



SN Tulach Uí Chadhain

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction:

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Bríde, Tulach Uí Chadhain 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 and is therefore fully committed to following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour

Rationale

Scoil Náisiúnta Tulach Uí Chadhain recognizes the right of every child to learn in a supportive caring and safe environment, without the fear of being bullied. This policy was drawn up, in consultation with all stakeholders, to put in place the correct procedures and practices to ensure that this right is respected. It is important that our school maintains a clear policy on the promotion of respect for everyone and that everyone within the school community recognizes that bullying is an unacceptable behaviour. This policy promotes this belief and provides clear strategies for teachers, pupils and parents to deal with bullying in a firm, fair clear, prompt and positive manner.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, all staff, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure comprehensive 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 anti-bullying behaviour.
- To increase co-operation between home and school regarding the issue of bullying.

- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self – discipline in pupils based on respect among all members of the school community.
- To share the task with parents/guardians of equipping pupils with the necessary skills to deal with others

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as repeated acts of aggression; which may be verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.

Bullying may take many different forms such as physical aggression, damage to property, theft of property, extortion, intimidation, abusive telephone calls, isolation, name calling, writing notes, emailing or texting. As a form of aggressive behaviour it is usually hurtful and deliberate. It is persistent over time and makes it difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It is important not to confuse bullying with isolated incidents of aggressive or antisocial behaviour, which must not be condoned. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it becomes bullying.

All members of the school community have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.

Types of Bullying

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- Cyber bullying
- Ongoing physical intimidation or threatening behaviour
- Identity based bullying such as homophobic bullying, bullying based on a person's ethnicity 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

See Appendix 1 for a non-exhaustive list of various types bullying behaviour

Key Principles:

The Board of Management of SN Tulach Uí Chadhain are fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- The creation of 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;
- The implementation of effective leadership
- A school-wide approach
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and trans phobic bullying;
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- Supports for staff readily available
- 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.

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 prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

School Staff

The school staff will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. Children's self-esteem will be developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success throughout the curriculum and school. Teachers will help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others. Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff. Teachers will be vigilant, respond sensitively and caringly to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying and investigate all disclosed incidents of bullying.

Teachers will 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 problems.

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school religion programme, the Social Personal and Health Education programme, the Stay Safe Programme, the Arts and/or Circle time.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other. Pupils should report incidents of bullying to their parents and teachers.

Parents

Encourage positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour both at home and at school.

Encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression.

Encourage children to share, to be kind, to be caring, and to be understanding towards others.

Watch out for signs and symptoms that your child is being bullied or is bullying others.

Don't dismiss your instincts as being wrong.

Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with her/him.

Support the school in its efforts to prevent and treat bullying.

Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) are as follows:

Create a culture of "telling"

- Teachers should repeatedly reinforce the message that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour, they should not retaliate in any way, but they should tell an adult. Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with.
- Class lessons to be provided to enable pupils "how to tell" (telling protocol)
- Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying and if anyone witnesses bullying behaviour, they should always tell a teacher. This is not telling tales but a means of protecting victims.

Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by:

- Addressing aspects of bullying at morning assemblies. (What is bullying? What is not bullying? What to do if you feel you are being bullied? What to do if you see somebody else being bullied?)
- Engaging in formal teaching within the class setting through SPHE, Stay Safe, and RE programmes.
- Creating an annual awareness week for school community about bullying. This will involve discussion, anti - bullying games, poster/slogan competitions appropriate to class level.

Other Strategies:

- Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising children's self-esteem and equipping children to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Walk Tall, RSE, Alive-O, Webwise, and Stay safe. Positive reinforcement by teachers in classroom setting (Treasure Ticks, Students of the week, Golden time, Golden ticket; Spot Prizes, Stars, Stickers etc.)
- Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by teachers and staff.

- Promotion of extra-curricular activities which encourage co-operation among pupils (to extend this beyond sport eg drama, dance, music) eg Art, Gardening.
- Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour and showing acts of kindness at class level.
- Encouraging students to look out for each other and to be responsible for their own behaviour.
- All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty- record all significant incidences in the Yard Book - monitor repeat offenders
- Immediate affirmation of children who report incidents of bullying which they have witnessed.
- Each class to have a set of class rules which complement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Ensure Code of behaviour is received and signed by all parents
- Renew the signs around the school.
- Supervision at all times when pupils can access the internet.
- Sanctions for unauthorised use of the internet/electronic devices will be imposed as per the Code of Behaviour and AUP.
- All teachers to do a lesson on internet safety- coincide with Internet Safety Day.
- To focus on the topic of bullying on at least one school assembly
- Parent workshop on anti- bully with a focus on cyber bullying.

Responding to Bullying

Stage 1

All reports of bullying must be dealt with initially by the class teacher.

