

SCOIL BHRÍDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Killane, Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

Phone / Fax: 046-9773451

email: info@scoilbhrideps.com

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 Bhríde Primary 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.
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) 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
 - promote respectful relationships across the school community (see table A)
 - (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
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 teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying which is (are) as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):
 - All class teachers
 - Deputy Principal
 - Principal

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*):

Education:

- Scoil Bhríde's Anti-Bullying Campaign
- MySelfie.ie
- Webwise
- RSE programme
- Walk Tall programme
- Age- appropriate material on cyber bullying
- Friendship week
- Extra-curricular activities (develop sense of self-worth)
- SPHE eg *Growing Up LGBT*
- Curriculum: Drama, English, Art etc

Prevention

- Education on online safety
- Development of anti-bullying code to be displayed around the school eg *Think before you click, web wise Primary Teachers' resources*
- Concerns box in classroom
- Display of anti-bullying posters, display of messages of respect around the school
- Fostering an inclusive and harmonious environment

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*)

- Stage 1 –Establishing the Facts
- If an incident has taken place that might involve bullying, the class teacher will record whatever details are known by completing "Incident Report Form" and then follow the remaining steps below to investigate and resolve it. All actions taken to deal with such an incident will be recorded on "Action Taken Form"
- Using the "Reform, Not Blame" approach, survey all classes in that year group, e.g. all third class groups, using copies of the class survey questionnaire
- Later, read through the questionnaires for evidence of bullying
- Stage 2- Interview an alleged perpetrator
- Interview any alleged perpetrators using the "Alleged Bullying Interview" form and the "Bullying Behaviour Checklist" form using the 'Reform, Not Blame' approach. Those interviewed are reminded that they must be honest in the interview so you can trust their promise to stop and avoid any punishment at the end.
- Stage 3- Resolution
- In the event that there has been bullying taking place, ask the pupil to complete a signed "Pupil Behaviour Promise" form and countersign it. In most cases pupils will keep that promise.
- In usual cases it may be necessary to fill out a Pupil and Parent Behaviour Promise Form. This is a similar promise form but with a place for a parent's/guardian's counter-signature. This could happen if (a) the bullying was of a particularly serious nature, (b) the pupil was less than fully cooperative during the interview (e.g. trying to avoid blame or deny the facts), or (c) the pupil had previously bullied, had promised to stop and had broken that promise.
- Pupils who have bullied previously and are being interviewed for bullying for the second time still face no sanction by the school but will be given a stern warning. The warning, given by the interviewer at the end of the second interview, when the pupil has signed the second promise (that must still be countersigned by a parent/guardian), may be roughly the following;
 - *A meeting may take place with the school Principal, your parent(s)/guardian(s), me (the school anti-bullying coordinator) and you.*
 - *At that meeting the details of the first interview after you bullied (N) will be read out in front of them all. If you had kept your first promise these details would never have been revealed.*
 - *At that meeting the details of your second interview, showing how you bullied (N2), after signing a promise not to bully again, will also be read out in front of them all.*
 - *At that meeting the Principal may then decide to suspend you from school for several days with a large amount of written homework to keep you busy all day each day. The Board of Management would have to be informed about this too.*
- STAGE 4 - REHABILITATION
- The Targeted Pupil Impact Statement Form is designed to be used some time after the resolution of the bullying situation but within the same school year
- These procedures are to be used with Scoil Bhríde's Anti-Bullying Campaign
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying has not been adequately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded and the Principal must be informed
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately dealt with the relevant teacher must take into account: (a) whether the bullying has ceased, (b) whether the

relationship between the parties has been restored as far as is practicable, and (c) any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred to the school's complaints procedures
- In the event that a parent exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying has not been adequately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded using **Appendix 3** and the Principal must be informed

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Buddy/ peer mentoring system
- Development of the children's self esteem
- Group work such as circle time
- Counselling where appropriate
- Targeted Pupil Impact Statement Form

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 12 Feb. 2024

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: Nichola Hogan.

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Kevin Duffy

(Principal)

Date: 12 Feb. 2024

Date of next review: 12 Feb. 2025

Table A: Key Elements of a positive school culture and climate

Area of Focus	Y/N Comment
The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.	Y
The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being	Y
The school promote positive habits of self respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members	Y
The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members	Y
The school has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning	Y
The school has the capacity to change in response to pupil's needs	Y
The school identifies aspects of the curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values	Y
The school takes particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner	Y
The school recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school wide basis	Y
The school recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills	Y
The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities	Y
The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school	Y
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	Y

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	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

--

9. Details of actions taken

--

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.

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> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
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?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
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?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
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?	Yes
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N/A

Signed Nichola Hogan
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 12 Feb. 2024

Signed Kevin Duffy
Principal

Date 12 Feb. 2024

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

To: School Personnel + Parents' Association.

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde Primary School 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 of 12 Feb. 2024
- 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 Nichola Hogan,
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 12 Feb. 2024

Signed Kevin Duffy
Principal

Date 12 Feb. 2024