, in consultation with the Principal, teachers and parent body, has prepared 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 positive school culture and climate which-

o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment;

o 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;

● Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

● Supports for staff;

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

● On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

1. 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 do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, 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*.

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*.

1. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: The class teacher(s), LS/RT, Principal.

**Grievance Procedure**

If a parent/guardian feels their child is being bullied the parent/guardian should:

1. Contact the child’s class teacher.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the **Chairperson of the Board of Management** with a view to resolving it.
4. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

**All contact and correspondence with the Board of Management must go through the Chairperson only.**

1. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he can contact the Office of the Ombudsman for Children which may independently investigate the complaint, provided the parent/guardian has firstly and fully followed the school’s complaints procedures.

1. 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

∙ Promotion of a positive school as per code of behaviour and school rules

∙SPHE Curriculum

∙Stay Safe Programme

∙Relationships and Sexuality Programme

∙Modelling positive inclusive behaviour

∙Effective supervision

∙Investigation of allegations and follow up

1. 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:

∙ When a complaint of bullying is made or when bullying behaviour is observed we have

 a duty to respond and the following procedure will be followed. Investigate the

 complaint by interviewing the children named and any others who may be able to

provide information. This may take the form of an oral interview or a request for a

 written account of any incidents. In their own interest children will be asked not to

 disclose the details of the interview to their peers. However, at all times they will be

 encouraged to discuss everything with their parents.

∙ At all times the procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying *(Section 6.8 of*

 *the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)* will be followed.

∙If we feel that there is evidence of bullying the following strategies will be used:

- Parents of the children involved will be informed.

- The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template at Appendix 3 (and a copy must be provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable) 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

- The **number** of bullying incidents will be reported periodically to the Board of Management. The details of the incidents will not be reported or discussed.

**Depending on the seriousness of each case some or all of the following sanctions may**

**be applied:**

∙ The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);

∙Reasoning with the pupil and reprimand including advice on how to behave.

∙Temporary separation from peers. Depending on the age of the pupil he/she may be

 requested to use this period to contemplate and write about their own feelings and the

 feelings of others on bullying.

∙Loss of privilege.

∙Suspension.

∙In very serious cases it is within the power of the Board of Management to exclude a

 pupil for a period or ultimately to expel a pupil. *(Rule 130 Rules for National Schools).*

∙In some cases, the Gardai or HSE may have to be contacted.

1. The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*)

∙Cooperation with parents

∙Improving self-esteem of targets by providing opportunities to improve their

 relationship with others.

∙The subject of bullying will be dealt with through the SPHE programme.

∙Efforts will be made to include material in various subject areas which will deal

with the theme of bullying.

∙Circle time, role plays etc. will be employed to explore the theme of bullying and to

 identify approaches to dealing with various situations that students may find

themselves in.

∙May consult HSE for support

1. **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.

1. **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.

1. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 25/11/21.

1. This policy has been made available to school personnel and provided to the parents through the website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

1. 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, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Nancy Kiely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Ailín Fitzgerald \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

Date: 17th October 2023