



# Scoil an Linbh Íosa

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Introductory Statement

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of Scoil an Linbh Íosa has adopted the following Anti-Bullying Policy within the framework of the school's existing Code of Behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published by the Department of Education in September 2013.

### Key Principles

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 that;
  - 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;
  - promotes restorative practice within the school;
  - has the capacity to adapt in response to pupils' needs; and
  - acknowledges that staff members share a responsibility to model respectful behaviour, at all times, and to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour
- (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 builds empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - that explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying
- (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

### **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;

- I. Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying, cyber-bullying; and
- II. 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 do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

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

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

See Appendix A for Examples of Bullying Behaviours

The relevant teacher(s) responsible for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows;

- o The class teacher and/or SET teacher;
- o The principal and/or deputy principal;
- o Any teacher can act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) used by the school are outlined in Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

See Appendix B for Sample Education and Prevention Strategies

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 comply with Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

## **Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

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.

### **A. Reporting Bullying Behaviour**

- 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 and cleaners are required to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

### **B. Investigating and Dealing with Incidents: Style of approach (Section 6.8.9 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*)**

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Teachers will take a balanced, problem-solving approach.
- (d) Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure;
  - the privacy of all involved; and
  - that all interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
- (e) When interviewing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will endeavour to include restorative questions such as;
  - From your point of view, what happened?
  - What do you remember thinking at the time?
  - How were you feeling?
  - Who else has been affected by this?
  - How do you feel now?
  - How do you think the other person feels?
  - What could you have done differently?
  - What would you like to see happen next?

- (f) If a group is involved, each member may be interviewed individually at first. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s). The *"Thinking about my Behaviour"* sheet (Appendix D) may be useful.
- (g) A restorative circle or a group meeting may be used, where each member is asked for his/her account of what happened, to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
  - Every effort will be made to support members of the group, should they experience peer pressure;
  - 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 will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to discuss the restoration of relationships;
  - Those involved will be reminded of the school's *Anti- Bullying Pledge* (Appendix E);
  - A support plan may be put in place;
  - In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, it will be made clear to all parties that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;
  - In cases where sanctions are deemed necessary, they will be implemented in line with the school's *Code of Behaviour Policy*.

### **C. Follow Up**

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.

Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged separately, with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date, if all parties are 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) will 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 will advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **D. Recording /Reporting of Bullying Behaviour**

All recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.

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

### ***Informal Stage: Pre-Determination that Bullying has Occurred***

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

### ***Formal Stage 1: Determination that Bullying has Occurred***

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will 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.
- Records will be kept in a file by the class teacher.
- At the end of the year records will be transferred to the relevant pupil's file in the admin office.
- Unless a child protection or personal injury issue arises (e.g. in cases of extreme physical bullying), records will be retained in line with the school policy on retention of student records.
- Where a child protection issue arises, records will be retained forever. Where a potential personal injury claim arises, records will be retained in line with our *Data Protection Policy*.

### ***Formal Stage 2 - DES Procedures***

- The relevant teacher should use the Template for recording bullying behaviour (Appendix C) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances;
  - I. 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;
  - II. In cases where the behaviour is deemed to be a gross misdemeanour as defined in school's *Code of Behaviour*.
- In such circumstances the bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal or deputy principal as applicable
- When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher and a copy maintained by the principal. This is then retained in line with our *Data Protection Policy*.

### **Established Intervention Strategies**

- Anti Bullying Campaign that includes class surveys, anti bullying pledge and anti bullying promise
- Teacher interviews with 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
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Communication box

### **Support Programmes**

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying complies with Section 6.8.16 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and includes;

- School based activities as part of the SPHE/RE programmes to build self esteem and build resilience, and to develop coping strategies, friendships and social skills;
- Pupils and Staff are encouraged to 'Be FRESH' (Fair, Respectful, Engaged, Safe and Honest) in their daily interactions with each other;
- Explicit teaching of the 'FRESH' concept;
- The *Friends for Life Programme*;
- Mindfulness practice;
- Pastoral Care;
- An understanding of the responsibilities of bystanders will be fostered, especially the importance of telling an adult.

If pupils require counselling, or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for pupils affected by bullying or those instigating the bullying behaviour.

### **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.

### **Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under Equality Legislation (The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018), take all such steps as are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff, or the harassment of pupils or staff, on any of the nine grounds specified in that legislation, i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

### **Ratification**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 08.06.2023.

### **Communication**

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request, and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and the patron, if requested.

### **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 teaching and non-teaching staff, published on the school website or otherwise made readily accessible to parents/guardians and pupils on request, 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 of Education.

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



(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 08.06.2023

## **Appendix A: *Some Examples of Bullying Behaviours (this list is not exhaustive)***

### ***General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying***

Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the Equality Legislation: gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed
- Persistent teasing
- Silent treatment, exclusion and isolation
- Mocking and harassment
- Offensive written comments
- Trying to influence other students against a particular boy/ girl
- Lies, rumours

### ***Cyber***

- Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- Harassment: Sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- Impersonation: Posting messages or creating online profiles under another person's name or identity
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight
- Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive communication on social networks
- Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology



### ***Identity Based Behaviours***

Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation;

- Gender (including transgender)
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Traveller community

### **Homophobic and Transgender**

- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation
- Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner
- Physical intimidation or attacks
- Threats

### **Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller Community**

- Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
- Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

### **Relational**

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

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation & exclusion
- Ignoring
- Taking someone's friends away
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- Use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way

### **Sexual**

- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

### **Special Educational Needs, Disability**

- Name calling
- Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.
- Mimicking a person's disability
- Setting others up for ridicule

## Appendix B: Sample Education and Prevention Strategies

### School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
  - The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
  - The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
  - Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
  - School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
  - 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.
  - Talks for parents/guardians.
  - Development and promotion of an *Anti-Bullying Pledge* for the school -to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
  - Involvement of pupils in spreading the message that bullying behaviour is unacceptable and have all staff committed to tackling bullying throughout the school.
  - The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils, in an age appropriate way, and is available to view on the school website. A hard copy is available from the school office.
  - The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. assemblies where anti-bullying is regularly addressed and pledge is recited, an awareness day/week, and display of children's work in relation to anti-bullying.
  - Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling' and understand that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
  - Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell;
1. Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class;
  2. Hand a note up with homework or put in worries box;
  3. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf;
  4. Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils;
  5. Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an *Acceptable Use Policy* in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

#### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the *SPHE, Friends for Life, RSE, Stay Safe and Walk Tall* Programmes.
- The school will 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.

## Appendix C 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


### 3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D**     *Thinking about my behaviour*

**Student Reflective Sheet / Log.**

What happened?

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What were you thinking about at the time?

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What have your thoughts been since?

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Who has been affected by what you did?

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In what way have they been affected?

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What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

