

Anti-Bullying Policy

All sections of this template must be completed

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 Teampall Toinne 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;
 - 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 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*.

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

As per Fig 6.8.3, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". At primary level, the relevant teacher will normally be the class teacher.

In our school, the following are the class teachers who are the normally responsible for dealing with bullying incidents:

- a. Junior Infants – Ms. Marian Duggan
- b. Senior Infants – Mrs Ellen Fox
- c. First Class – Mrs Breda Quinlan (Deputy Principal)
- d. Second Class – Ms. Treasa McGrath
- e. Third and Fourth Class – Mrs Jean Russell

- f. Fifth and Sixth Class – Mr T.J. Coffey
 - g. Special Education Teacher – Mr. Shane Molan
 - h. EAL Teacher (Part time position of 15 hours per week) – Ms. Ali Price
- * The SET has also an important part to play in dealing with bullying as they have supervision responsibilities on yard, during class instruction etc.

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):

This anti-bullying policy operates in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, which is used to address isolated instances of anti-social behaviour.

The school has a central role in the children's social moral development just as it does in their academic development. In school, we work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. The individuality of each child needs to be accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to education in a disruption free environment.

All types of bullying are damaging and quite often difficult to detect - particularly verbal and emotional bullying - due to the secrecy upon which it relies. In many cases of bullying, the victim is too frightened to tell. The most successful bullies are those who can keep their victims quiet by threatening or humiliating them.

There are no innocent bystanders when it comes to bullying. As parents, teachers or children we all have a part to play in ensuring that those around us can live a life free from bullying.

Promoting an anti-bullying environment in our school:

The prevention of bullying is a significant part of our school's written Code of Behaviour. In conjunction with our School's SPHE plan all children are taught specific anti-bullying lessons each school year.

SPHE Plan Year 1: Topic 2 friendship and bullying Stay Safe

SPHE Plan Year 2: Walk Tall-Relating to others topic with a key focus on anti-bullying to be completed in the first term of school.

*This direct teaching approach is not exhaustive and further lessons or resources can and may be used in relation to anti-bullying in any classroom at the discretion of the class teacher.

Each class will create a safe environment where the following principles are upheld.

- Children will be encouraged to tell and inform a member of staff about an incident of bullying. Each complaint reported will be investigated and the child will be reassured and reminded that they have behaved in a responsible manner in relation to the incident.
- The situation is monitored over a reasonable time.
- All parties involved will be supported in school.
- The incident is treated in a confidential way
- Parents are kept informed about progress

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):*

Dealing with bullying

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians.

Respect and sensitivity will be upheld during the investigation and resolution process.

Some incidents where necessary may be investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim/the pupil engaged in the bullying behaviour. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story.

All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

Overview of Steps to be followed when dealing with an incident of bullying:

***If more than one rule from the Code of Behaviour has been breached, the teacher can request that the principal investigate the matter with them.**

a. Class teacher speaks with the people involved **individually**.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, teachers will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

b. Class teacher speaks with all of the children involved in the incident as a **group**.

c. Review of **rules** broken with children involved.

Teacher will refer to the code of conduct and the rules which have been broken which have caused the bullying to take place. At this point an appropriate sanction and resolution for the act of bullying will be agreed. The sanction will be guided by our school's code of conduct.

d. Record the incident in Anti-bullying **incident report book**. (Appendix 1: template)

All parties involved will sign the incident report. Incident report book is stored in the principal's office.

e. Class teacher will make direct contact with the guardians of all the children involved. The parent will be informed of the incident/procedures followed and resolution reached.

***NB If a child is involved in more than one incident of bullying, a face to face meeting will be arranged with the child and their guardians.**

f. All incident reports will be reviewed and signed by the **principal**.

Dealing with an incident of bullying among staff members/parents:

1. Incident will be reported to the principal.
2. The principal will speak individually with each staff member/parent.
3. The principal will speak to all parties involved as part of a group. This meeting will be recorded, taking note of the points discussed and each party will be treated with utmost respect and fairness. Each party will discuss a resolution to the issue and a review of the matter will be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe following the group meeting.
4. Where cases, relating to either a pupil or a teacher remain unresolved at school level, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

Monitoring of bullying – Staged approach

Stage One-Class

The class teacher will keep personal records of negative behaviours observed or reported to them in class or on the yard. This record keeping system will be factual and concise. The purpose of this record keeping will be to aid memory of negative behaviours which may lead to bullying and to inform the planning and intervention of an incident of bullying or negative behaviour in line with our code of conduct.

