



**Meánscoil Iognáid Rís**

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Ratified by**

**The Board of Management on**

**18/11/2021**

**This policy is a living document and subject to ongoing review.**

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## **1. Introduction**

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 Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary 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 first published in September 2013.

While it is acknowledged that all members of the school community may engage in, or be victim of bullying behaviour, this policy applies, in particular to students of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School.

It relates to all activities during normal school hours and those beyond school hours which are deemed to have a direct impact on school life including but not limited to, going to and from school, and extra-curricular activities.

This policy has been developed through consultation, which involved all members of the school community, students, parents/guardians, and school staff.

The relevant legislation, circulars and guidelines informing this policy can be viewed in **Appendix 1**.

## **2. Mission Statement**

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School operates within the context of the Religious and Educational Philosophy of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The legacy of Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers, challenges our school to be inclusive, to be especially mindful of the disadvantaged and to focus on the importance of a value-based, Christian education in the Catholic tradition. The school endeavours to promote to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical, and intellectual development of our students.

It subscribes to a holistic view of education which is expressed in the following key principles:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality, and gospel-based values developing the whole person and celebrating diversity.
- Promoting partnership, building, and maintaining strong home/school links, while embodying the principle of inclusiveness.
- Excelling in teaching and learning. Each pupil, irrespective of academic ability, is afforded the opportunity to attain their full potential.

- Creating a caring school community based on respect, co-operation, self-discipline and working for social justice.
- Inspiring transformational leadership, thus eliciting leadership and responsibility in students.

### **3. Rationale**

The Board of Management and staff of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School believe that every student has the right to a safe environment, free from any threat to their welfare. All members of the school community are entitled to work in a caring and secure environment. In this context, bullying is unacceptable within the school community. The Board of Management accepts its legal and moral duty to provide an environment where bullying is actively discouraged. Our school promotes respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages, and ways of life in society.

### **4. Aims of the Policy:**

- To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour and to create a high level of collective vigilance.
- To engender an atmosphere of openness which encourages, facilitates, and supports students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that there is no ambiguity with regard to each student's right to a safe and secure learning environment.
- To ensure that each member of the school community is aware of his/her responsibility to protect those rights.
- To develop and outline protocols for reporting, investigating, and recording incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To provide a programme of support for (1) those who experience bullying and (2) those involved in bullying behaviour.

### **5. Definition of Bullying**

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools September 2013, p.9, 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.
- 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.

## 6. Types of Bullying Behaviours

(The list of examples below is not exhaustive.)

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>● Physical aggression</li> <li>● Damage to property</li> <li>● Name calling</li> <li>● Slagging</li> <li>● The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>● Offensive graffiti</li> <li>● Extortion</li> <li>● Intimidation</li> <li>● Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>● The “look”</li> <li>● Invasion of personal space</li> <li>● A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Cyber Consult Appendix 9</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation</li> <li>● Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean, or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>● Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name</li> <li>● Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>● Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>● Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>● Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>● Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>● Silent telephone/mobile phone call Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>● Abusive text messages</li> <li>● Abusive email</li> <li>● Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Face-book/Askfm/ Twitter/YouTube or on games consoles</li> <li>● Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>● Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
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**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).

<p><b>Homophobic and Transgender</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation</li> <li>● Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>● Name calling e.g., Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>● Physical intimidation or attacks</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background, and member of the travelling community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discrimination, prejudice, comments, or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>● Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Malicious gossip</li> <li>● Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>● Ignoring</li> <li>● Excluding from the group</li> <li>● Taking someone’s friends away</li> <li>● “Bitching”</li> <li>● Spreading rumours</li> <li>● Breaking confidence</li> <li>● Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>● The “look”</li> <li>● Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>● Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name calling</li> <li>● Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>● Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>● Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues</li> <li>● Mimicking a person’s disability</li> <li>● Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

## 7. Impact of Bullying

“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. Research shows that bullying can have short and long-term effects on the physical and mental well-being of pupils, on engagement with school, on self-confidence and on the ability to pursue ambitions and interests.” (Department of Education and Skills Anti Bullying Procedures, 2013; 1.1.

The Board of Management of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School, 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.

### Key Principles:

(a) 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.
- Promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

**(Consult Appendix 2 for tips on building a positive school culture and climate.)**

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) 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.

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.

(g) Supports for staff.

