

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed September 2024

Introduction:

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 Naomh Náille 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.

Aims:

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.

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*.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows (see section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*):

Class Teacher of pupils accused of/being bullied
Rory O'Donnell – School Principal/DLP
Maura Gavigan - Deputy Principal/DDLP

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*):

We hold regular school assemblies where anti-bullying is the first issue to be addressed. This reminds the school community of our role in understanding the very serious issue of bullying and its effects.

During the year each class undertakes SPHE lessons on the themes of personal safety, anti-bullying and friendship using the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes.

Each year the 6th Class pupils take part in lessons dealing with to the more sensitive issues of RSE. Parents are sent a copy of the lessons and their consent is required for their child to take part.

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*):

1. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, are noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. We in Scoil Naomh Náille consider this confidence factor is of vital importance. Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils are referred immediately to the principal or deputy principal. All incidents of bullying or suspected bullying are noted in the **Appendix – template for recording bullying behaviour** which are kept for five years.

2. Parents or guardians of alleged victims and bullies are informed by the principal or deputy principal earlier rather than later of incidents in order that they are given the opportunity to discuss the matter with their child. They may be invited to come to the school to discuss it with the teacher/principal with a view to resolving the problem. They are then in a position to help their child before a crisis occurs.
3. Parents/Guardians can make enquiries regarding incidents of bullying which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians to the class teacher, principal or deputy principal. We in Scoil Naomh Náille make clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
4. Individual teachers can take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the schools policy and code of behaviour and discipline.
5. The offending party will be deemed to have breached the schools Code of Conduct and sanctions will be applied.
6. The non teaching staff such as Special Needs Assistants, Secretary, Cleaner and Caretaker are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the appropriate teaching member of staff.
7. The situation will continue to be monitored to ensure that the problem has been resolved.
8. In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member this should normally in the first instance be raised with the staff member in question and, if necessary, with the principal.
9. Where cases relating to either a pupil or staff member (teaching and non teaching) remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the schools Board of Management. If it is not resolved at Board level the matter may be referred to the Department of Education.

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*):

Pupils who have been bullied and who have bullied

Class teachers and those on yard or other areas of supervision will monitor pupils' progress on an ongoing basis.

If required, Learning Support staff will facilitate opportunities to participate in activities such as friendship groups, social skills groups, or other practical projects to raise self esteem and confidence.

Parents will also be informed of ongoing monitoring in school by school staff and will be asked for feedback from home.

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:

- The Stay Safe Programme
- SPHE
- RSE Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Anti-Bullying website resources

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The school will also work with the alleged bullies and their victims in reviewing the programmes above, and with one-to-one support in resolving the issues raised.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves discussing the incidents with the pupils, reassuring them that they were right to bring the events to the attention of staff, that they were not telling tales and their actions will help others, they will be reminded that they should tell again if they have any new concerns. The teacher(s) involved and the principal will check from time to time with the child that everything is ok.

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.

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.

Review and Ratification

This policy is reviewed annually, with the most recent review being in September 2024. It was ratified at the Board of Management meeting on 3rd October 2024.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills 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 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: *Teresa Gallagher*
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: *3rd October 2024*

Bullying Behaviour Record Sheet

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

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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/toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<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	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

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 _____