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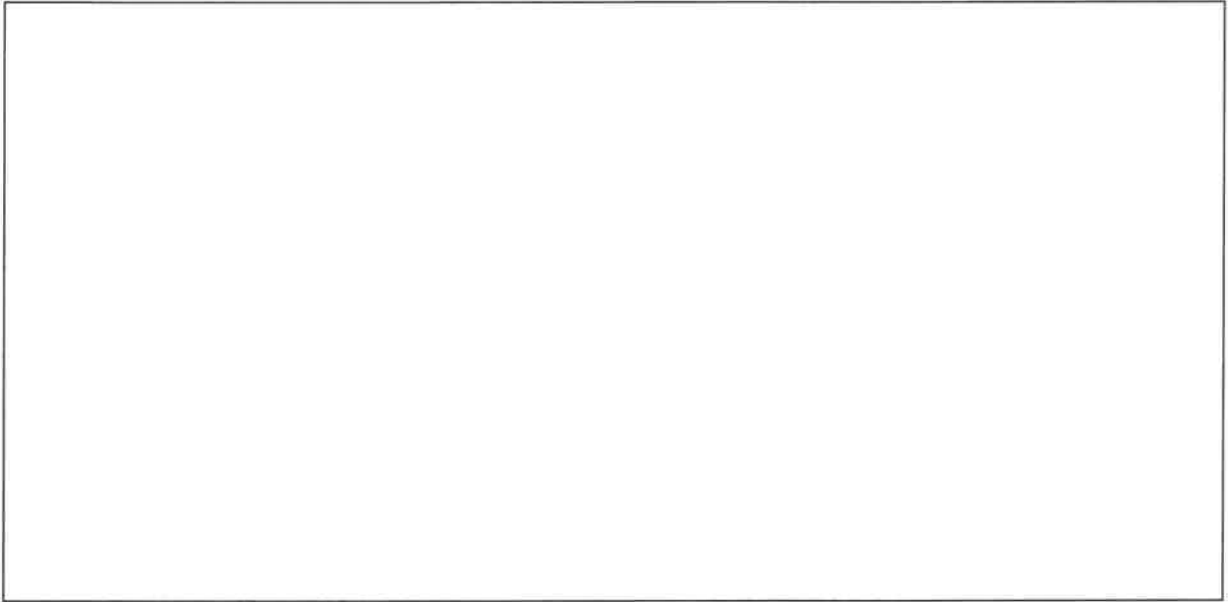
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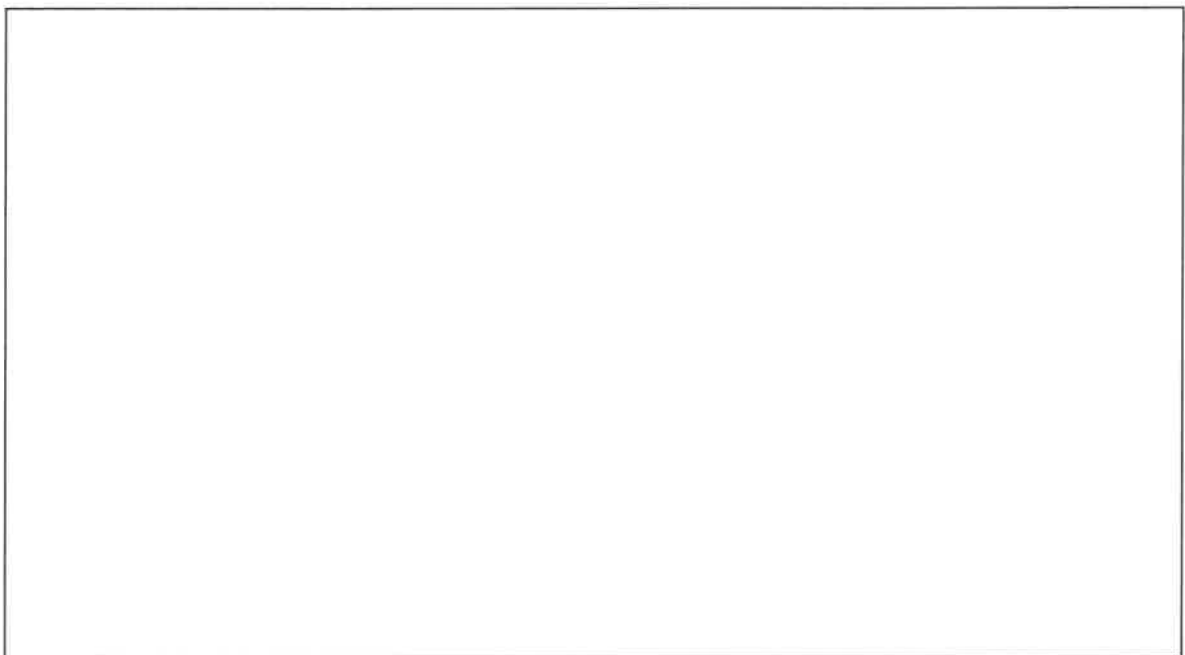
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**My Behaviour Report**

**Draw a picture showing what you did.**



**Draw a picture of what you think should happen next**





## Appendix E

### 1. Anti Bullying Pledge

*We in Scoil an Linbh Íosa*

*Promise to*

*Stand up for each other*

*Think before we act*

*Always try to be kind*

*Never leave anyone out*

*Do our best to help*

*Tell*

*An adult*

*Look and*

*Listen*

*So we can*

*STAND TALL against Bullying*