



Anti-Bullying Policy Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa Ballymurn

Appendix A of Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement:

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 Chroí Ró 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.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. The school community believes strongly that respect for all at all times must be promoted and become intrinsic in the ethos of society. This is fundamentally, the biblical principle of the 'Golden Rule.' Matthew 7:12 - "So always treat others as you would like them to treat you."

The children are taught that society is made up of a variety of different people, all of whom deserve our respect, all of whom have the right to be treated equally and to have the fundamental right to be allowed to exist in society and be content in their lives. No bullying can therefore be tolerated and no discrimination based on the nine stated grounds included in equality legislation, i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, can be allowed.

This Policy was formulated by the staff of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa in collaboration with the Board of Management, pupils and parents of the school, during the school year 2013/2014. The policy will guide action and organisation within the school for preventing and responding to bullying.

The Board of Management and the staff of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa are therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which –
 1. is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 2. encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 3. 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-
 1. build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and

2. 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 (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:

Definition:

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:

1. deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
2. cyber-bullying and
3. 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 Appendix B of this policy.

Who will deal with accusations of bullying?:

As with all instances of misbehaviour in school, if there is an accusation of bullying in school, the class teacher (or the teacher on yard, if the incident occurs on yard) will investigate and deal with the incident in the first instance. The teacher to whom the initial bullying report is made shall discuss the incident with the child(ren)'s class teacher. The principal is then informed of the incident. Sanctions are imposed **only** when the investigation has been completed and the school management team are satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that bullying has occurred.

If there is an acceptance that the behaviour constituted bullying, or the behaviour is repeated, the matter is brought to the attention of the principal. The principal will speak to all the children involved and the incident will be recorded on the 'Template for recording bullying behaviour' (Appendix C).

The principal will also contact the parents of all parties involved and address the issue with them and the class teacher.

Sanctions will be imposed in line with the school's behaviour policy but there may be some variation on the sanctions imposed depending on where the incident took place.

Stage 1: Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve

Stage 2: On the third reprimand the child should be separated from peers using a "time out" zone e.g. table or chair. The time period will depend on class level. The following is suggested:

- Infants – not more than 5 minutes
- 1st/2nd – not more than 7 minutes
- 3rd/4th – not more than 10 minutes
- 5th/6th – not more than 15 minutes

*** In the case of more serious misbehaviour stages 1 & 2 may be skipped.**

Stage 3: Loss of privileges e.g. Golden Time, Activities, yard time, curricular areas under certain circumstances. For a short period of time the child may be removed from their classroom and supervised by a neighbouring teacher during which time, written work may be given.

However, as bullying is considered a very serious offence in this school, time may also be spent discussing the matter with the principal and another teacher.

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 (to be set up by the DES in conjunction with this initiative)
- Incredible Years

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:

- The Stay Safe Programme
- SPHE
- RSE Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Anti-Bullying website (to be set up by the DES in conjunction with this initiative)
- Incredible Years

The school will also work with the alleged bullies and their victims in revising 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.

Aims:

The aim of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa, Anti-Bullying policy is

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

Statement on Bullying

- Every person in the School is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- The School will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- The matter will be dealt with seriously.
- The School has a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied (Stay Safe, Walk Tall)
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

Indications of Bullying

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:-

- anxiety about travelling to and from school - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, 'mitching', 'ditching';
- deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
- unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- visible signs of anxiety or distress - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;

- possessions missing or damaged;
- increased requests for money or stealing money;
- unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
- reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil

Strategies for Prevention of Bullying

- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.
- Children do not have access to Wi-Fi/Social Media or mobile phones while at school or on school excursions.

Maintaining awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa NS will emphasise and reinforce the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by:

- Using school assemblies to remind pupils of the school's anti bullying policy
- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable through visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, cooperative games...
- Devising a school anti-bullying charter for display in classrooms and other prominent locations

Disclosure

Children will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. They will be helped to differentiate between incidents of a minor nature and those that constitute bullying. They will also be taught the difference between 'telling tales' and asking for help.

Records

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain:

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Both parents/guardians and pupils will be told when a record is being made about a child's behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained. All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school community are enabled to deal effectively with bullying. The Board is committed to providing time and resources for the implementation of the policy. The Board will ensure that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to help prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

School Staff

The school staff shall foster a caring atmosphere of respect and tolerance. Children's self-esteem will be developed through celebrating differences and achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners, and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and the school. Teachers shall help pupils to develop skills through the SPHE programme, Stay Safe and through discussion of issues of behaviour. Relationships with pupils shall be based on mutual respect and trust. Teachers shall be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying.

Teachers shall discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with the pupils and use behavioural management strategies which focus on problem solving and enable pupils to take an active role in finding a solution to the problem.

Pupils

- Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other.
- Pupils are expected to follow School, Yard and Classroom Rules
- Pupils are expected to recognise the seriousness of bullying and to co-operate with staff when managing incidents of bullying (at an age appropriate level).
- Pupils should report incidents of bullying as soon as possible to their parents and teachers.

Parents

- Encourage positive behaviour, tolerance and respect both at home and at school.
- Encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression.
- Encourage children to share, be kind, be caring and to be understanding towards others.
- Watch out for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others.
- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with their child/children.
- Support the school in its efforts to prevent and manage bullying.

Parents are obliged to bring any concerns/issues about bullying in respect of their child **to the class teacher first**. It is neither acceptable nor appropriate for parents to approach the alleged bully's parents outside of the school. In such instances, parents only succeed in undermining the school anti-bullying procedures and the BOM will not support, entertain or become embroiled in any such behaviour.

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.

Success Criteria:

- Positive feedback from staff, pupils and parents.
- Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors, yard.

Implementation and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 11th February, 2014. It will be reviewed annually. 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 and 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:

Matthew Kelly
Chairperson (BOM)

Signed:

Emer O'Gorman
Principal

Date: 17th September 2024

Date of next review: Bí Cineálta will be implemented next year.

APPENDIX B:

Types of bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

1. **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
2. **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.
3. **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore" (implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".
4. **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.
5. **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.
6. **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
7. **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Appendix C 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<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"/>

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 _____

APPENDIX D

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> ?	Y
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Y
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?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Y
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Y
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Y
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Y
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Y
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Y
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?	Y
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	N
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	N
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	N
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?	Y
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	N
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N

Signed:



Matthew Kelly
Chairperson (BOM)

Signed:



Emer O'Gorman
Principal

Date: 17th September 2024

APPENDIX E

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 ignored.
- 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 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 the pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

APPENDIX F

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

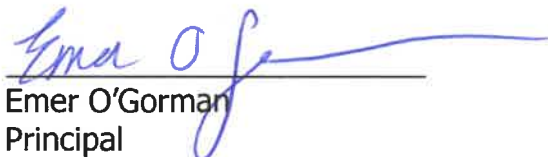
To: Parents, Teaching Staff and Ancillary Staff

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa 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 on 17th September 2024.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix D** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: 
Matthew Kelly
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 17th September 2024

Signed: 
Emer O'Gorman
Principal

Date: 17th September 2024