



Duleek GNS Anti Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 2000 and the code of behaviour, the Board of Management of Scoil Bheinín Naofa Cailíní has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the schools 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 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 that
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity based bullying including in particular homophobic and trans phobic bullying
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour
- 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



- 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/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 our school's Code of Behaviour.

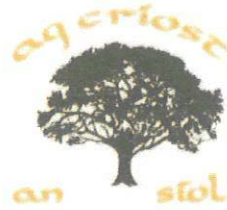
Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

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

- Class Teacher

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):

- A training day will be facilitated by a qualified facilitator and carried out every two years for pupils from 3rd to 6th class with follow up meeting for their parents/guardians in school that evening to educate pupils on internet safety.
- Teachers will train students in Netiquette
 - never share a password
 - never add strangers
 - if someone is horrible to you stop talking to them, block/unfriend/report
 - never respond, bullies feed on reaction
 - never delete evidence
 - save and print material as proof
 - don't pass on bullying messages
 - scoilnet.ie/online_safety-primary.shtm, contains lessons for primary children on safety issues when using internet
- Throughout the year each class undertake SPHE lessons on the themes of personal safety, bullying and friendship. The Stay Safe Programme also deals with issues surrounding bullying.



- If teacher deems it necessary an 'issue box' will be placed in each classroom. Teachers to deal with issues that arise
- Anti-bullying posters to be displayed throughout the school.
- An attitude of mutual respect and acceptance of difference will be encouraged in all areas of school community
- Issues of personal safety, friendship and bullying are covered in class throughout the year. However the month of January will be deemed 'Stay Safe' month and awareness raising month. Emphasis placed on raising the awareness of bullying within all members of the school community.
- Children will be encouraged to disclose incidents of bullying and will see that action will be taken
- Through curricular and extra-curricular programmes (involvement in sports, choir, arts) pupils self-esteem will be developed and pupils provided with the opportunity to develop a positive sense of self-worth.
- There is space within teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all, to promote the value of diversity, address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

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) :

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

Any pupil or parent/guardian can bring a bullying incident to the attention of the relevant teacher in the school. At times it may be necessary for parents/guardians to bring to the relevant teacher/principals attention incidents of a bullying nature that has happened outside of school.

All reports, including anonymous reports, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

Teaching and non-teaching staff such as SNA's, secretaries, caretaker, bus escorts 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)

- 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.
- 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 they may face 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.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/guardians 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 parents/guardians 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 necessary, incidents of a bullying nature may be communicated with school staff. This communication will only take place if considered to be in the best interest of the concerned parties.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has 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.

Role of Parents/Pupils

- Parents/Guardians 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.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupil and parents/guardians that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, her parents/guardians 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 has ceased

Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable

Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the school principal



- When suitable, follow up meetings with the relevant parties 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/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent/guardian must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaint procedures.

Recording of Bullying Behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying behaviour must be done in an objective and factual manner. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows.

Informal : predetermination that bullying has occurred

- All staff keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher and he/she must classify such reports as potential bullying where his/her professional judgement deems it as such.
- 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 discussion with those involved regarding same
- Any reports received or drafted at this stage will be stored in the pupils file by their class teacher

Formal Stage One: 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.
- Records associated with incidents of reported bullying are stored by class teachers in an appropriate folder.

Formal Stage Two: Completion of Standardised Bullying Record Template

The relevant teacher must use the recording template to record bullying behaviour in the following circumstances.

- In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.

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

Established Intervention Strategies

(Given the complexity of bullying behaviour it is recognised that no one intervention works in all situations).



Established intervention strategies

- Teacher investigates incident (interviews with all pupils)
- Help the pupils to reach agreement towards a positive outcome on an informal basis initially.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Group Work
- Developing better social skills with a group

The teacher will also talk to all children involved, outline expected behaviour and monitor the situation. Following on from these interventions and if deemed necessary:-

- The principal will arrange to meet with the parents of the child who is seen to be bullying and separately with the parents of the victim of bullying. The children themselves may be required to attend part or all of these meetings.
- The child who is seen to be bullying will be closely monitored during the day. All staff will be made aware of the situation; this will be particularly helpful in 'hot spot' situations such as playtime.
- Class teacher will note all positive behaviour, progress in work etc. If necessary journal may be used by teacher to communicate behaviour, negative or positive to parents.
- The child should be able to see that parents and school are working together in her interest. The purpose of these records is to focus as much as possible on the positive qualities and efforts of the child and to motivate the child to move away from negative behaviour.
- Should the above intervention fail and the bullying continues, a programme of appropriate sanctions may be implemented by the Principal in consultation with the parents. Sanctions implemented aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the esteem of the child. These sanctions may include a period of suspension. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Management.

What Parents Can Do To Help

- It is important to be realistic, it will not be possible for a single child to assert her rights if attacked by a gang. Children should be advised to get away and tell in situations such as this.
- Teaching your child to say 'no' in a good assertive tone of voice and to carry herself in a confident way will help your child to deal with many situations. A child's self-image and body language may send out messages to potential bullies.
- Children should be encouraged to tell class teacher
- Children should be encouraged to be non-violent in resolving conflicts.

What if Your Child is a Bully?



- Give your child an opportunity to talk about anything that could be upsetting her. Explain how the victim felt.
- Bullies often suffer poor self-esteem. Use every opportunity you can to praise good, considerate behaviour.

7. 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) :

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying and those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will include activities to build their self-esteem, to develop friendship and social skills.

Pupils will be reassured by teacher and principal 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.

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

Guest Speaker: Trained facilitator for anti-bullying workshops once every two years. Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

Involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports will enhance the pupil's sense of self-worth. Advice of NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) will be sought if deemed necessary on how to support both victims of bullying and those involved in bullying.

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 29/01/2020.



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:  (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  (Principal)

Date: 12/2/23.

Date of next review: Feb 2024