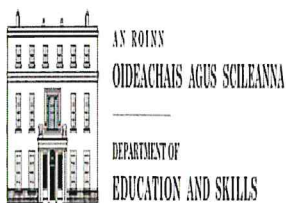




# Scoil Phádraig

## Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2024



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## *1. Full Compliance*

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Scoil Phádraig has **adopted the following anti-bullying policy** within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

## *2. Key Principles of Best Practice*

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;

### **At Scoil Phádraig we consider the following to be key elements of a Positive School Culture:**

- We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and their worth as a human being
- We promote positive habits of self- respect, self -discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- We actively prohibit vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members
- We have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning
- We have the capacity to change in response to its pupils needs
- We identify aspects of its curriculum through which positive and sustainable influences can be exerted towards forming pupils attitudes and values

- We take particular care of 'at risk' pupils and uses its systems to identify needs and facilitate early intervention where necessary –thus responding to the needs, fears & anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner
- We recognise the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community
- We recognise the right of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.
- We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying
- We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities
- We promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among its members both in school and outside of school
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by ANY MEMBER of the school community

**(b) Effective leadership**

- The BOM has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The BOM must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy
- ISM Team have a clear role to act in a leadership capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying – and modelling best practice
- The Principal of Scoil Phádraig as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to dealing with bullying
- Teachers must act as good role models and not misuse authority, but be fair, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

**(c) A school-wide approach**

- A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and Scoil Phádraig community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians

- Beyond the school community, bullying behaviour may extend to outside of school. Where this negatively impacts on a school - parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.
- The assistance of Gardaí, Tusla and Community Workers may be required in some cases
- Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school/community sector to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

- Scoil Phádraig endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that ALL relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy (Section 2&3 of Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools)

**(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
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

- Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent
- Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively, with particular attention given to 'hot spots' or 'hot times' eg arrival & dismissal
- Office Staff are well placed to inform if any behaviour which may constitute bullying is noticed

**(g) Supports for staff**

- Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis
- All staff must have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context

- Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and new/inexperienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and model best practice
- CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all members of staff

**(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**

**(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.**

### *3. The 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
- 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.

Some Examples of Bullying Behaviour:

**Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):**

- **Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:**

Shouting and uncontrolled anger,

Personal insults,

Verbal abuse,

Offensive language directed at an individual,

Continually shouting or dismissing others,

Public verbal attacks/criticism,

Domineering behaviour,

Open aggression,

Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact.

- **Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:**

Treating in a dictatorial manner,

Ridicule,

Persistent slagging,

Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort.

Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual.

Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. personal life/family

Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork.

- **Interference with property, for example:**

Stealing/damaging books or equipment

Stealing/damaging clothing or other property

Demanding money with menaces

Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property

Marking/defacing property

- **Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:**

Condescending tone,

Deliberately withholding significant information and resources,

Writing of anonymous notes,

Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments,

Malicious tricks/derogatory jokes,

Knowingly spreading rumours,

Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new ideas,

Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling),

Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying),

Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual in his/her absence,

Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person.

- **Ostracising or isolating, for example:**

Deliberately marginalising an individual

Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group,

Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational

Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do.

- **Cyber:**

Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation

Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual

Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name

Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight

Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online

Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images

Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group

Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety

Silent telephone/mobile phone call

Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls

Abusive text messages

Abusive email

Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles

Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures

Abusive posts on any form of communication technology



- **Identity Based Behaviour:**

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 and 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

**Please Note:**

- *Parents/Guardians are reminded that the legal age for children using Facebook is 13 years*

- *Parents/Guardians must be aware of the fact that there may be risks and dangers associated with their child using forms of social media and that parental supervision is required in this area*
- *Parents/Guardians should acknowledge that the school has safeguards in place with regard to pupil internet/website access at school and that use outside school falls under parental responsibility*

#### *4. Who is responsible for doing what?*

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- All Class Teachers

\*Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it

#### *5. Our Strategies for Education and Prevention*

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 ( SPHE Curriculum, Walk Tall)
- 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
- 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
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school and on school website
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year). The Code of Behaviour is also published on the school's website
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship. An anti-bullying resource area in the library, regular school or class group assemblies by principal and deputy principal

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied i.e. make an appointment to speak with the principal and the class teacher
- The implementation of an 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
- Internet safety guidance and tips for parents.
- The children from 2nd to 6th will complete an anonymous online survey to ascertain the level of bullying in the school, if any once a year

