

Anti-bullying policy

Scoil Bhríde, Oldtown, Naas.

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 Bhríde has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.
2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
 - A positive school culture and climate which-
 - 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 (see Appendix A);
 - Effective leadership;
 - A school-wide approach;
 - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
 - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - i. build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - ii. explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
 - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
 - Supports for staff;
 - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
3. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:-

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within

the definition of bullying and 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.

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

4. The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the Class Teacher. Any teacher, including Principal and Deputy Principal may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.
5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:
 - The school's Code of Behaviour outlines the expected behaviour in the classroom, on the yard, during school trips etc.
 - The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through the teaching of the following Curricular areas:-
 - SPHE
 - Stay Safe
 - RSE
 - Alive O
 - SESE
 - The school follows the Continuum of Support for Behaviour.
 - Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers. Some of the teachers have received training in 'Incredible Years' and the Incredible Years programme is used throughout the school.
 - The school uses teaching methodologies to promote positive behaviour e.g. 'Circle Time', 'Golden Time,' etc.
 - The school provides a wide variety of after-school activities to cater for a wide range of interest including a Social Skills programme for children with ASD
 - Procedures are in place for the supervision and monitoring of the students throughout the school day.
 - Scoil Bhríde is engaged in a consultative process with NEPs
 - The following school policies reflects a positive school culture and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect:-
 - Enrolment Policy
 - Inclusion Policy
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Internet use policy

- Scoil Bhríde has positive relations with the local Secondary schools and engages in a Transition programme with them.
 - The school avails of training from the SESS on behaviour management.
 - The school participates in the FAI programme ‘Give Racism the Red Card’
 - Training is provided for parents on Safe Internet Use.
 - Training is provided for the children of Fifth and Sixth Classes on Safe Internet Use.
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:
- The alleged bullying is reported to the relevant teacher.
 - The relevant teacher will investigate and deal with the reported incident with the aim of resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
 - The relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
 - Students will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying. It will be made clear to all students that reporting incidents of bullying is behaving responsibly and not considered to be telling tales. It is of vital importance that the children gain confidence in ‘telling’.
 - All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
 - Non-teaching staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
 - In line with good practice, incidents are generally investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure privacy of all involved.
 - When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
 - The relevant teacher will deal with incidents of bullying in a calm, non-aggressive manner.
 - When a group is involved, each member of the group will be asked to give an individual report before having a group meeting.
 - In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher 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. Parents will be given an opportunity to reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the students.
 - 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.
 - Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.
 - It will be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.

- If deemed necessary, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, he/she must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template at Appendix C.
- In cases of cyberbullying, fears for personal safety or fears of coming to school, the relevant teacher must record the incident in the standardised recording template at Appendix C and report it immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- 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 the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- In cases where the recording template at Appendix C is used, the template must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.
- The relevant teacher may consult with the Principal or Deputy Principal at any stage of the process.
- When 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; and
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Implementation of the education and prevention strategies already mentioned.
- A programme to raise self-esteem and to develop friendship and social skills may be implemented if required.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. Prevention of Harassment

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

APPENDIX A: KEY 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.
- The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.
- The school has the capacity to change in response to student's needs.
- The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming students' attitudes and values.
- The school takes particular care of "at risk" students and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.
- The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the student with a range of life-skills.
- The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.
- The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.
- 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.

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrassment 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 work, 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.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation. • Harrassment: 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 call. • 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
<p>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).</p>	

Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip. • Isolation and 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 of terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way.
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching. • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling. • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs. • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying. • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person’s disability. • Setting others up for ridicule.

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"/>
School 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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

APPENDIX D

- This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 19th March 2014.
- This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent/Teacher Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron (the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, Bishop Denis Nulty) if requested.
- This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent/Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: June 2015