

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Bunscoil Mhuire,  
Youghal**

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## MAIN POLICY STATEMENT

(THIS POLICY IS PART OF AND TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH, THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY).

### **Compliance with legislation**

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the *Code of Behaviour Guidelines* issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), the Board of Management of Bunscoil Mhuire 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.

### **Definition of bullying**

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, bullying is defined as follows: Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. The following general behaviours apply to all types of bullying:

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation i.e. gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- 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 above

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying. This list of examples is non-exhaustive.

**Relational bullying** (manipulating relationships as a means of bullying), for example:

- Malicious gossip
- Excluding from the group
- Subtle forms may include being persistently followed at yard time, being stared at in class, raised eyebrows in a classroom when the person makes a contribution
- Taking someone's friends away
- "Bitching"
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- The "look"
- The use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way

**Cyber-bullying**, for example:

- Denigration: Spreading rumours, 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
- Abusive/silent telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages/ email/ website comments/blogs/pictures
- Abusive communication on social networks
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

**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. It may be based on any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in equality legislation. For example:

- 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
- 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
- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment
- Name calling and /or 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

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.

All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The Board is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The Board will ensure that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

### **Education and Prevention strategies**

The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows.

#### School wide approaches:

A school wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

The promotion of activities to foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Regular review of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources.

School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying.

The provision of adequate supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, outings and extra-curricular activities.

Promotion of anti-bullying code in the school-that is included in student journals.

The school's anti-bullying policy is made available to all parents/guardians as part of the Code of behaviour via the school web-site.

Encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.

#### Education/ curriculum:

The SPHE curriculum will be fully implemented- to include RSE and Stay Safe programmes.

Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes e.g. Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Weaving well-being.

The implementation of NEPS programmes eg Zippy's friends, Friends for life.

Annual visit from community guard to senior classes to cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.

Internet/ Cyber safety workshops for children and or parents.

We also aim to provide additional support to children with general learning difficulties to ensure all children can be better enabled to achieve the learning outcomes of the SPHE curriculum ( as per NCCA guidelines).

Other policies that may be relevant:

Code of Behaviour

Child Protection Policy

Mobile Phone use policy

Attendance Policy

SPHE plan

#### **School Staff**

The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. Children's self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school. Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others. Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff. Teachers will be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying.

Teachers will discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils and use behavioural management strategies, which, focus on problem solving and enable pupils to take an active role in finding a solution to problems.

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school religion programme, the Social Personal and Health Education programme, the Stay Safe Programme, the Arts and/or Circle time.

## Pupils

Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other. Pupils should report incidents of bullying to their parents and teachers.

## Parents/ Guardians

- Encourage positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour both at home and at school.
- Encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression.
- Encourage children to share, to be kind, to be caring, and to be understanding towards others.
- Watch out for signs and symptoms that your child is being bullied or is bullying others.
- Don't dismiss your instincts as being wrong.
- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with her/him.
- Support the school in its efforts to prevent and treat bullying.
- Be aware that many social media sites have minimum age requirements. We would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. until they are the appropriate age. Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to regularly check their child's online activity (e.g. Snapchat, Whatsapp, Instagram, TikTok or any apps that your child may have) on mobile phones and electronic devices to ensure they are aware of their child's online interaction with others and approve of same. It is **not** the responsibility of the school to monitor this.

## Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Bullying Incidents

Bullying incidents should be reported to the class teacher. This reporting may be done by the pupil, parent or a friend. All reported incidents which are serious or are part of a pattern of behaviour will be noted, investigated and treated as circumstances require. All cases of bullying will be reported to the Principal. Reports of bullying behaviour on the way to and from school will be investigated by the Principal. From Jan 6<sup>th</sup> 2022 all teachers should record bullying behaviour using the template Appendix 3 from Anti bullying procedures document. This is available from the office and will be distributed to teachers. This form should then be submitted to the Principal or deputy principal.

## Responding to Bullying

Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their teacher or another staff member, along with continuing support when they feel they may need it. A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and will put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.

The school will inform parents/guardians of what has happened and of the measures being taken to help them and encourage them to report further incidents if they occur.

Help and support will be sought for a child who is found to have engaged in behaviour as outlined in the definition. This will include speaking with them to discover why they became involved, informing their parents/guardians and continuing to work with them in order to modify their behaviour. The school code of behaviour applies to bullying behaviour. These children will be helped to see things from the victim's point of view. Exclusion from the playground at lunch break or special monitoring procedures may be

implemented. If the bullying behaviour continues they may be subject to further disciplinary procedures in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school code of behaviour. Incidents of bullying will be used as opportunities for re-enforcing the anti-bullying policy of the school. Follow-up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

### **Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

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

### **Prevention of Harrassment**

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 travelling community.

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

Ratified by Board of Management on 13/12/21  
Date

Signed M Keefe  
Chairperson, Board of Management

## Appendix 3 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 \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.



## Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's 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 <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	✓
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	✓
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	✓
Is the Board satisfied that school 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 pupils?	website
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	STAYSAFE ✓
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 teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? <i>Please use Appendix 3 for reporting</i>	✓
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	✓
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	✓
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	NO
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	NO
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	NO
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	✓
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? <i>Template for recording</i>	✓
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	✓

Signed *M K Lal*  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 13/12/21

Signed *Eoghan Keenell*  
Principal

Date 13/12/21

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: The School Patron  
The Board of Management of Bunscoil Mhíre wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 13/12/21 [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed M. V. L.  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 13/12/21

Signed Soghian K. M.  
Principal

Date 13/12/21