



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 Monaghan Institute has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the college'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 learners or staff and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.
 - a) A positive college culture and climate which:
 - ✓ is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - ✓ encourages learners and staff to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - ✓ promotes respectful relationships across the college community.
 - b) Effective leadership.
 - c) A college-based 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 learners;
 - ✓ Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying;
 - ✓ including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - f) Effective supervision and monitoring of learners.
 - 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

3. In accordance with the DES Circular letter 045/2013

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 college 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 college'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*.

4. **Education and prevention strategies to combat bullying -**

Monaghan Institute makes it clear to all staff, learners, parents and guardians (of learners under 18 years) that bullying of any kind is unacceptable, irrespective of whether it is a learner, a staff member or any other person that is the subject or perpetrator of such behaviour. In this context, all members of the college have a duty to bring to the attention of the Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate) any incident of bullying including cyberbullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

4.1. While, when investigating and dealing with bullying the primary focus is on resolving differences and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than apportioning blame), Monaghan Institute nevertheless reserves the right to take disciplinary action (up to and including suspension and expulsion), where such is warranted, in accordance with the Monaghan Institute Learner Code of Behaviour.

- 4.2. The focus of the Monaghan Institute bullying prevention strategy will be to build empathy, respect and resilience in learners. Monaghan Institute will provide opportunities to understand the causes and effects of bullying, the issue of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and trans-phobic bullying through awareness raising information provided to learners.
- 4.3. Prevention and awareness raising measures will also deal explicitly with cyber-bullying through educating learners about appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also through developing a culture of reporting any concerns about or incidents of bullying to a member of College staff. Further information can be found in the Monaghan Institute Social Media Policy.
- 4.4. Learners and parents/guardians (where the learner is under 18 years) are encouraged to report in order to assist Monaghan Institute in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- 4.5. Where necessary, Monaghan Institute will seek the assistance of and work with: Guidance counsellors; the Health Service Executive (HSE); TUSLA - the Child and Family Agency; the Gardaí, and other external agencies as appropriate, to combat bullying – identify the perpetrators and support the victims.
- 4.6. In combating bullying, Monaghan Institute will take particular account of the needs of learners with disabilities or with additional learning needs. This will involve improving inclusion, developing social skills, learner induction and promoting respect for everyone.
- 4.7. Monaghan Institute will adopt a staff development approach through staff meetings and CPD; this will help build an understanding of what bullying is and provide guidance on how it is best combated – prevented, detected, investigated, documented (as appropriate) and resolved.

PROCEDURES

Monaghan Institute is committed to monitoring the levels and types of bullying behaviour and adapt strategies for dealing with bullying as appropriate:

5. **Procedures for investigating, following up and recording of bullying behaviour, and intervention strategies used by Monaghan Institute for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour:**
 - 5.1. Where a member of staff has a concern about a learner being bullied, either as a result of a personal observation or as a result of receiving a report from a third party, s/he may investigate and deal with the matter in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
 - 5.2. Where a tutor is concerned that a particular bullying episode is **causing serious upset to a learner**, staff member or other person, s/he should bring it to the attention of the Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor, (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate), at the earliest possible opportunity.

- 5.3. Monaghan Institute reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where bullying is perpetrated by a member of the college and it impinges on the work or well-being of a learner in the college, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the college environment.
- 5.4. Monaghan Institute reserves the right to seek the assistance of agencies such as TUSLA, the HSE and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to deal effectively with bullying behaviour.
- 5.5. Concerns about, or allegations of, bullying will be investigated and addressed as follows:
- a. In investigating and dealing with bullying the focus will be on resolving the interpersonal issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved - rather than apportioning blame.
 - b. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the tutor will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred (this may be in consultation with other colleagues) and how best the situation might be resolved.
 - c. There is a clear obligation on each member of staff who becomes aware of bullying behaviour either to deal with such behaviour themselves or to bring such behaviour to the attention of the Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate), at the earliest possible opportunity.
 - d. All reports of bullying, including anonymous reports, will be investigated and dealt with either by the tutor who first becomes aware of the allegations/concerns or the Course Co-ordinator and/or Guidance Counsellor, (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate).
 - e. It will be made clear to learners that when they report bullying behaviour they are not considered to be 'telling tales' but are behaving responsibly and that the well-being of other learners is dependent on them reporting such behaviour to a member of staff.
- 5.6. Those involved in investigating and resolving bullying behaviour will note and report developments as follows and, in doing so, they will comply with relevant data protection legislation.
- The relevant tutor will use his/her professional judgement regarding the records to be kept of information received, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved with the bullying behaviour will be recorded using the **Incident Report Form see Appendix 1**. A copy needs to be submitted to the Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate) at the earliest convenience
 - Where the Tutor, Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor establishes that bullying has occurred, s/he must keep appropriate written records to assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the

relationships of the parties involved. The Tutor, Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor must use the template see Appendix 2, (Record of Bullying behaviour) to record:

- a) Where s/he considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 working days after s/he has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- b) Where it is has been necessary to report serious bullying behaviour immediately to the Deputy Director/Director or where a relevant tutor at any time passes on concerns or allegations of bullying to the Deputy Director/Director