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

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

## **8. Relevant Teachers**

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Tutors
- Care team
- Wellbeing team
- Guidance Counsellor

**\*Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

## **9. Education and Prevention Strategies**

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School adopts a proactive and preventative approach to bullying. Here, we endeavour to foster a culture of positive relationships which are based on mutual respect.

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are listed below.

### **School wide approach:**

- A school-wide approach is adopted to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The value of diversity is promoted and celebrated to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- We endeavour to foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils are 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 develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it - prevention and intervention.
- Provision of supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Particular attention is given to identified "hot spot" areas where bullying is more likely to occur and to potential "hot times" when bullying is more likely to occur. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- The student council contributes to a safe school environment e.g., Mentoring / Cinnirí.
- The school runs a successful Transition Programme for the induction of first years which facilitates student bonding.
- The school uniform is required to be worn at all times. This reduces pressure on students regarding their appearance.
- The Anti-Bullying policy, Acceptable Use policy and the Code of Behaviour are all published in the students' journal. All three policies are required to be signed by parents/guardians and pupils at the commencement of each academic year.
- Awareness measures such as Anti-Bullying campaigns / Wellbeing Week promotes positive relationships in the school.
- Awareness of bullying is raised through the school newsletter, posters, and screens.
- The importance of positive relationships outside of school in addition to inside of school is promoted to prevent bullying occurring after school.
- A culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders is encouraged. In this way pupils gain confidence in 'telling.' This confidence factor is of vital importance. It is made explicitly clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- The protocol for who to tell and how to tell is explained to students.
  - Directly approaching a teacher, tutor, or year head at an appropriate time, for example after class, break or lunchtime.
  - Handing a note up with homework.
  - Making a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Getting a parent(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.

- Students are made aware of both internal school supports and external supports which are available to them.

### Implementation of curricula:

- SPHE and CSPE classes are provided for junior cycle students.
- RSE is provided for senior cycle students (incorporating education on sexual identity and orientation).
- Continuous Professional Development is provided for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Outside individuals/groups are invited into the school to address students/teachers/parents as appropriate.
- The school specifically considers the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

### Links to other policies

**(This list is not exhaustive)**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Relevant Legislation, Circulars and Guidelines</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	Section 15(2)(d) Education Act 1998 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 Circular M51/93
<b>Code of Behaviour</b>	Circular M33/91 NEWB Guidelines 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools' Section 23 Education Welfare Act 2000 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary Schools 2013
<b>Attendance</b>	Circular M51/93 Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 21 Education Welfare Act 2000 (Annual Attendance Report to NEWB & Parents)
<b>Homework</b>	
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Health & Safety Act 2005
<b>Data Protection</b>	Data Protection Act 1988

	Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003 GDPR 2018
<b>Special Educational Needs</b>	Education Act 1998 Equal Status Act 2000-2011 Education Welfare Act 2000 Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004 Disability Act 2005 Circular 0070/2014
<b>SPHE RSE</b>	Circulars 23/2010 (Post Primary) "Social Personal and Health Education, Best Practice Guidelines" outline the approaches to the consistent implementation of the SPHE curriculum including RSE.  Circular 37/2010 (Post Primary) 'Relationships and Sexuality Education' outlines the obligations of Post Primary schools to: • develop a school policy in regard to Relationships and Sexuality Education; and • implement a programme in this area as an element of Social Personal and Health Education at junior cycle, and as an RSE programme in senior cycle.
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	DES Directive Schools Guidelines 2002
<b>Internet Acceptable Usage</b>	NCTE Guidelines 2012
<b>Child Protection</b>	Circular 0065/2011 Child Protection 2018
<b>Critical Incidents</b>	Responding to Critical Incidents, NEPS Guidelines and resources for schools. (2017)
<b>Wellbeing</b>	The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines NCCA (2017)

## 10. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

Here at Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School, 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. (Rather than to apportion blame.)

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s), guardian(s) understand this approach from the outset.

### Reporting bullying behaviour:

All suspected bullying incidents should be reported to the year head and principal by the relevant teacher (**Refer to section 8**).

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated, and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

### Investigating and dealing with incidents:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Parent(s), /guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All parties are interviewed.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of **what, where, when, who** and **why**. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- 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 account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher. Those involved may also be asked to write down their account of the incident(s) before the group interview.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil(s) being disciplined, his / their parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Any reported allegations of bullying/harassment between students and staff should be dealt with directly by the principal.
- In relation to staff incidents, the matter should be referred directly to the principal and an Incident Report Form filled out. Refer also to the ASTI Grievance procedure. Procedures should be followed in accordance with the Dignity at Work Act.

