

# **Anti-bullying Policy**

## **Scoil Phobail Bhéara**

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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 Phobail Bhéara **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.
  - 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 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, bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs, religious bullying.

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*.

The list of examples below is non exhaustive

**Examples of bullying behaviours**

<b>General behaviours which apply to all</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. (9 grounds in equality legislation include the following: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another</li> </ul>
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	<p>person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Sharing Images:</b> Posting or tagging inappropriate information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks or on games</li> </ul>

	<p>consoles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>•Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>  <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b>  (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).  <b>Special Educational Needs</b></p>	
<p><b>Homophobic and Transgender</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation</li> <li>•Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>•Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>•Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>•Threats</li> </ul>
<p><b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community, religion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>•Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relational</b></p>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Malicious gossip</li> <li>•Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>•Ignoring</li> <li>•Excluding from the group</li> <li>•Taking someone’s friends away</li> <li>•Spreading rumours</li> <li>•Breaking confidence</li> <li>•Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>•The “look”</li> </ul>

<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>•Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs and/or Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>• Mimicking a person’s disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

**Reporting Bullying**

An allegation of bullying may be reported to any member of staff in the school. Therefore each member of staff is a Contact person for this purpose.

**4. The Relevant Teachers in this school are:**

The Year Teachers

They will be supported by appropriate school personnel:

e.g.

Class teachers

Chaplain

Guidance Counsellor

Deputy Principal

Principal

## 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** (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

### **School-wide approach**

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. School staff will be expected to model good behaviour.
- 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.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- 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 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.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment.
- Student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support e.g. student mentors.
- The promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school should be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy will be discussed with pupils and a copy of the policy will be available for parent(s)/guardian(s)s
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week; parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by Principal, Deputy Principal, Year

Heads; use of posters, YSI projects; positive mental health strategy.

- Encourage a culture of reporting, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘reporting’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to report to and how to make a report, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand up a note with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Use of cabhair box located outside the Prayer Room, the Deputy Principal’s Office and side area.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Administer a confidential questionnaire in SPHE once a term to all pupils.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of reporting if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Clear protocols will be developed to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol will be developed in consultation with the Parents Association

The school will revise the Acceptable Use Policy and it will 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.

A list of resources available in the school will be compiled by the SPHE Department.

### **Implementation of curricula**

- The school will implement the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programme.
- Continuous Professional Development will be encouraged for staff delivering these programmes.
- The school will be guided by the DCU National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre and staff and parents will be made aware of the resources available.  
([www.dcu.ie/abc/school.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/abc/school.shtml) )

- **Resources that are available include:**

**Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click,  
**Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (GLEN [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie) )

- Delivery of the Garda Safety Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety substance abuse and cyber-bullying
- 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.

#### **Links to other policies**

- List school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance, Sporting activities.

**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*) :

**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);**

**The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

#### **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, 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: Style of approach**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any relevant investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with alleged bullying.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- It may be helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

### **Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
  - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
  - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school 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 Pupils.

### **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:

#### **Pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher on the student referral form.
- 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 report will be filed in the student's file in the main office.
- The relevant teacher must inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.

#### **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.

- Records of bullying will be stored in the student's file.

### **Formal-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

Appendix 3 forms should be given to the clerical officer for storage in a separate file in the main office. The principal should be given a copy of a completed appendix 3 form.

In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil will seek the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS).

Serious instances of bullying should be referred to the HSE and/or Gardaí.

### **Supports for students affected by bullying**

Students who have been bullied may need counselling and opportunities to raise their self esteem and to build resilience.

Students involved in bullying behaviour may need counselling.

Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

Supports provided will be in accordance with the pastoral care system.

### **Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy**

The school will examine the effectiveness of the anti-bullying measures in place by using periodic surveys of pupils staff and parents.

Data gathered from Appendix 3 will be collated annually and a record will be made available to the Board of Management.

The Implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be included on the agenda of staff meetings at least once a term.

### **Periodic reports to the Board of Management**

The Principal must provide a report to the Board of Management at least once every school term.

**7 The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows** (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

Pastoral care system

Mentoring system

Class teacher/Year teacher

Cabhair group

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with parents and advise them of appropriate agencies that are available. 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.

## **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.

## **10.**

The school reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related if in the opinion of the Principal/Deputy Principal and/or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

- 11.** This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on September 2016
  
- 12** This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website. A copy of the policy was provided to the Parents' Association . A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
  
- 13** 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 Parents' Association A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Date of next review: September 2017