Tullamore ETNS 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 Tullamore ETNS 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 of Tullamore ETNS 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.

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.

The definition of bullying includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which would harm a pupil or undermine a pupil's self-confidence or self-esteem.

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

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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*):
  a. All reports of bullying should be noted, investigated and dealt with by the class teacher so that pupils will gain confidence in telling. A record of reports should be kept by the person to whom the report is made.
  b. Serious cases should be referred immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
  c. Parents should be informed earlier rather than later
  d. Parents must be informed of the appropriate person to whom they can make their enquiries regarding bullying
  e. Pupils must understand that reporting is not ' telling tales'.
  f. Individual teachers should record and take appropriate measures in accordance with policy.
  g. Non-teaching staff should be encouraged to report incidents. Discretion is important.

5. 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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

The prevention and awareness of bullying is integral to this policy and pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self worth through curricular programmes. The focus of Tullamore ETNS education and prevention strategy will be to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils. These habits will be explicitly nurtured through:

a. Core Value Strand Unit of the Learn Together Curriculum
b. SPHE Curriculum
c. Friendship/Wellbeing Week

The prevention and awareness of bullying will be proactively dealt with through:

a. Awareness Raising Strand of the *Anti- Bullying Campaign* or similar resource
d. SPHE Curriculum-makes provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships
e. The Stay Safe programme at primary level, is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying
f. RSE programme
g. Internet Safety Week; Presentations by outside agencies-Community Garda
h. Learn Together Curriculum
i. The work can be extended to other areas of the curriculum such as Art, Drama and P.E.

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:

The relevant teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end. All reported/suspectrd incidents are logged on the Form for Recording Bullying Behaviour, available on Google Drive.

In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved; in cases of cyberbullying An Garda Siochana will be involved;

The relevant teacher, in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner, should proceed as follows:

a. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. When this is difficult to ascertain (as time may have lapsed) a strategy should be put in place for a child to keep a record of the next incident of bullying behaviour so it can be dealt with as soon as possible.

b. 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 everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

c. If the teacher determines the bullying behaviour has occurred they will work towards a resolution of the situation with the pupils involved and the parents of the parties involved should be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. If this results in a successful resolution the matter is closed.

d. If this is not the case and the behaviour continues a meeting of the parents/guardians of the parties involved will be called and sanctions will be imposed; this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.

e. 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.

f. The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour. It is retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal.

g. All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school

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

Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behaviour,

- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the awareness-raising programme,

- Facilitate support for the child through the Continuum of Support model in school

- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

- Implementing a "buddy system" for that child if deemed necessary.

Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet,'

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this;

- Facilitating the child through the Continuum of Support model to access a programme such as ' Stop, Think, Do' or similar

- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),

- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,

- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,

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 as 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 first adopted by the Board of Management on 24/09/15.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent Teacher Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and to the patron.

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 provided to the Parent Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department of Education and to the patron if requested.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Next review: *October 2022*