



Scartleigh National School

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# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Scartleigh National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013. 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;
  - 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.

### Definition of Bullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

**Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.**

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and

- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people **will be regarded as bullying behaviour**. Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

## **Examples of Bullying Behaviours**

### **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.

### **Cyber**

- Denigration: Spreading rumours, 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. Face-book/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

### **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

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

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

Sexual

- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

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

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

The fostering of good quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, children, parents and ancillary staff is a responsibility shared by everyone.

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

### **Responsibilities of the 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.

### **Responsibilities of School Staff**

To acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the school.

To implement prevention and intervention strategies which build and maintain safe learning environment for the whole school community.

To empower students to deal with conflict in constructive ways.

To take all reports of bullying seriously and to report them to the Principal if warranted.

To document any serious bullying incidents using the Bullying Incident Report Form (appendix 3).

### **Responsibilities of Children**

To show consideration, respect and support towards others and themselves.

To be able to identify bullying behaviour.

To not bully others.

To tell if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied.

To engage in responsible reporting (i.e. to use the steps for responsible reporting taught in school) when witnessing or experiencing bullying behaviour.

To develop a sense of empathy for all members of the school community and as a result take safe and sensible action as a bystander.

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

To embrace their role as primary educator of the child and discuss bullying at home.

To watch out for signs that their child may be being bullied or bullying.

To speak to the class teacher if their child is being bullied; involved in bullying behaviour, or they suspect that this is happening. They should not defer letting the school know of any issue, in the hope that the problem will go away.

To speak to the class teacher as soon as they are aware that issues are arising which are affecting their child.

To instruct their children to tell if they are being bullied or if they have seen other pupils being bullied.

To ensure that if their children are online that they are using social media in a safe and responsible manner; parental supervision is essential in this area.

To never directly approach a student, or the parent of a student, at the school to intervene in behavioural issues.

### **Relevant Teachers**

All incidents of alleged bullying must be investigated firstly by the **Class Teacher**. He or she must then report the incident to the **School Principal**, even if he or she considers the allegation to be without foundation. An allegation of bullying behaviour reported to an **Ancillary Staff Member** (SNA, caretaker, secretary) must be reported to the **School Principal** who will then inform the child's **Class Teacher** who will commence the investigation process. In the absence of the Principal, the **Deputy Principal** will assume the role.

### **Education and Prevention Strategies**

Scartleigh National School prides itself on its proactive approach to preventing negative and bullying behaviour with prevention rather than cure as the key strategy.

The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows:

## 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.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- 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.
- Involvement of the children in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Circle of Friends, Stop Think Do Programme or other support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Staff modelling of friendly and respectful behaviour, e.g. Meet and Greet at early morning supervision, addressing children by name, explicit praise of children for good and kind behaviour, smiling and making eye contact when passing children in the corridor and around school environment.
- Public displays in school corridors and classroom walls of school rules, positive behaviour initiatives, clear positive messages of inclusivity.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year).
- Monthly implementation of whole school awareness measures. cd
- **We are a Telling School;** we encourage a culture of telling. The by-stander has a duty to tell. Children should be taught to tell.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) to tell on your behalf.
- Protocol for parents with concerns that their child may be a victim of bullying in school. Contact child's class teacher to arrange a meeting to discuss concerns.
- Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school.

## Implementation of curriculum

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Stop Think Do. Evidence-based social skills programme.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme
- Using teachable moments to reinforce anti-bullying messages e.g. If examples arise during class novel lessons then time will be given to explore themes.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, 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.

- The school will implement the advice in Information Booklet for Schools, available from [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie).
- The school will implement the advice in Sexual Orientation advice for schools [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)

### **Procedures for Investigation, Follow-up and Recording of bullying behaviour**

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);

#### **The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

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.
- 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.

### **Protocol**

1. Any allegation of bullying must be reported to the Class teacher.
2. Class teacher investigates (e.g. speaking to individual children / group)
3. Class teacher reports findings to principal
4. Principal (in consultation with class teacher) decides whether to proceed.
5. If the decision is to proceed, the parents will be informed
6. The Principal and the relevant teacher will speak to both the alleged victim(s) and perpetrator(s)
  - Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
  - One teacher will ask, the other will record responses. (Please see appendix 1).
  - Children will be asked non-judgemental questions (when, who, where, what, why).
  - It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s) (please see appendix 2).
  - At the end of interview, the children will be assured that will be supported and informed of follow-up procedure.
7. The teacher and principal will write a report (please see appendix 3).
8. The parents will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
9. 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;
10. Where it has been 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;
11. 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;
12. All interaction of all children involved will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

### **Follow up and recording**

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, 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) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- 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.

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. Please see appendix 4.

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 in their own school diary using the headings, Date, Pupil/Staff, Incident, Location, Outcome and Follow-up. See Appendix 1, Informal Report Sheet.
- When incidents occur in the playground, relevant teacher will record in the Yard Book.
- The relevant teacher may inform the principal of incidents being investigated.

#### **Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will 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.
- The relevant teacher will issue a report which will be stored in the Bullying Incident Record Book. See appendices

#### **Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

The relevant teacher will 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. A list of behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal is listed in appendix 5. These are in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal in the Bullying Incident Record Folder and filed in the



Principal's office. This file must not leave the office. Multiple copies must not be taken of these forms.

### **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) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews/conferencing if necessary as part of follow-up procedure
- Implementation of Individual Behaviour Plans. (see NEPS Continuum of Support)
- Stop Think Do Programme
- [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf)
- Anti-Bullying Resources (Lower, Middle, Upper) available from LSRT room.

### **Programme of Support**

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

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 e.g. - Group work such as circle time, Stop Think Do, Social Skills Group, ELSA, Friends for Life etc.

If pupils require counselling of further supports (Stage 3), the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies (NEPS, COPE, CAMHS, EI) 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.

### **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.

All Internet sessions are supervised by a teacher. We have PDST-provided safe search software installed.

The Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

### **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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

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 the 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.

**Principal:** Denise O' Donovan

**Date:**

**Chairperson of Board of Management:**

**Date:**

**Date of next review:**

### **Appendices**

1. Informal Report Form. (Stage 1)
2. Pupil Interview Sheet.
3. Formal Bullying Report Form.(Stage 2)
4. Complaint Procedure
5. List of Behaviours /Incidents to be Reported to Principal
6. Resources

<b>Informal Report Form (Stage 1) – Appendix 1</b>	
Date (record date, time as applicable)	
Pupils involved	
Staff Involved	
Incident	
Location	
Outcome	
Follow-up	
Signed: Date:	

<b>Pupil Interview Sheet – Appendix 2</b>	
Who?	
What?	
Where?	
When?	
Why?	

**Relevant teacher files this carefully in personal notes.**

<b>Formal Bullying Report Form (Stage 2) – Appendix 3</b>	
Name of pupil being bullied and class group	
Name:	Class:
Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour	
Source of bullying concern / report (please tick) Pupil concerned Other pupil Parent Teacher SNA Secretary Car taker Other	Location of Incidents (please tick) Playground Classroom Corridor Toilets School Bus Other
Name of person who reported the bullying concern	
Name calling Type of bullying behaviour Physical aggression Damage to property Isolation or exclusion	Cyber-bullying Intimidation Malicious gossip Other (please specify)
Where the behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:	
Homophobic	Disability / SEN related
Racist	Membership of Traveller community
Other (please specify)	
Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact	

Details of actions taken

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of this must be kept in the Anti-Bullying Folder in the Principal's Office. Relevant teacher keeps one copy of this form. This folder must stay in the office.

#### **List of Behaviours to be Reported to Principal – Appendix 4**

If a teacher has concerns about any behaviour it is always advisable to bring those concerns to the attention of the principal.

The following behaviours must be reported to the principal:

- Violent conduct
- Self-harm
- Causing injury or distress to another child
- Leaving the classroom or school yard without permission
- Abusive language
- Repeated refusal to participate in any school activity
- Problems with self-regulation (e.g. tantrums)
- Damage to school property
- Repeated oppositional behaviour
- Any behaviour that seriously impacts on the teaching and learning process in the classroom

This list will be reviewed annually.

## **Complaints Procedure-Appendix 5**

The Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPMSA) and the Irish National Teachers Organisation have agreed a five stage protocol for parents who wish to make a complaint about a teacher.

### **Introduction**

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the board of management, except where

those

Complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

- (i) on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- (ii) frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school;
- (iii) complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

### **Stage 1**

1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.

1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the principal teacher with a view to resolving it.

1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/ guardian should raise the matter with the chairperson of the board of management with a view to resolving it.

### **Stage 2**

2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the chairperson of the board of management.

2.2 The chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### **Stage 3**

3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:

- (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; and
- (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the principal teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

### **Stage 4**

1.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.2 (b).

1.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the Board meeting.

1.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:



- (a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
- (b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
- (c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
- (d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
- (e) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
- (f) The meeting of the board of management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).

### **Stage 5**

5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the Board.

5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.

5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years;

5.4 CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party 3 months' notice of intention to do so. (In this agreement 'days' means school days.)