The recording template at Appendix 2 must be completed in full and retained by the Tutor, Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor in question and a copy provided to the Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 2 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

5.7

- a) In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant Tutor, Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor 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; and
 - ⇒ Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/ guardians (if under the age of 18 years) or the College Director or Deputy Director.
- b) All non-teaching staff and those involved in providing extracurricular activities will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to either a tutor or the Course Co-ordinator or Guidance Counsellor (Deputy Director/Director, as appropriate).
- c) Incidents of bullying will be investigated in a calm, unemotional problem-solving manner.
- d) Incidents of bullying will generally be investigated outside of the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- e) All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for the rights of learners, irrespective of whether they are allegedly involved in bullying

- behaviour or in a position to provide information about the behaviour being investigated.
- f) Those investigating bullying behaviour will calmly seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
 - g) Where a group is allegedly involved in bullying behaviour, each learner will be interviewed individually in the first instance. Thereafter, where appropriate, all involved will be met as a group and, at this meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account to ensure that all are clear about what each individual is saying.
 - h) Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that s/he may face from the other members of the group after being interviewed.
 - i) Where deemed appropriate, those being interviewed may be asked to write down their account of what happened.
 - j) Where the tutor investigating a bullying issue determines that bullying behaviour has occurred, the learner and/or the parents/guardians (if learner under 18 years) of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken (by reference to the college policy). Monaghan Institute will give learners and/or parents/guardians (if learner under 18 years) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the college.
 - k) Where the relevant tutor determines that a learner has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Monaghan Institute Anti-bullying Policy and every reasonable effort will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the learner/s being bullied.
 - l) Where Monaghan Institute deems it necessary to impose disciplinary sanctions, it will be made clear to all involved (both the bullied and those doing the bullying) and their parents/guardians (if learner is under 18 years) that this is a private matter between the learner being disciplined, his/her parents (if learner is under 18 years) and Monaghan Institute.

5.8 A learner or parent/guardian (if learner is under 18 years) is not satisfied that the College has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, s/he will be **referred to the CMETB complaints procedures** i.e. the Code of Practice for dealing with Complaints made by Parent/s, Guardian/s of a Student or by a Student (who has reached the age of eighteen) currently enrolled in a school/centre, against a Staff Member employed by Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (ETB)

Where a learner and/or parent/guardian (if learner is under 18 years), having exhausted the CMETB complaints procedures, is still not satisfied s/he will be advised of his/her right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman/Ombudsman for Children, as appropriate.

6. Programme of support for working with learners affected by bullying -

6.1. Monaghan Institute will put in place a programme of supports for learners who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements.

- Learners who have been bullied will be:
 - ✓ offered appropriate counselling
- Learners who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:
 - ✓ provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others; and
- Learners who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their tutors and their parent/guardian (if learner under 18 years) and to avail of counselling as appropriately where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced. They may be experiencing feelings of doubt or guilt and need affirmation that they were right to report what they have observed.

7. Supervision and Monitoring of Anti-Bullying in Monaghan Institute

- The Board of Management confirms that it will endeavour to ensure that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.
- The implementation and effectiveness of the Monaghan Institute Anti-bullying Policy will be discussed at staff meetings/update meetings – so the concerns about the policy and/or the welfare of individual learners can be shared and effectively addressed.
- Data gathered through the reporting template Appendix 2 will be collated and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying issues requiring attention.
- The Director will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out the following.
 - ✓ the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template - see Appendix 2) since the previous report to the Board.
 - ✓ confirmation that all cases referred via the recording template (Appendix 1) have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the Monaghan Institute Anti-bullying Policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. The minutes of Board of Management' meetings will record the report but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the learners involved.

8. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that Monaghan Institute will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of learners or staff or the harassment

of learners 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. Policy Adoption and Review

This policy was adopted by the Monaghan Institute Board of Management on 13th October, 2015.

10. Policy Dissemination and Publication

This policy operates in conjunction with other Monaghan Institute Policies for example Admission Policy, Social Media Policy, Attendance Policy, Child Protection Policy, Code of Behaviour, etc. These policies are available in the learner handbook and/or on request from the Director.

11. Policy Review

- The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the college's anti-bullying policy and its implementation in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools using the checklist included at **Appendix 4**.
- The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas for improvement identified by the annual review.
- Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to MI staff, published on the website (where appropriate) and provided to the parent/guardians (if learners are under 18) on request.
- Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management' meeting that adopted the review and a record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron (Cavan and Monaghan ETB) and the DES. In the case of the DES, it is appreciated that the Inspectorate will place a strong focus on the actions Monaghan Institute takes to create a positive college culture to prevent and tackle bullying.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: _____

Date of next review: December, 2022

Appendix 1 Incident Report Form

Date _____

Time _____

Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator reporting _____

Name of learner(s) involved

Details of Incident

Who was involved? _____

What happened? _____

When did the incident happen? _____

Where did the incident occur? _____

Reasons as to why the incident occurred _____

Witnesses to the incident _____

Witnesses interviewed and accounts recorded. Yes No

Action Taken

Signed Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator _____

Learner/s _____

Follow up suggestions _____

Form received by Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator **(date)** _____ **Initialed** _____

Details of any follow up meeting/discussion

Date _____

Time _____

Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator reporting _____

Name of learner(s) involved

Appendix 2 - Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of learner being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es)*)	4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es)*)
Learner concerned	College grounds
Other Learner	Classroom
Parent	Corridor
Tutor	Toilets
Other	Bus
	Other

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	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/additional learning needs related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

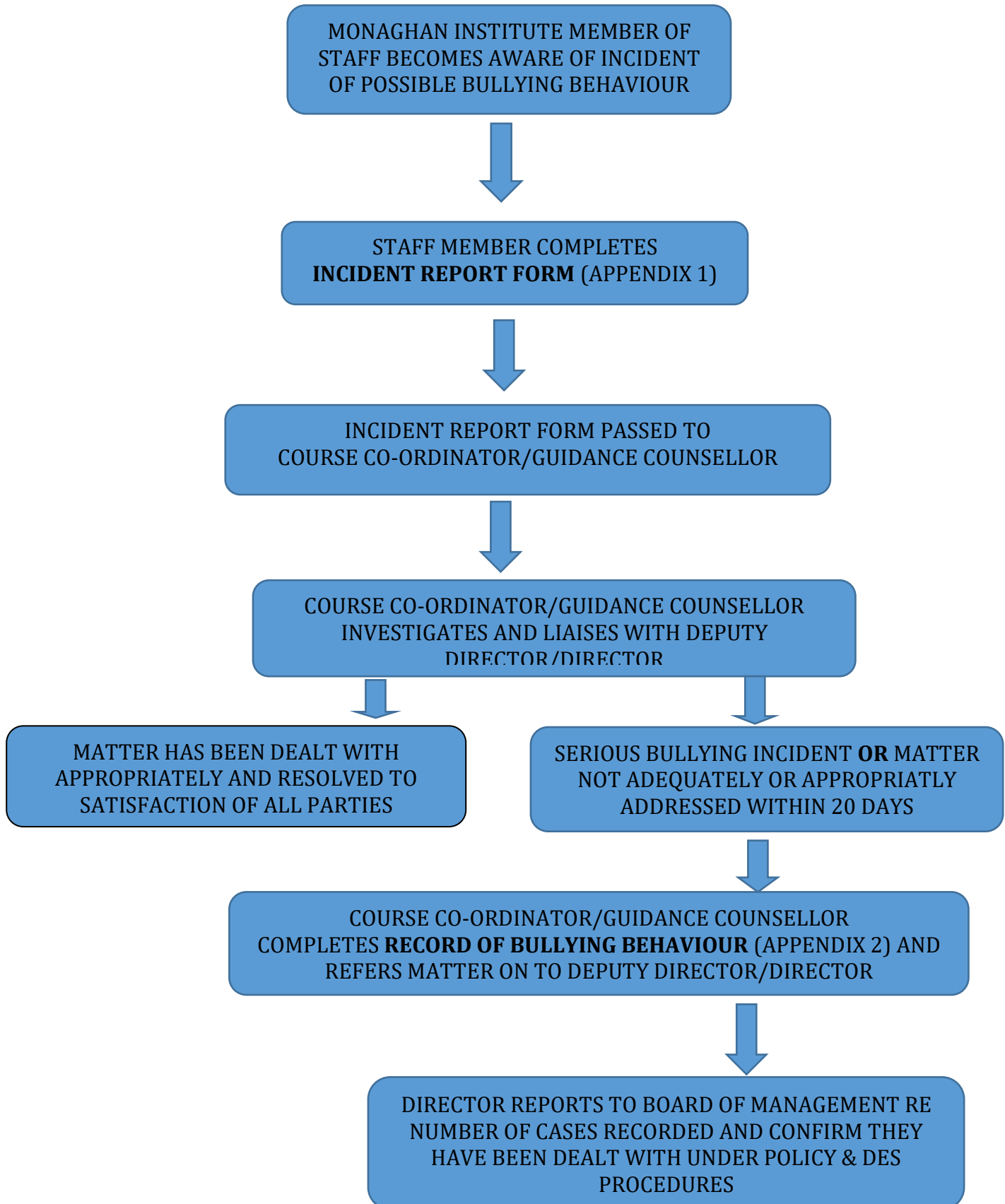
Signed _____ (Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator)

Date _____

This form must be completed by the Tutor/Guidance Counsellor/Course Co-ordinator to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) Where s/he considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 working days after s/he has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- b) Where it is has been necessary to report serious bullying behaviour immediately to the Deputy Director/Director or where a relevant tutor at any time passes on concerns or allegations of bullying to the Deputy Director/Director

Appendix 3 Reporting Structure



Appendix 4 Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-bullying Policy and its Implementation

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the Monaghan Institute 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/guardians on request?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that 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 learners?	
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 tutors are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Co-ordinator?	
Has the Board discussed how well the centre is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Directors periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parent/guardians regarding the centre's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parent/guardians withdrawn their child from the centre citing dissatisfaction with the centre's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman/Ombudsman for Children investigations into the centre's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Director been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the centre'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 _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____
Director