### Follow up and recording:

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
  - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
  - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.

- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template. **(Appendix 5)**

### **Right to Appeal:**

- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that parent(s) / guardian(s) have exhausted the school's complaints procedures and are still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour:**

- It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.
- Our school uses the recording template in **Appendix 5** to record **all** incidents of bullying.

Our school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

#### **Informal pre-determination that bullying has occurred:**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher. **(Section 8)**
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

#### **Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred:**

#### **(Consult Appendix 4 for assistance in judging behaviour)**

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, 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.

**Option A – to be used for situations where immediate action can be taken:**

- The incident is recorded and reported to the Year Head and Principal
- Interviews are held and documented.
- Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) are informed.
- Consultation and agreement will be sought regarding the intervention strategy to be deployed.
- Deployment of intervention strategy.
- Progress review.
- If further action is required, it will be taken in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

**Option B –for use in more complex situations, in the absence of concrete evidence:**

- The incident is recorded and reported to the Year Head and Principal
- Individuals need to be monitored by parents (if involved), teachers, class tutor, lunchtime supervisors etc.
- Feedback to Year Head to take place as frequently as necessary.
- Students involved may be interviewed individually or collectively by the Relevant Teacher/ Tutor/ Year Head/Guidance Counsellor//Deputy Principal/Principal.

Students involved in either option A or B may be encouraged to visit the Guidance Counsellor for follow-up.

**Formal Stage 2 (From DES Procedures. Appendix 5 in this document)**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 5** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) 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.
- b) In certain circumstances where bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal or deputy principal.

As per our Code of Behaviour, extremely severe incidents must be reported immediately to the principal. These incidents include but are not limited to:

- Acts of physical violence.
- Any perceived or explicit threat or act, which places the student(s) in immediate danger. (E.g., Threat to pupil(s) on their journey to or from school).

When the recording template is used, it will be retained by the relevant teacher and a copy maintained by the principal. All records are maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

## **11. Established Intervention Strategies**

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, coupled with the ongoing nature of national and international research into the effectiveness of particular approaches, Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School, acknowledges that no one intervention works in all situations. However, the following are the approaches and established intervention strategies that have been approved for use in our school in the event of a bullying incident.

\*Where possible and appropriate, victim(s) of bullying behaviour may be consulted regarding the intervention strategy to be deployed. It is important to hear their voice, allow them to express their desired outcome, and for them to consent to the intervention process to achieve that outcome.

- Teacher interviews with all pupils.
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions.
- No Blame Approach.
- Supporting both the person engaged in bullying behaviour and the victim of bullying behaviour.
- Restorative Practice.
- Referral of students to outside agencies.
- Disciplinary action where appropriate in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Further information on these intervention strategies can be found in the document entitled "Anti-Bullying Support Material" Post-Primary Resource available from the PDST.

<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/PDST%20Support%20Material.pdf>

## **12. The School's Programme of Support**

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

- All cases of bullying will be treated in the utmost confidence.
- The student(s) will be provided with the opportunity to meet with the Guidance Counsellor and may be referred to the school completion programme coordinator, school's psychotherapist, or an external psychologist if necessary. Use of outside agencies following consultation with parents may be deemed preferable. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Secondary School liaises closely with NEPS, the HSE Children and Family Social Services and the Gardaí.
- Following an incident of bullying, the behaviour of all pupils involved will be closely monitored. Staff will be informed where appropriate and may be asked to observe and monitor the students. **(Appendix 6)**
- In a case where a sanction needs to be imposed, they will be enforced as per the Code of Behaviour, by the Principal / Deputy Principal.
- Our Guidance counsellor may be asked to provide training in resilience so that the victim is provided with strategies to deal with bullying and methods of responding.
- Pupils affected by bullying will be invited to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills.
- If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or the pupil 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.

## **13. 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.

## **14. 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.

## **15. Policy Ratification**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 18/11/2021.

## **16. Distribution of Anti-bullying Policy**

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

## **17. Policy Implementation and 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, 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. (Appendix 5)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix 1. Relevant Legislation, Circulars, and Guidelines informing this policy.**

- Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993.
- Circular M33/91: Guidelines towards a positive policy for school behaviour and discipline.

