

Scoil Mhuire, Strokestown 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 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.
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 staff 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;
 - 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-
 - 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;
- 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 (including Text messaging)
- 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 DES website

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*): In the case where a student(s) is being bullied he/she should be able to approach the following people:**

- Any member of the Pastoral Care team. Mrs. Egan, Mrs. Hester, Mrs. Beirne, Mrs Brudell, Mr. Donnelly
- Class Tutor and/or Guidance Counsellor.
- Any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable.
- A Mentor
- Principal or Deputy Principal.

A student should feel comfortable reporting a bullying incident by using one, or any, of the following approaches:

- Directly approaching a teacher at an appropriate time. e.g. after class, break/lunch time.
- Handing up a note with homework or at assembly time
- Getting a parent to contact the school by ringing the school

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*):

The policy addresses bullying behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment.

While it primarily addresses issues related to bullying of students, it applies also to teaching and other school staff, parents/guardians and others insofar as measures under the policy relate to them.

The policy applies

- During school time (including breaks)
- Going to and from school
- During school tours
- During extra-curricular activities
- To any behaviour of a bullying nature (outside school) which seriously impacts on a students'/staff members' participation in school and / or where the matter relates to the school's duty of care of a student / staff member.

Actions to prevent bullying

- Our Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of Scoil Mhuire's Code of Behaviour.
- Everyone in Scoil Mhuire has a duty to look out for any behaviour which can be deemed bullying. This includes parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- Class tutors can remind students regularly of effects of Bullying.
- Supervision and monitoring of students behaviour, including lockers, yard, corridors and areas with access to computers.
- Inclusion in the Curriculum – create awareness in a wide range of subjects.
- Activities are planned that raise awareness and prioritise anti-bullying interventions.
- CPD training for all staff
- Development of the Anti-Bullying Charter for all classrooms.
- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation.

Links to Other Policies and to Curriculum Delivery.

This policy is consistent with other policies in Scoil Mhuire

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Pastoral Care
- Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety
- SPHE/RSE
- Guidance
- Learning Support
- Admissions Policy

This policy links to the following Curriculum areas

- SPHE: the issue of bullying dealt with in each of three years of Junior Cycle SPHE
- The Cool School anti-bullying lessons , could be taught by subject teachers and Class Tutors e.g. CSPE (Human Rights), English (personal accounts), PE (Q of sporting exclusion)
- Other links could include
 - Transition Year
 - LCVP
 - Tutor Time
 - Weekly assembly
 - Restorative Model eg Questionnaire; Teachers Observation form; Incident Report form; Code of Behaviour

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*) :

Noting and Recording Incidents of Bullying.

- All reported incidents of bullying to be noted on the Bullying Incident Report form
- Bullying Incident Report form to be filled in by the teacher to whom it was reported
- Forms to be completed by the teacher and left in the secretary's office for the attention of the Principal.
- Access to the files to be restricted to the Pastoral Care Team, the Principal and the Guidance Counsellor.
- Files are to be kept in the filing cabinet for 5 years after the student leaves the school
- Non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants(SNA's), caretaker and cleaners will report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the relevant teacher

Dealing with reported Incidents of bullying

The principle of consultation applies across all measures here

The procedures for noting and recording as outlined above will apply.

The rights of all students and staff will be respected and a fair hearing will be given to all.

Staff will be aware that allegations of bullying need to be fully investigated before action is taken.

1. **Initial steps** to be taken following a report or disclosure of bullying behaviour

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include
Any class or subject teacher A member of the Pastoral Care team Teacher or member of the PastoralCare team	Speak to the student(s) involved Speak to relevant student(s) and/or interview the class using the Questionnaire (see appendix) Keep a record. Follow up progress with all parties involved and monitor the situation.	Serious talk with the student(s) Verbal warning. Any issues at this stage should be followed up in a compassionate and non-confrontational way. Outline a fair and mutually agreed outcome

2. **Subsequent incidents**/reports of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include
Any teacher Member of the Pastoral Care team and/or Principal may be involved	Incident should be investigated by the Pastoral Care team . Principal / Deputy Principal informed. Parents of students involved should be contacted. Keep a record Class Tutor and Pastoral Care Team to monitor progress with all parties	Serious talk with the student Second verbal warning Any sanctions imposed and will be applied as per the Code of Behaviour . Pastoral Care Team to monitor behaviour

3. Where bullying behaviour persists / serious incidents of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or Sanction
Principal / Deputy Principal involved	Parents to meet the Principal	Detention / Suspension as per the Code of Behaviour
Class Tutor and Pastoral Care Team may be involved	Use Restorative approach where possible and appropriate	Parents to agree to a set of conditions for behaviour
Board of Management will be notified at the discretion of the Principal, once a term or in the case of Suspension.	Feedback to Class Tutor and Pastoral Care Team Keep a Record Follow up progress to be monitored by the Pastoral Care Team and / or the Principal	Referral to external supports e.g. Child Psychologist/Counsellor may be suggested The future of the student in the school may be considered.

- Any reported allegations of bullying/harassment between students and staff should be dealt with directly by the Principal.
- In relation to staff to staff incidents, the matter should be referred directly to the Principal where an Incident report is to be filled out. Refer also to the ASTI Grievance procedure, Occupational Health.

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*) :

- The victim will receive the utmost privacy and confidentiality in the initial, and subsequent, investigations.
- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying
- Bullying will be incorporated into SPHE and CSPE lessons.
- In a case where sanctions need to be imposed, they will be enforced, as per the school's Code of Behaviour, by the Principal.
- Following an investigated incident of bullying, Class Tutors, members of the Pastoral Care Team and break-time Supervisors will monitor the behaviour of the students involved.
- Staff will be informed of necessary developments in bullying incidents, at staff meetings. They will be asked to monitor and observe the students or classes involved in specific incidents and to pass on these observations to a member of the Pastoral Care Team.
- Parents or guardians will be informed of serious incidents and if necessary they may be required to join in the restorative based approach to resolving the issue.
- A referral system will be in place to ensure that all incidents will be dealt with. If those investigating can't resolve issue it will then be referred onto the following people
 - Teacher/Class Tutor.
 - Pastoral Care Team Member/Guidance Counsellor
 - Principal
 - Outside Agencies

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. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

13/1/22

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and is provided to the Parents' Association. 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 (is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) 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.

Signed: [Signature] (Principal)

Signed: [Signature]
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 13/1/22

Date of next review: Jan 23

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Sociogram

Name _____

- Are you happy with the atmosphere in your classroom?
 - Who are your friends?
 - Are you feeling under pressure in any way?
(Take details and reassure student that the problem will be addressed)
 - Is there anyone in class having a hard time? Explain
 - Is anyone being left out, or ignored?

 - Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages or e-mails to make others feel bad about themselves?
(Only ask depending on answer to two above)
 - Is anyone being unfair to others?
 - Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?
- Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time?
- Can you give examples?
 - Who do you think is causing the problem?
 - What can you do to help pupils having a hard time?
 - Have you been contributing to anything that would isolate anyone or make them uncomfortable?

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.

Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.

Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

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.