- When a pupil tells a teacher s/he is being bullied, it is important to gather all of the facts from both sides (What, where, when, who, why?). This will involve an interview with the alleged bully.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation.
- The aim for the class teacher 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).
- Non- teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.
- The teacher should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional, or judgemental language.
- Instances are investigated outside the classroom to avoid public humiliations.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regards to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can provide very useful information in this way. (See Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post -Primary Schools 6.8.9 page 30-31) for further suggestions.
- Where possible, a witness is present.

- It is explained to the alleged bully how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to assure the teacher and the victim that further incidents will not take place.
- Parents of both parties to be verbally informed.

Stage 2

If this child breaks the promise and re-offends then the Deputy Principal with the class teacher will interview the child/children again. It is explained to them that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise. Again attempts will be made to resolve the situation. Students will be asked to sign the "Pupil Behaviour Promise". This has to be signed by their parents. They are now advised that if they break this promise again, they will have a meeting with the principal and their parents in the office and could face suspension.

- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigations 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.
- Information spoken about should not become available, so that the victim would not be further tormented. (Need to know basis)

Stage 3

If a child breaks his/her promise twice then the matter is referred to the Principal. The Principal meets with the child and the parent. The child may be suspended for up to 3 days. The Principal has the permission of the Board of Management to suspend for up to 3 days.

It is important that notes are taken and maintained at all stages. These should be stored securely in pupils' files.

Program of Support

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

Victims

- Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- Strategies for restoring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parents.
- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling.
- Staged approach- class support, school support(as per Continuum -Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties- NEPS).
- The parents of the pupils concerned will be advised to contact the local Gardai if appropriate.

Bullies

- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling. They may need to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Empathy awareness needs to be developed.
- The child may be chosen for Social Skills groups
- Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties- NEPS)

In certain cases it may be necessary to invite assistance from formal agencies such as Gardai, (Juvenile Liaison Officer) Health Board, Local Youth Groups etc.

The school will constantly remind parents of the dangers of "cyber- bullying" as can happen with the use of social networking sites and mobile phones. We also direct their attention to the school's internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

The school cannot be responsible for disagreements between pupils that happen outside the school grounds but will make reasonable efforts to cooperate with parents in assisting them to resolve issues.

Supervision and Monitoring of pupils

The BOM 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 teachers, parents and pupils
- Well-being and happiness of the whole school community in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered and fewer problems in the yard
- Increase in numbers of children reporting

Ratification and Review

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 20/12/2022 and will be reviewed annually. *See Appendix 2 for review checklist.*

The policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the BOM 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 Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and to the Department

Signed



Date: 20/12/2022

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed



Date: 20/12/2022

School Principal

Appendix 1 Types of Bullying

The following is a non-exhaustive list of various types of bullying behaviour:

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Identity Based Behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender</p>	

including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

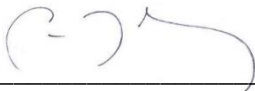
<p>Homophobic and Transgender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
<p>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Relational</p>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying.</p> <p>Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Sexual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
<p>Special Educational Needs, Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Appendix 2 Review Checklist


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

Signed 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 20/12/2023

Signed 
Principal

Date 20/12/2023

Appendix 3 Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To whom it may concern

The Board of Management of SN Tulach Uí Chadhain 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 _____ [date].
- 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 _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 20/12/2023

Signed Brian MacLochlain
Principal

Date 20/12/2023

Appendix 4 Advice for Parents

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can affect pupils in many different ways. When pupils are bullied their lives may be made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. They may lose self-confidence and self esteem, blaming themselves for the bullying. Some children may experience stressful symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches, nightmares or panic attacks. (This form of unhappiness is likely to affect their concentration and learning). If unchallenged other pupils can learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want.

Indications of Bullying Behaviour – Signs and Symptoms

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.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches).
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
- 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 her/him.

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

What to do if your child is being bullied

- Discuss the experience with your child to find out the precise details of what has happened.
- Reassure her/him that you and the school will help her/him.
- Discuss with her/him what to do next - he may be able to suggest strategies for dealing with it.
- Encourage her/him to tell his teacher.
- Contact the school as soon as possible.
- Follow-up to ensure that the matter is dealt with and resolved.

What to tell your child to do if someone they know is being bullied

- Tell a teacher (privately if necessary)
- Tell his/her parents - they will contact the school.
- Talk to the person who is being bullied - you may be able to help her/him.

- Reject bullying behaviour among your friends - tell them that it is wrong to bully.
- Help the bullied person to get away from the situation.
- Know and follow the school code of discipline.

What to tell your child to do if you are being bullied

- Tell the teacher immediately. Tell your parents when you get home.
- Help the teacher to investigate it. Tell a friend about what is happening.
- Tell the bully to stop.