- The Education Act 1998.
- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.
- The Equal Status Act 2000 / 2004
- Circular 0045/13: Anti-bullying procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.
- PDST Anti-Bullying Policy Template
- PDST Anti-Bullying Support Material.

**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 ignored.
- 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.
  - o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors, and other areas of unstructured supervision.
  - o 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 3. Symptoms that may indicate that a student is being bullied.**

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school.
- Unwillingness to go to school.
- Pattern of unexplained absenteeism or lateness.
- Pattern of illness.
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour.
- Out of character comments about pupils or teachers.
- Possessions missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing.
- Unexplained bruising or damaged clothing.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If they are repeated, they require investigation.

#### **Appendix 4. Checklist for Teachers...Is it bullying?**

One of the primary characteristics in bullying behaviour is the range of serious effects it can have on the victim and others who may observe it.

These can include physical effects such as physical ill health (Slee 1995) for example headaches or/and stomach pains (Olweus & Limber 2000), physical injury (Olweus & Limber 2000) and aggression or violence (Olweus 1994).

Effects may include social maladjustment such as social isolation (Rigby 1996), loneliness which is a strong predictor of peer victimisation (Hawker & Boulton, 2000), poor social self-concept and low self-esteem (Besag 1989), and social anxiety (Hawker & Boulton, 2000).

Psychological Maladjustment may also be a characteristic for example levels of distress and upset (Hawker & Boulton 2000), fear (Olweus 1993; Rigby 1996), generalized anxiety (Rigby 1996, Slee 1995), and high levels of anger (Rigby 1996) (Borg 1998).

Depression is an effect but also another strong predictor of peer victimisation (Hawker & Boulton, 2000) and may sometimes involve suicidal thoughts or behaviour (Slee, 1995) (Hawker & Boulton, 2000)

Other characteristics may include the presence of an imbalance or abuse of power (Craig et al 2000), that the victim is generally defenseless (Roland 1998) and that the behaviour may be unprovoked (Olweus 1994).

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>
Effect	Is the person distressed/upset? (Hawker & Boulton 2000) Humiliated, In real fear, Angry, Sad, Depressed?	
Aggression	Is there physical, verbal, or psychological aggression? (Olweus 1994)	
Imbalance of Power	Is there an abuse of power? (Craig et al 2000).	
Planned or repeated	(Olweus 1993)	
Defenselessness	Does the person feel helpless? (Roland 1998)	

Unprovoked	Does the person ask, 'Why me?' (Olweus 1994)	
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	Consider	Yes	No
1	Is the behaviour repeated? Only repeated incidents can be regarded as bullying. Once off incidents fall under the Code of Behaviour. However, see 2 below		
2	Have there been any offensive or hurtful public messages or images placed on a social networking site or other public forum? Can the bullying image, statement or message be viewed or repeated by other people? NB: One such incident qualifies as cyber bullying.		
3	Is the behaviour planned?		
4	Is there unwanted negative behaviour inflicted on the victim?		
5	Is the unwanted negative behaviour of a physical, verbal, or psychological character?		
6	Is the behaviour inflicted by one person, or is there a group involved?		
7	Is the victim deliberately targeted?		
8	Do the behaviours involve deliberate exclusion, isolation, malicious gossip, or other forms of relational aggression?		
9	Are the behaviours targeting an aspect of the victim's identity? For example, physical, verbal, or psychological aggression which is directed at their sexual orientation, their race, religion, ethnicity, or traveller background.		
10	Are the behaviours targeting the victim because they have Special Educational Needs?		

#### Appendix 5. 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

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<p>3. Source of bullying concern/report (Tick relevant box(es)) *</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Pupil concerned</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other pupil</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parent</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teacher</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>4. Location (Tick relevant box(es)) *</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Playground</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Classroom</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corridor</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Toilets</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>School Bus</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	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"/>
Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Other pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
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. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Membership of traveller community	Racist	Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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7. Details of actions taken

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Relevant Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 6. Sample class observation form.**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Name of Pupil(s)	Behaviour	Directed towards

**Appendix 7. Notification regarding the board of management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy.**

Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to inform you that:

o The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in the Department’s Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

**(Appendix 8)**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

## Appendix 8. 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 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal**

## **Appendix 9. Tips and infographics advising on internet safety.**

### **Cyber bullying:**

Cyberbullying can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing bullies with another route to annoy their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying – the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; the false idea that the Internet is an anonymous space; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Here are some steps that you can take to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyberbullying

#### **1. Be respectful and careful regarding what you say online or what images you send:**

Remember that when you send a message to someone, you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. Therefore, it is vital to remain respectful to those you are communicating with, and to exercise due caution regarding the content of your messages.

#### **2. Think before you send:**

It is important to stop and think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your future employer to see that photo?

#### **3. Do not retaliate or reply:**

Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger is exactly what the bully wants.

**3. Do not forward nasty messages:** If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully and even be accused of cyberbullying yourself.

#### **4. Save the evidence:**

Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures, or online conversations. These will help you show to others what is happening and can be used by the school, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the Gardaí to investigate cyberbullying.

**5. Block the Bully:**

Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly.

**6. Make sure you tell:**

You are entitled not to be bullied and harassed online. There are people that can help. Tell a parent or adult you can trust. Tell your school. Your teachers or tutor can support you. Tell the service provider.

**7. Support each other:**

If you witness cyberbullying, support the victim, and report the bullying.

**8. Set a secure password.**

Devise a difficult-to-guess password with symbols or numbers and change it regularly. This will help prevent people hacking into your account and pretending to be you.

Infographics with tips on how to remain safe online.

# How to stop **CYBERBULLYING**

**STOP** LOG OFF the site where the bullying is happening.

**BLOCK** BLOCK EMAILS or messages. Don't respond to them.

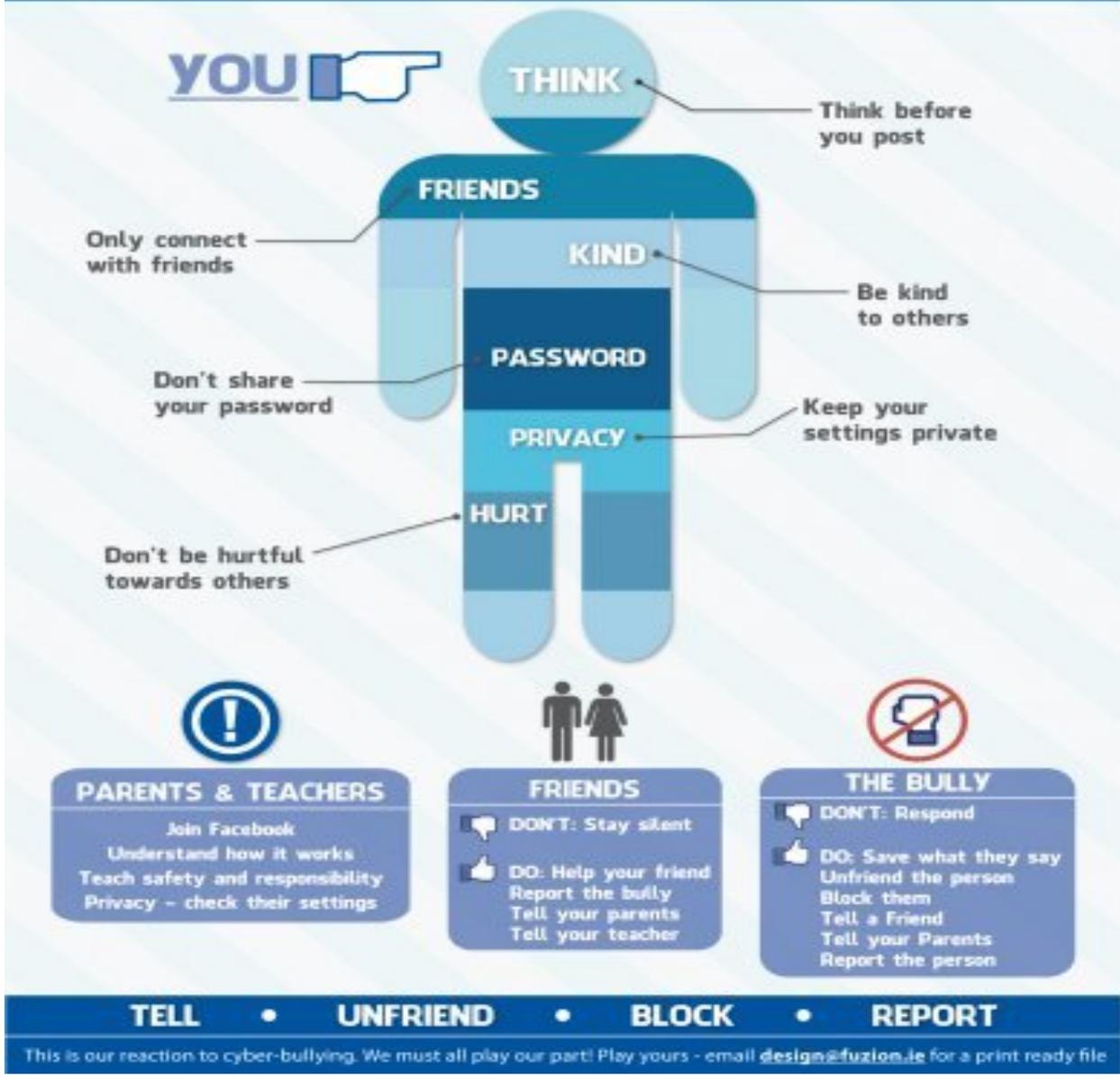
**REC  
RECORD** SAVE THE MESSAGE or email and show an adult.

