

**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 Scoil Chroí Íosa 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) 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;

**(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. 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 conduct, 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 should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a **once-off** offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a **social network site or other public forum** where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people **will be regarded as bullying behaviour.**

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

The following examples are taken from Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

**Examples of bullying behaviours**

| **General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying** | * Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. * Physical aggression * Damage to property * Name calling * Slagging * 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 * The “look” * Invasion of personal space * A combination of any of the types listed. |
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| **Cyber** | * **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, 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 * Abusive text messages * Abusive email * Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles * 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 and 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 * Excluding from the group * Taking someone’s friends away * “Bitching” * Spreading rumours * Breaking confidence * Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear * The “look” * Use or 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 |

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

Refer to section 6.8.3. and 6.8.4 in the Procedures.

| The Relevant Teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:   | Primary School | | --- | | The class teacher(s) initially  Special Education Teachers if appropriate  Principal & Deputy Principal thereafter if necessary  **Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.** | |
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5. 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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

**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. * 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. * Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. * Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils * Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth * Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and how to stay safe while online * Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level develop personal safety skills. * Programmes which seek to enhance children’s self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other S.P.H.E. programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour. * The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects e.g. Reading Buddies * Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. In Scoil Chroí Íosa, we have regular coaching from the local GAA. * Yard duty- oral/written report to class teacher after both lunch breaks. * Class and school rules to be discussed in September of each year and to mention the code of behavior and anti-bullying policies regularly in class. * Have positive behavior and anti-bullying on the agenda all times. * All staff members will have access to the anti-bullying policy on the drive along with a library of resources to support them in this area.   **Links to other policies**  Our Anti-Bullying Policy has specific links to the following policies:   * Code of Behaviour * Child Protection Policy * Supervision Policy * Acceptable Use policy * Attendance * SPHE Policy * GDPR policy |
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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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and

Post-Primary Schools):

| **6.8.9. 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.*  **With this in mind the school’s procedures are as follows:**  **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, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.   **Investigating and dealing with incidents:**   1. In investigation and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved. 2. Parents and pupils are required to cooperate 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. 3. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach. 4. Initial investigations of bullying will be done **in class where possible** but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. 5. 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. 6. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) 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. 7. If a **group** is involved, each member will be **interviewed individually at first**. 8. Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after an interview by the teacher. It might also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s) 9. Where the relevant teacher(s) has/have 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. 10. In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved **should be contacted** at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support for their pupils. 11. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how s/he 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. 12. It must also be made clear to all involved that in any situation where **disciplinary sanctions** are required, these sanctions are considered a private matter between the pupils being disciplined, his or her parents and the school. 13. Any sanctions against bullying behaviour will follow the guidelines clearly stated in our School Code of Behaviour and will be discussed with the pupil and his/her parent/guardian   **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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal   * **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**  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. Incidents that occur during yard time must be recorded in the incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher. * While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same * The relevant teacher must inform the 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 must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. * All records will be stored in accordance with the school’s GDPR policy.   **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**  The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:  a) in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and  b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. Gross Misdemeanours must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal.  .All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. **The principal will retain these records(Appendix 3 ) in accordance with the school’s data protection policy. The relevant teacher will keep a copy of these sheets for that school year. Records kept in individual pupil drop files must be GDPR compliant i.e. not naming other pupils. Redaction of names of others is recommended. Details may also be logged in the pupil’s ‘Log of Action’ on Aladdin. Again, care must be taken to ensure it is GDPR compliant.**  **Intervention strategies**  Intervention strategies **must** be utilised where bullying behaviours have occurred.  *Below is a list of suggested interventions:*   * Teacher interviews with all pupils * Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process * Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions * No Blame Approach * Circle Time * Restorative interviews * Restorative conferencing |
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7. The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

(see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

| **Support for those affected by Bullying**   * In-school supports and opportunities will be provided for pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.   - Buddy / Peer mentoring system  - tailored SPHE lessons  - assistance from SET  - Group work such as circle time   * If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. * Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher. |
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**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.

| * Supervision of Pupils is carried out in line with the school Supervision Policy * Students are encouraged to be aware of children in need of extra support in the yard and alert teachers on supervision to possible concerns * In relation to Acceptable Use Policy:   -All Internet sessions are supervised by a teacher  -The school constantly monitors pupils’ Internet usage  - Pupils do not have access to social networking sites under the school’s broadband provider |
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**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 and published on the school website. 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). 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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Supporting Documentation**

* **2013 Guidelines:**

**(for Definition of Bullying and CHaracteristics Associated with Bullying)**

[**https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf**](https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf)

* Associated Department **Circular 0045/2013**

<https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0045_2013.pdf>

* **Appendix 2**: Practical Tips for Building a Positive School Culture and Climate
* (pg 42 of document)

<https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf>

* **Appendix 3**: Template for Recording Bullying (if unresolved after 20 school days)
* (pg 43 of document)

<https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf>

* **Appendix 4**: Checklist for Annual Review
* (pg 44/45 of document)

<https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf>