Scoil Bhríde
Policy for Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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 Scoil Bhríde 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 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
     - 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
   - 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.

   For the types of behaviour included in our definition of bullying, see **Appendix 1**.

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.

4. Bullying may be reported to any teacher in the school. The alleged bullying will then be investigated by the relevant teachers in consultation with the reporting teacher.The **relevant teachers** for investigating and dealing with bullying are:

- Year Heads
- Pastoral Care Team (including the school counsellor and school chaplain)
- Deputy Principal
- Principal

5. The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows :

Adopting a school-wide approach
A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. This is undelined in the school mission statement and in the school aims

Scoil Bhríde Secondary School is an all-girls voluntary Catholic School, which values and maintains a Christian ethos of mercy, justice, and equality for all. Its aim is the pursuit of excellence in a centre of holistic learning. We actively nurture a caring environment in which respect for all is the hallmark.

School Aims
Our aim is the pursuit of excellence in a centre of holistic learning by developing the academic, spiritual, physical and social abilities of each girl, in a Christian atmosphere. To achieve this:

- We will continue to promote equality of opportunity for all using a student centered approach.
- We will continue to enhance a climate, which values individuals and nurtures learning through a disciplined environment.
- Pastoral care will continue to be an integral part of school life.
- We will avail of our personnel and resources to provide new and to develop existing courses that meet the educational needs as laid down by the Board of

Management

- Parental involvement is welcomed through our Parents Association and through Parent/Teacher meetings
- We will encourage responsible student participation through the Student Council and other school based clubs and groups.
- We support co-operation between the Parents and Student Councils.
- We endeavor to link the above aims with our school motto

"Serviamus in Veritate"

School Initiatives and Actions Include the Following:

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Throughout the year the school holds events where diversity is celebrated through participation and inclusion. These include:
  liturgical services, activities on the transitions year curriculum, European Languages Day, CSPE projects, involvement in musical and arts activities, involvement is sport.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community. This awareness is fostered at certain points in the day or week such as general assembly, tutor time, SPHE classes,Parents talks organised through the parents association talks and
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
  Acceptable use policy/mobile phone policy/social media awareness programme/internet safety day .
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment.
- Monitor system, mentoring, Lunchtime activities for 1st years/whole school and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents and guardians have access to the policy.

- The implementation of regular school awareness measures including the annual Jumpstart January Wellbeing Fortnight.
- The school encourages a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. Students are supported in feeling comfortable about telling. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. Students are given helpful strategies to assist them, including:

  ➢ Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class. Hand note up with homework.
  ➢ Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
  ➢ Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Parents and Guardians are encouraged to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol is developed in consultation with the parents association.

Section 6

The primary aim 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.
Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parents/guardians) understand this approach from the outset. Reporting, Record-keeping and Determination procedures are summarised in **Appendix 2**.

Section 7

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
  - Chaplain and Guidance Counselling
  - Peer mentoring system
  - Tutor/Year head system
  - Group work such in SPHE
  - Access to the Student Support Team

- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
  Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

Board of Management

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.

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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

6. 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.

7. 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.

Signed: _____   Signed:

_____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)   (Principal)

Date: _____   Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 1

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

General behaviours which apply to all	- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. - Physical aggression - Damage to property - Name calling - Slagging - The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person - Offensive graffiti - Extortion - Intimidation - Insulting or offensive gestures - The "look" - Invasion of personal space - A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	**Denigration**: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation **Harassment**: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual **Impersonation**: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name **Flaming**: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight **Trickery**: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online **Outing**: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images **Exclusion**: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety - Silent telephone/mobile phone call - Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls - Abusive text messages - Abusive email - Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles - Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures - Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours	

Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule