Loreto Senior Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by Tusla, the Board of Management of **Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1, Loreto Senior Primary School, Crumlin** 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 & Post-Primary Schools.

N.B. This policy should read and comprehended in conjunction with other school policies relevant to bullying, particularly the following:
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **SPHE/RSE Programme**
- **Supervision procedures**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Acceptable Use Policy**
- **Attendance Policy**
- **RE Curriculum**
- **Code of Behaviour**

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) 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;

Elements of a Positive School Culture and Climate

The school:

- Acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- Acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- Accepts that personal identity is a human right.
- Promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- Prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- Has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of it's functioning.
- Has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.
- Identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.
- Takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs and anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- Recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed of procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- Recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.

- Recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- Promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- Promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all members of the school community.
- Acknowledges that staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.
- Acknowledges that all the adults in the school community have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with pupils and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for pupils.

(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; 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;

(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); and

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

3. Definition of Bullying

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 private 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.

Cyberbullying of staff, as well as pupils, is prohibited, under this anti-bullying policy.

Loreto Senior Primary School

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Examples of Bullying Behaviour (This list of examples is non exhaustive)

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation
- Physical aggression /damage to property
- Name calling or slagging
- Production, display or circulation of words/pictures/other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion or intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- The "look"
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyberbullying

- Denigration: Spreading rumours, 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/text messages / emails
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Snapchat/TikTok/Twitter/You Tube/Whatsapp/Instagram or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
- Agreeing online with abusive comments or images with e.g. 'like'. 'thanks', 'agree with' function (different apps have different terms)
- Sending or forwarding inappropriate or illegal images

Relational Bullying

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation, exclusion or ignoring
- Taking someone's friends away
- "Bitching"/Spreading rumours/Breaking confidence
- Talking loudly enough so that the victim can hear
- The "look"
- Name-calling or use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way

Physical Bullying

Behaviours include:

- Hitting, punching, slapping
- Kicking, deliberate stamping
- Striking with object or throwing object at someone
- Deliberate shoving

- Spitting, deliberately coughing on someone
- Threats of violence

Identity Based Bullying

(Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation)

Note: A single incidence of identity-based negative behaviour is not classed as bullying. However, it will be treated and recorded as harassment under one the nine grounds in legislation and dealt with according to the Code of Behaviour.

Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying
- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Taunting a person due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity)
- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner
- Physical intimidation or attacks or threats due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity)

Bullying: Race, Nationality, Ethnic Background and Membership of the Traveller Community
- Discrimination, prejudice, comments, insults, exclusion, or **name-calling* on the basis of colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
- Physical intimidation or attacks or threats due to race, nationality, ethnic background or membership of the Traveller community

Sexual Bullying

- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching/ Harassment
- Name-calling

Bullying due to Special Educational Needs (SEN) or 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.
- Physical intimidation or attacks or threats due to SEN or Disability

4. **The Relevant Teachers**

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- The Principal
- Deputy Principal
- All teachers

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

5. **Education and Prevention Strategies**

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

School-wide Approach
The school will:

- Promote and foster a climate of respect for all members of the school community.

- Promote the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping

- Foster and enhance the self-esteem of all pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities

- Provide pupils with formal and informal opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth

- Highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

- Ensure that all members of the school community are aware that name – calling of any description will not be tolerated. Pupils will be provided with formal and informal opportunities to develop a respect for each person's identity and the differences between people. The school will develop an anti-bullying code in conjunction with parents/guardians and pupils. The code will include a specific reference to name calling. This code will be taught to pupils in all classes and referred to on a regular basis. The anti-bullying code will be communicated to parents/guardians.

- Incidents of homophobic and/or transgender bullying will be addressed in the context of the ethos of the school. In these cases, the school will consult with parents/guardians and the issues will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the children's age and stage of development and in conjunction with the school's SPHE and RSE policies.

- Ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell. Examples may include:
  o Direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, e.g. at playtime, after class.
  o Hand note up with homework.
  o Put a note in an Anti-bullying or Worry Box
  o Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
  o Administer confidential questionnaires to pupils.

o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Carry out an annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources. There will be a specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s). Based on this audit provide staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff members develop awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives, the need to respond to it and prevention and intervention strategies.

- Promote school-wide awareness on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and school staff.

- Ensure adequate 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.

- Involve pupils in contributing to a safe school environment through student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.

- Ensure that the school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and that it is available to all parent(s)/guardian(s) on request.

- Implement regular whole school awareness measures e.g. Friendship Week; Good Manners Week, parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; student surveys.

- Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to communicate with the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.

- Ensure implementation of the Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology within the school is

strictly monitored, including the prohibition of student mobile phones and smart devices on the school premises.

Implementation of curricula

The school will:

- Ensure the full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes in all classes.
- Provide information to the staff on continuous professional development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Arrange the delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level where available. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- Specifically consider 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 policy is linked to other school policies, practices and activities that are relevant to bullying, particularly the following:

- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- RSE Programme
- RE Curriculum
- Supervision procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Attendance Policy

6. <u>Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying</u>

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. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of alleged bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

<u>Reporting bullying behaviour</u>

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring an alleged 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, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of alleged bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

<u>Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach</u>

- In investigating and dealing with alleged bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved. They may seek advice from the Principal or the Deputy Principal if they wish.
- 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.

- Incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

- Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;

- 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/her 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;

- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down or draw their account of the incident(s)

- 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 should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing 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/her how he/she is in breach of the school's

anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her 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 being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

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 staff

- 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.

- 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 a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is 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

Loreto Senior Primary School

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The 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. Records will be made and stored in the relevant pupil's file. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher and principal/deputy principal. These records are stored on Aladdin.

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 records on Aladdin which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

Formal Stage 2: Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)
All bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal. The relevant teacher must use the recording template in Appendix 1 to record the bullying behaviour. This template is available in Aladdin.

Records will be accessible to:
- the Board of Management
- relevant teachers,
- parents/guardians of the pupils involved (records relating to their children with all the details relating to others involved redacted) on request

- Past pupils over the age of 18 (records relating to themselves with all the details relating to others involved redacted) on request.

Pupils engaging in or affected by bullying behaviour will need assistance on an ongoing basis. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

Pupils who have been bullied:
- 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, to build resilience and to increase their feelings of self-worth.
- The Stay Safe Programme and the Walk Tall Programme will be fully implemented in all classes.
- Where possible School Completion workers will support the students either in a targeted or universal manner.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour:
- Opportunities will be provided for the pupils who engage in bullying behaviour to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and to increase their feelings of self-worth.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need support to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Where possible School Completion workers will support the students either in a targeted or universal manner.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher or staff member.

Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases, behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. To ensure that any such cases are dealt with appropriately, the school's anti-bullying policy is linked to the school's code of behaviour. In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought. Referral will also be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate.

Referral of serious cases to Tusla

● In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First)* and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult Tusla with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan".

● Serious instances of bullying behaviour will in accordance with the *Children First* and *The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* be referred to Tusla and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

● The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to Tusla, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from Tusla.

7. **Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

Loreto Senior Primary School

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.

8. **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.

9. **Ratification by the Board of Management**

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on: 1/12/2021.

10. **Availability and Access**

This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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

Signed:_____

Date: _____

Loreto Senior Primary School

Appendix 1

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE IN ALADDIN (Alleged Bullying Report in Templates). PLEASE USE THE ONLINE VERSION.

Add all students names, including pupil allegedly bullied and pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour above. Change description to reflect the incident.

1. Name of pupil allegedly bullied and class group

Name: Class Group:

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour

3. Source of alleged bullying concern/report (enter X in relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (enter X in relevant box(es))*

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

6. Type of alleged bullying behaviour (enter X in relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	

Loreto Senior Primary School

Name Calling		Other (specify)	

7. Where alleged 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 alleged bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

* Note: The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.