**TALK IT OUT** TELL SOMEONE you trust.

**ROBIN SELID  
Foundation**  **Walk-Away  
Program  
Talk it Out  
Seek Help**  **University  
of Victoria**

Find out more at [www.wapprogram.ca](http://www.wapprogram.ca) or [www.mediaarts.ca](http://www.mediaarts.ca)

# safebook



## **Appendix 10. Summary of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle Secondary School's procedure in the event of an alleged bullying incident.**

### **A. Procedure for reporting bullying as a student:**

- Directly approaching a teacher, tutor, or year head at an appropriate time, for example after class, break or lunchtime.
- Handing a note up with homework.
- Making a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
- Getting a parent(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

### **B. Procedure for reporting bullying as a teacher:**

All suspected bullying incidents should be reported to the year head and the principal.

### **C. Relevant Teachers:**

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Tutors
- Care team
- Wellbeing team
- Guidance Counsellor

**\*Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

### **D. Informal pre-determination that bullying has occurred:**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the year head and principal of all incidents being investigated.

### **E. Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred:**

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, 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.

**Option 1 – to be used for situations where immediate action can be taken:**

- The incident is recorded and reported to the Year Head and Principal
- Interviews are held and documented.
- Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) are informed.
- Consultation and agreement will be sought regarding the intervention strategy to be deployed.
- Deployment of intervention strategy.
- Progress review.
- If further action is required, it will be taken in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

**Option 2 –for use in more complex situations, in the absence of concrete evidence:**

- The incident is recorded and reported to the Year Head and Principal
- Individuals need to be monitored by parents (if involved), teachers, class tutor, lunchtime supervisors etc.
- Feedback to Year Head to take place as frequently as necessary.
- Students involved may be interviewed individually or collectively by the Relevant Teacher/ Tutor/ Year Head/Guidance Counsellor//Deputy Principal/Principal.

Students involved in either option A or B may be encouraged to visit the Guidance Counsellor for follow-up.

**F. Established Intervention Strategies:**

- Teacher interviews with all pupils.
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions.
- No Blame Approach.
- Supporting both the person engaged in bullying behaviour and the victim of bullying behaviour.
- Restorative Practice.
- Referral of students to outside agencies.

- Disciplinary action where appropriate in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

### **G. Formal Stage 2 (From DES Procedures. Appendix 5 in this document)**

The relevant teacher **must** use the recording template at **Appendix 5** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) 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.
- b) In certain circumstances where bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal or deputy principal.

As per our Code of Behaviour, extremely severe incidents must be reported **immediately** to the principal. These incidents include but are not limited to:

- Acts of physical violence.
- Any perceived or explicit threat or act, which places the student(s) in immediate danger. (E.g., Threat to pupil(s) on their journey to or from school).

When the recording template is used, it will be retained by the relevant teacher and a copy maintained by the principal. All records are maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

### **H. Important Points to Note:**

- Our school records all incidents of bullying on the recording template.
- None of the parties involved in the incident has the right to discuss the issues with friends or other students in such a manner as to exacerbate matters for any party involved. Defamation is itself a form of bullying and will be treated as such.
- False accusations/reports are a serious offence and will be dealt with accordingly under the school's Code of Behaviour.