

**Anti-Bullying Policy 2023/2024**

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 Phádraig Naofa 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
* promotes respectful relationships across 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.**

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.

**Examples of bullying behaviours**

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| This list is non exhaustive and any unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) which is repeated over time will not be tolerated and will be investigated. |

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| **General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying** | * 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
* Intimidation
* Insulting or offensive gestures
* The “look”
* Invasion of personal space
* A combination of any of the types listed.
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| **Cyber** | * **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
* It is illegal for primary school children under the age of 13 to be on Facebook
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| **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). |
| **Homophobic and Transgender** | * Spreading rumours about a 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
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| **Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community** | * 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
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| **Relational** | This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:* 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
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| **Sexual** | * Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
* Harassment
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| **Special Educational Needs,****Disability** | * 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
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4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

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| The Relevant Teachers in this school are the base class teacher that each child is enrolled in.  |

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-

bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows

**Education and prevention strategies**

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| **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.
* 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.
* Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
* 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.
* **SPHE programme:** Social, Physical & Health Education is part of the curriculum & is taught in all classes incl. RSE & Stay Safe.
* **School Completion Programme:** Aims to improve the quality of participation and educational attainment of children in the educational process. We have a project worker (Gillian Crowley) in our school 3 days a week to deliver initiatives and programmes.
* **Home School Community Liaison Teacher:** Our HSCL teacher is Helena Creedon and she is in school on Tuesdays and Fridays. She is there as a support to parents and to promote co-operation between home, school, and community. He can be contacted on 087 2384968.
* **Nurture Ireland approaches & strategies:** We are very proud to be one of a small number of schools in Ireland to be involved with Nurture Ireland and adopt its strategies. The focus of this is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and remove barriers to learning by promoting nurture in education. Mr. Kelly is currently developing this in our school and it has been a wonderful support to the children involved. We hope to develop this further as an early intervention strategy for all children in the infant rooms next year.
* **Restorative Practices:** Develops and sustains strong, happy communities by actively building and maintaining good relationships, preventing conflict & resolving conflict in a healthy manner when it arises. Ms. Hennessy & Mrs. Nyhan are trained in this.
* **Incredible Years:** Several teachers have taken part in Incredible years training. It is a classroom based programme aimed at promoting positive social behaviour in children. This programme is delivered and promoted by the National Educational Psychologists Service.
* **Social Skills Groups:** Our Special Education Teachers regularly take children for social skills sessions as needed.
* **National Council for Special Education (NCSE) training:** The teachers in our ASD classes have all engaged with training provided by the NCSE this year to ensure that challenges arising for children in these classes are addressed in a way that is appropriate to their needs. Staff training for mainstream teachers also took place in September last year. All children in our primary ASD classes integrate to mainstream classes for playtime and class time (as is appropriate for each child). Positive interactions and good quality inclusion opportunities are important to the development of our school as a truly inclusive environment. Integration is closely monitored by teachers and SNAs.
* **Friends for Life Programme:** Friends for Life is a school-based anxiety prevention and resilience building programme developed by Dr. Paula Barrett in Australia. The World Health Organisation cites ‘Friends for Life’ as the only evidence-based programme for anxiety in children that is effective at all levels of intervention (WHO, 2004). This programme is currently being delivered to 5th class and we hope to deliver it to 3rd class next year. Teacher training for this is provided by the National Educational Psychologists Service.
* **Weaving Well-being Programme:** Weaving Well-Being is the first Irish designed positive mental health programme of its kind which aims to enhance well-being in children aged from 8-12 years within the framework of the SPHE curriculum. It is underpinned by the concept that a state of well-being is not simply the absence of the negative, but the presence of the positive.
* **Webwise:** Webwise is the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre which is co-funded by the Department of Education and Skills and is co-financed by the European Union’s Connecting Europe Facility. The website develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate internet safety into teaching and learning in their schools. It also provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children’s online lives, see [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) Lessons from this site are used in classes throughout the school.
* **Get Up! Stand Up!:** NEPS programme aimed at preparing children for the transition to secondary school. This is taught in conjunction with the SCP transition programme. This programme was delivered for review purposes this year in conjunction with NEPS psychologist.
* **Roots of Empathy Programme (Training provided by Barnardos):** Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based programme delivered in primary school classrooms which has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children by raising social-emotional competence and increasing empathy. At the heart of the programme is a baby and parent who visit the classroom every three weeks during the school year. A trained Roots of Empathy instructor (Sarah Leonard delivers this programme in our school) coaches the children to observe the baby's development and to label the baby's feelings. The baby is the ‘teacher’ in this experiential learning, while the instructor helps the children identify and reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others.
* **Strudent’s Council:** Our Students Councilis lead by sixth class. We look forward to seeing what the newly elected council take on and to supporting them along the way.
* **Links with Community Gardaí incl. class visits:** We are very grateful for the support of our Community Gardaí**.** They visit our school every year to talk to the children. They also make the Garda Bus available to the children in our ASD classes and accompany the children on trips.. Ms. Hennessy has regular contact with them through the CFSN meetings and directly as needed.
* **Friendship Week Activities (Co-ordinated by School Completion Project Worker):** A focus is placed on the importance and value of good friendships during this week.

**Implementation of curricula*** The full implementation of the SPHE and curricula
* Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
* 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*** Code of Behaviour
* Child Safeguarding Policy incl. risk assessment
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 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):

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| **6.8.9. 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);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 secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, 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 a 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 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.
* In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred it must be recorded in the recording template (Appendix 3 template on yellow page).

**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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal* 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) 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 them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher and recorded on Aladdin
* 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.

 **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.

 **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** 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. When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. These will be stored in a file in the prinipals office.**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)s to support school interventions
* No Blame Approach
* Circle Time
* Restorative interviews
* Implementing sociogram questionnaires

\*Some staff trained in Restorative Practices and are making use of the restorative questions to discuss incidents with children.  |

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

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| * 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 as listed in the prevention strategies section of this document.

 * 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.
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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.

* See supervision rota
* See Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

**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 in September 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: Michael Crowley Signed: Méabh Hennessy

 Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: 27.09.2023 Date: 27.09.2023

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

**(DES Anti-Bullying Procedures 2013)**

**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.

The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each

individual and his/her worth as a human being.

The school promote positive habits of self-respect,

self-discipline and responsibility among all its

members.

The school prohibits vulgar, offensive, sectarian or

other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its

members.

The school has a clear commitment to promoting

equity in general and gender equity in particular in all

aspects of its functioning.

The school has the capacity to change in response to

pupil’s needs.

The school identifies aspects of curriculum through

which positive and lasting influences can be exerted

towards forming pupils’ attitudes and values.

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.

The school recognises the need to work in

partnership with and keep parents informed on

procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide

basis.

The school recognises the role of parents in equipping

the pupil with a range of life-skills.

The school recognises the role of other community

agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

The school promotes habits of mutual respect,

courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of

people in groups and communities

The school promotes qualities of social responsibility,

tolerance and understanding among all its 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

**Sample Action Plan to promote a positive school**

**culture and climate**

**Target:** To develop practices to ensure a positive school culture and climate is prioritised across the school

*Appendix 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures has been referenced to develop our Action Plan*

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| What steps do we need to take? | Who will do it? | When will it be done by? | Complete Ongoing Deferred |
| As a staff we will model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times  | All staff  |  | Ongoing  |
| We will explicitly teach pupils at all class levels what respectful language and behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school  | All staff  |  | Ongoing  |
| We will engage in CPD events in relation to Anti-Bullying and also set aside planning time as a staff for this area  | All staff  | June 2014 and ongoing |  |
| We will agree key respect messages and display them in classrooms, assembly areas and around the school, The pupils will be involved in thedevelopment of these messages and they will be cross referenced with the Code of Behaviour  | Staff representatives per class level  |  | Ongoing  |
| We will consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school- this includes homophobic and racist language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN   | All Staff  |  | Ongoing |