



SCOIL AN SPIORAID NAOIMH CAILÍNÍ

ANTI – BULLYING POLICY 2024 /25

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 an Spioraid Naoimh Cailíní. I 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 importance of Anti-Bullying measures and the negative impact that bullying can have on the lives of pupils. The Board 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;
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

See Appendix B: Practical tips for building a school culture and climate.

(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 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.

3. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* the Definition of Bullying is 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 & other forms of Relational Bullying,
- Cyber-Bullying
- Identity-Based Bullying related to characteristics considered part of a person's identity or perceived identity group, such as race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, immigration status, membership of the Travelling Community or LGBT+ Community.

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

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

<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/circulation of written words, pictures/materials aimed at intimidating another • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Instagram/Viber/Snapchat/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 Travelling Community).</p>	

Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about 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
Race, Nationality, Ethnic, Traveller Community background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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 • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Use or 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

4. The ****Relevant Teachers**** for investigating and dealing with bullying are The **CLASS TEACHER/S, in Consultation with the Principal (Carol Constant) / Deputy Principal (Zita O’ Dwyer)** In practice, **ANY teacher can be the relevant teacher**, depending on the circumstances.

5. The **Education and Prevention Strategies** (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying & homophobic 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*):

Sample 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 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 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 **Student Representatives** in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, 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 **Journals & displayed on School Notice Boards & Website.**
- The school's Anti-bullying policy is **discussed** with pupils, parents, guardians. **Access to the policy is** through Notice Boards and School Website.
- The implementation of regular **whole school awareness measures** e.g. promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; student surveys; regular school assemblies by 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 notes up with homework.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- 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, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum, 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.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Web wise Primary teachers' resources, the school should list every resource related to the SPHE curriculum, and make a list of supports.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programme. These lessons, delivered by our Community Garda, 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.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).
- The school will engage with Department of Education led Bí Cinneálta Action Plan on Bullying' as it is rolled out. This Action Plan will to help prevent or address bullying behaviour, guide the school in engagement with anti-bullying initiatives and will be used as a valuable resource in our implementation of the new Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.

Links to other policies

- School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance.

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):

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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 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 Secretary, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), Caretaker, School Traffic Warden, 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 (see section 6.8.9)

- 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 should take **calm, unemotional problem-solving approach**.
- 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**;
- If a group is involved, **each member should be interviewed individually at first**. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It may also be appropriate or 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 been 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 the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, 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 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 must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by or notified to them. **Appendix A** to be used to record **possible bullying incidents**
- 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 relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated and **Bullying Incident Forms kept in the office**.

Formal Stage 1-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.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix C (From DES Procedures)

The **Relevant Teacher** must use the **recording template** at **Appendix C** 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

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained.

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
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 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.
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling of 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.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management of Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Cailíní 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.

The following Prompt Questions may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots?
- How will the student support/care structures (including SPHE, HSCL, Learning Support teachers) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
- How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the student council and school clubs be involved?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
 - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
 - Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage?
 - Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
 - Have pupils been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

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 of Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh, Cailíní

11. This policy has been made available on the school website and school Notice Boards, as well as 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 every school year. School personnel and the Parents' Association will be notified of the review. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:

JOHN TALTY (Chairperson BOM)

CAROL CONSTANT (Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of Next Review: _____

Appendix B 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.
- 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 & 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 C: Report Template For Incidents of Bullying

SCOIL AN SPIORAID NAOIMH GIRLS' SCHOOL

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. _____ CLASS _____ NAME

2. NAME(s) and CLASS(ES) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

NAME/S: _____
CLASS/ES: _____
DATE: _____ TIME: _____

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"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<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	Traveller Community	Other (specify)

8. BRIEF DESCRIPTION of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. ACTIONS TAKEN / FOLLOW UP

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Signed: _____ **(Relevant Teacher)** **Date:** _____