



Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Fhursa Lyre National School 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.

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:

Key Principles of Best Practice:

(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;

In creating a positive school culture and climate we;

Acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.

Acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.

Promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all our members.

Prohibit vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of our members.

Have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of functioning.

Have the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.

Identify aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.

Take particular care of "at risk" pupils and use our monitoring systems to facilitate early



intervention where necessary and we respond to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Recognise the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.

Recognise the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life- skills.

Recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

Promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.

Promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all our 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.

(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;
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

(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.



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 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 Appendix 1

Examples of bullying behaviours

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment 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 words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, 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 • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • 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 eg. Derogatory terminology used to describe someone who is gay or lesbian • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<p>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</p>



Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking negatively and 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 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

Relevant Teachers for Dealing with Bullying

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with this policy

In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher".

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

All class teachers: Ms. Duggan (Principal), Mrs. Roche (Deputy Principal), Ms. Leahy

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it eg:

Learning Support Teacher (Mrs. Finn)

Resource Teacher

Substitute Teacher for long-term staff absences



Education and Prevention Strategies

School-wide approach

- 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 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 develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it's prevention and intervention.
- An annual discussion of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers
- 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 and ancillary 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 students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, Lunchtime Pals and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school, to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all new parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy.
- The implementation of regular (per term) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week, annual student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Pupil Post-box
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a year to all pupils.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or-



know that bullying is taking place.

- Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the 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 Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression, Cyber Bullying , Diversity and Interculturalism**
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety 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

- Our Anti-Bullying Policy has specific links to the following policies: Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Supervision Policy, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, SPHE Policy



Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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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:

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 (SNAs) must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any 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 will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews will 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 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;
- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements. Children may be asked to write down what happened in their own words
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;
- 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 will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or sup-



port the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;

- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil 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 should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- Any sanctions against bullying behaviour will follow the guidelines clearly stated in our School Code of Discipline and will be discussed with the pupil and his/her parent/guardian

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 - Whether the 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 will 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) will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

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:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff will keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them in the class incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- The relevant teacher will keep a written record of any reports of bullying, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.



Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will 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.
- All records will be kept in the relevant teacher's classroom filing cabinet. This will be locked and accessible only to the relevant teacher

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstance:

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

When the recording template is used, it will be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

The copy retained by teacher will be placed in the individual pupil file and locked in the classroom filing cabinet. Copy retained by Principal will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office. Only the relevant teacher and Principal will have access to these files. Pupil files will be maintained by the school until the pupil reaches the age of 21.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Circle Time
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice



Support for those Affected by Bullying

- In-school supports and opportunities will be provided for 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.
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Special Ed Team
 - Group work such as circle time
- 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 teacher.

Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

- Supervision of Pupils is carried out in line with the school Supervision Policy
- Bullying 'Danger Spots' have been identified in consultation with staff and senior pupils and staff on supervision duties will be extra vigilant in monitoring these areas
- Lunchtime Pals and Buddies will be aware of children in need of extra support in the yard and alert teachers on supervision to possible concerns
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy:
 - All Internet sessions are supervised by a teacher
 - The school constantly monitors pupils' Internet usage

Pupils do not have access to social networking sites under the school's broadband provider



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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in May 2014

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parent on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron 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 be accessible to parents 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: Martin O'Keeffe
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Noreen Duggan
(Principal)

Date: 06/05/2014

Date: 06/05/2014

Date of next review: May 2015



APPENDIX A:

Forms of Bullying

PHYSICAL BULLYING: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment.

INTIMIDATION: Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation; it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language, with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

EXCLUSION/ISOLATION: This occurs when a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some, or all, of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about the pupil loud enough to be heard.

RELATIONAL BULLYING: This occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms involves control; ("Do it or I won't be your friend anymore"), a group ganging up against one person, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours about the person or giving them the silent treatment.

CYBERBULLYING: This type of bullying is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging, apps, gaming sites, chat rooms etc. Being the target of hurtful and inappropriate messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact, it can occur anytime, anywhere. Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying.

NAME-CALLING: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual, which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name-calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who because they are achieved as high achievers, are also targeted.



DAMAGE TO PROPERTY: Personal property can also be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone, school books etc. It may also involve interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden. Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats. A pupil may also be forced into the theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.