Summerhill College, Sligo

Anti Bullying Policy

Ratified: _____

Signed: _____

_____

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 Summerhill College, Sligo 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-

     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; and

     o 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-

     o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and

     o 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 will 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.

See Appendix 3 for a more detailed list of Types of Bullying Behaviour.

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

Principal
Deputy Principal
Year Heads

Every member of the school community should report the disclosure of bullying to a relevant teacher.

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:

- Full implementation of the SPHE, RSE and CSPE programmes and curricula to ensure that school culture supports a safe social and personal environment. Training for staff in delivering these programmes. Training for SPHE teachers on: resolving bullying, internet safety and cyber bullying, sexual orientation and homophobia.
- School wide training on bullying which would include all school personnel, students and parents.
- School wide delivery of lessons on relational aggression (A friend in Deed), Cyber Bullying (Be Safe-Be Webwise, Think Before You Click, Lets Fight It Together), Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying (Growing Up LGBT, Stand Up

Programme), Diversity and Inter culturalism (Changing Perspectives).

- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes around personal safety and cyber bullying.
- Whole school awareness measures eg. Mental Awareness Week, Friendship Week, parents seminars, term student surveys, regular reinforcement through the class tutor system with Year Heads ensuring regular awareness raising.
- Development and promotion of an Anti Bullying code for the school (See Appendix B). This will be included in student journals and displayed publicly in common areas of the school and in classrooms.
- 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. The Acceptable Use Policy for IT will ensure supervision is always in place when students are online. Students do not have access to social networking sites in the school.
- Mentoring will be used to help support the 1ˢᵗ Year students transition.
- Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell, eg:
  - ➢ Direct approach to teacher, for example after class
  - ➢ Hand note up with homework.
  - ➢ Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher.
  - ➢ Get a friend or parent to tell on your behalf.
  - ➢ Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all students
- Teachers as individuals have a major role to play in building a positive school culture eg Two actions each teacher can make to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying are: acknowledge that there are LGBT people in the school community, as pupils, as staff, as parents. Use inclusive language in the classrooms and create opportunities to address LGBT issues. Challenge unacceptable use of language every time. The use of the term "gay" as a derogatory term should be challenged every time.

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 :

(a) Initial Report/Disclosure of Bullying Behaviour:

Action taken by:	Procedure:	Support and/or sanction *may* Include:
Subject teacher, tutor, or any teacher	Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable.	Serious talk with student(s) re effects of their behaviour Verbal warning. Student(s) involved warned to stop. No blame approach.
Member of the Care Team	Speak to both students separately and try to resolve the issue.	Seek verbal agreement re future behaviour.
Teacher etc. should Always consult with an appropriate colleague or management.	Keep a record (informal)	Outline a fair outcome if appropriate eg an apology, return of property etc.

N.B. If the incident has not been resolved within 20 school days the relevant teacher must record the behaviour on the Incident Sheet for Recording of Bullying Behaviour (Appendix A)

Subsequent report/ disclosure eg second incident by the same student:

Action taken by:	Procedure	Support and/or sanction may include:
Relevant Teacher, Tutor , Year Head Involved	Incident investigated by the Year Head	Serious talk with the student re behaviour and future behaviour.
Member of the Care Team may be involved.	Principal/Deputy Principal informed.	Sign written agreement re future behaviour.
	Both sets of parents informed by the Year Head.	Parents/Guardians sign written agreement re future behaviour.
	Keep a record	Speak with the Chaplain. Peer to Peer Mediation may be used if appropriate.
	Year Head follows up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved	Detention or sanction as per the Code of Behaviour.

Where bullying behaviour persists/serious incident of bullying:

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or Sanction
Relevant teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal.	Parents and students meet with Principal/Deputy Principal.	Detention/Suspension (Code of Behaviour)
Year Head	Use established intervention strategies.	Parents are met and conditions set regarding student's future Behaviour.
Care Team may be involved.	Feedback to Year Head.	
The incident may be referred to the Board of Management at the discretion of the Principal.	Record kept.	Counselling offered. Contact with other support Agencies eg re anger management.
	Follow up progress With victim, bully and others involved.	Advice sought from NEPS, Garda JLO
		The future of the student in the school may be considered.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
   Pastoral system
   Home Youth Liaison Officer
   School Completion Officer
   Use of tutor/Year Head structures
   Care Team
   Individual counselling for students where appropriate.
   Group work where appropriate.

   A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will ensure that they receive counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

   A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying will receive assistance on an ongoing basis where necessary. For those with low self esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

   Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

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 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.

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

11. 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.

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 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: February 12th 2018

Appendix A 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	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix B Anti Bullying Code
(To be displayed in every classroom and in the Student Journal)

Anti Bullying Code

- *In our school everyone is valued.*

- *The students of this school have the right to be themselves and the responsibility to treat others as they would like to be treated.*

- *We speak out when we know we should. Silence allows people to suffer .You must act.*

- *If you are bullied keep telling until someone helps you.*

- ***Students who persistently bully may be suspended/expelled.***

Appendix C Information for Parents

How can I tell if my child is Being Bullied?
There are some signs to look out for if you have suspicions. These can include:

• Unexplained bruises;
• Afraid and anxious when going to or coming from school or work;
• School performance getting steadily worse for no obvious reason;
• Being generally nervous, tense, unhappy;
• Not explaining suspicious incidents / vague explanations;
• Signs of being isolated from others of the same age;
• Signs of regular interference with personal property, books, etc;
• Frequently asking for (or perhaps stealing) money;
Although these can also indicate problems other than bullying, it's important that you don't ignore them. Try to encourage the child to talk about what's going on, either to you or to another trusted adult.

How can I tell if my child is a bully?
Here are some indicators of bullying behaviour:
• A tendency to bully family members;
• Being a victim of bullying;
• Regularly witnessing bullying behaviour in their environment;
• Being frequently short-tempered and/or aggressive;
• Having past experiences which can still cause negative feelings;
• Bringing home items that you know weren't bought;
• Speaking of others in a negative way, perhaps on the basis of their appearance or beliefs or social

status;
• Showing an interest in violent behaviour;
• Showing little sensitivity towards others;
• Having low self-esteem;
• Being the subject of previous complaints or suggestions of bullying behaviour.

How do I Inform the School of my Concerns? (Parent)
• Contact the school.
• Make an appointment to meet with the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal in the school.
• Don't exaggerate. Be honest and stick to the facts as you understand them.

Appendix D Examples of Bullying Behaviour

Types	Examples
General	· Harassment
	· Physical Aggression
	· Damage to property
	· Name-calling
	· Slagging
	· Taunting
	· Verbal abuse
	· Offensive joke
	· Victimisation
	· Intimidation
	· Exclusion
	· Extortion
	· Graffiti
	· Threats
	· Intrusion through interfering with personal belongings
	· An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any

	individual's reputation
Cyber	· Silent phone calls · Abusive phone calls · Abusive text messages · Abusive e-mail · Abusive website comments/blogs/MSN/pictures/Facebook/Twitter · Online polls/fake pages/camera phone abuse
Identity Based	Ethnic Homophobic Transphobic Racial · Taunting · Name calling · Spreading rumours · Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic background
Relational	· This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: · Ignoring and isolation · Exclusion from a group · Taking someone's friends away · Spreading Rumours · Talking loudly about someone so that the intended victim can hear
Sexual	· Unwelcome sexual comments or contact

Appendix E 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 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	
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

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 **Appendix 4 (** *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, Department of Education and Skills)*

Signed _____   Date _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____   Date _____
Principal