Should the action taken at this stage prove not to have resolved the issue, the staff will proceed to stage two.

Stage Two-School

If an incident of bullying is reported, the class teacher will refer to the steps for dealing with an incident of bullying previously stated in this document.

Within the staged approach communication and resolution of the bullying incident will take place.

Sanction and Resolution:

During the staged approach the class teacher and perhaps principal/class teacher decided an appropriate resolution and sanction.

The resolution will have a positive approach in that the bully will be placed on **report** (Appendix2). This means that the child's behaviour in all areas is monitored. All positive behaviour, progress on work etc will be noted daily/weekly (needs basis). The purpose of this report is to focus as much as possible on the positive qualities and efforts of the child, and to motivate the child to move away from negative behaviour. Negative behaviour can be recorded but it is the hope that positive behaviour will prevail.

A review of the report will be carried out on a weekly/daily basis by the principal, guardians and class teacher, this will highlight to the child that the school and their guardian are working together. Guardians, principal, teacher and child will sign the report weekly/daily. The length of time a child will remain on report will be determined by the gravity of their actions.

The sanction a bully will have to complete will be determined by the rules broken and form of bullying which took place. This will be guided by our school's code of conduct. Once the sanction has been completed the identified bully will be reminded that they have taken responsibility and they are given a fresh start moving forward in their schooling.

Stage 3-BOM

It is the duty of the school to provide a safe environment for all the children. Should the above interventions fail and the bullying continue a programme of appropriate sanctions may be implemented by the principal in consultation with the parents and Board of Management.

Sanctions

Sanctions implemented aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the esteem of the child will also act as a negative consequence to bullying behaviour. These sanctions may include a period of suspension during which there will be ongoing consultation with the parents to decide on appropriate action(s) to be taken in the best interests of the child. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Management.

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 child who is the victim of bullying will also meet with the Principal and his/her guardians to discuss and plan how best for them to move forward from the negative incident.

The aim of such a meeting(s) will be to address emotional needs and devise strategies for the child to deal with the bullying. This may involve reinforcing the programme being covered in class, or other strategies such as a buddy system or additional supports.

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.

- o SALT Conflict Resolution Programme
- o Circle Time activities
- o SPHE Programmes e.g. Walk Tall, Zippy's Friends
- o NEPS - Friends for Life, Incredible Years, Get Up. Stand Up etc.
- o Barnardo's Roots of Empathy programme
- o The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

This is a possible list of interventions and is only a guide to what could be undertaken.

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 relevant 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. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21st November, 2023.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: Term 1, Academic Year 2024/2025

APPENDIX 1:

REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING – TEACHER FORM

Date:	
Name of staff member(s):	
Name of pupil(s) involved: <i>Please specify the child's role i.e. victim/instigator</i>	
Brief overview of incident post investigation: <i>Please consult steps for dealing with an incident of bullying in the anti-bullying policy.</i>	
Nature of bullying: <i>Circle all that apply</i>	physical verbal racial gang One-on-one cyber bullying homophobic sexual other(please specify)
Rule broken:	
Sanction:	
Resolution/Review:	
Communication with guardians:	
Principal's signature:	
Staff member signature:	
Signature of pupil(s) involved:	

APPENDIX 2:

BEHAVIOUR MONITORING – PUPIL REPORT

Date:	
Name of staff member(s):	
Name of pupil involved:	
Brief overview of positive behaviour(Daily/weekly)	
Negative behaviour if applicable: (Daily/weekly)	
Reward/sanction: (Daily/weekly)	
Review date:	
Communication with guardians:	
Principal's signature:	
Staff member signature:	
Signature of pupil involved:	

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?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
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?	
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?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
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?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____

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

To: _____

The Board of Management of **Scoil Teampall Toinne** 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 on the **21st November, 2023**.
- 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 _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____