### **Implementation of Curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE Curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately

### **Links to other Policies**

The following policies are to be consulted:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection policy
- Supervision of pupils
- Health and Safety Statement
- Acceptable Use policy
- Attendance

## ***6. Our Procedures Re Bullying Behaviour***

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:

Since the failure to report bullying can lead to a continuation or a deterioration of bullying, the school and parents encourage children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. This can be with the class teacher, the teacher on yard duty at the time, Special Needs Assistants, and the principal or with parents. This is a "telling school" as defined in the Stay Safe Programme. Children will therefore be constantly assured that their reports of bullying either for themselves or peers will be treated with sensitivity. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information and should be encouraged to

report. Children should understand there are no innocent bystanders where bullying is concerned.

### **Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

**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.

#### **i. Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may report a bullying incident to any teacher in the school
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, external facilitators, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher

#### **ii. 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
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. If deemed appropriate, 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

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school

### iii. Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
  - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable
- 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, as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour under the heading 'Contact with School'
- 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.

### iv. 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. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. incident book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher

- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

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

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

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

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

- a) in cases where she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- b) All confirmed instances of bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The recording template must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

Teachers records are retained in a secure space in the teachers classroom. All report templates given to the Principal will be retained in the filing cabinet in the Principals Office.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent/guardian to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing questionnaires

## ***7. The School's Programme of Support***

**The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (Ref 6:8:16 of Procedures):**

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

SPHE Lessons  
 Stay Safe Programme  
 Walk Tall  
 NEPS programmes on [www.neps.ie](http://www.neps.ie)  
 Buddy system  
 Social Skills Group  
 Group work such as circle time  
 Restorative Practice

- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. **NEPS will also be contacted for advice**
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

## 8. Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear,

embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons, or being reckless as to whether or not such harm could occur.

Cyber bullying includes the use of mobile phones and the internet with the objective of upsetting someone.

It may take the form of general insults or impersonation, defamation or prejudice-based bullying.

*Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.*

While this policy addresses issues related to cyber bullying of students (i.e. situations in which one or more students are the victim[s] of bullying), the policy also applies to teaching and other school staff.

This policy applies to activities and events which include but are not limited to the following:

- During school time (including break times)
- Going to and from school
- School tours/trips
- Extra-curricular activities

- Activities outside of the school which might have a negative effect on the wellbeing of any pupil

### **Key Measures re Cyber Bullying**

A speaker will be invited annually into the 3rd to 6<sup>th</sup> classes to inform the children about the dangers of reckless online activity and in particular about cyber bullying.

A code of advice will be developed, periodically reviewed, and communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying (as perpetrator or as victim) and to advise them on reporting any incidents.

Students will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at the school.

Lessons on cyber bullying on an age appropriate level will be taught by teachers

Parents will on a biennial basis be invited to a talk on cyber bullying.

Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.

Parents and students are advised that the digital age of consent in Ireland is 16.

Teachers will investigate record and report all incidents of cyber bullying.

Scoil Phádraig endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the Internet without a member of staff present.

Safety measures are in place when the boys are using the school ipads.

## ***9. 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.

## ***10. 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.

## ***11. Date this policy was adopted***



This policy was updated in September 2024. It is due for ratification at the next possible Board meeting:

## ***12. Availability to this Policy***

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

### **Ratification of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 24/9/24

Thomas Dooley

Signed: Fr. Thomas Dooley  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date 24/9/24

Sheelagh Murphy

Signed: Sheelagh Murphy  
Principal

Date 24/9/2024.

**Appendix (1):**

**Allegation of Bullying Report Form**

**Allegation of bullying, or initial suspicion of bullying (an isolated incident or more, which could lead into bullying)**

Date of first report

Name of person reporting

Name of alleged victim

Class

Name of alleged aggressor

Class

Nature of harassment

Details of particular incidents

Has anything like this happened before?

Outcome of conversation

Signed Date

**Appendix (2):**

## 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

### 4. Location of incidents Tick Relevant Box(es) (Tick relevant box)(es)

Pupil Concerned

Other Pupil

Parent

Teacher

Other

Playground

Classroom

Corridor

Toilets

School Bus

Other

### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

### 6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))\*

Physical Aggression

Damage to property

Isolation / Exclusion

Name Calling

Cyber bullying

Intimidation

Malicious Gossip

Other (Specify)

### 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

### 9. Details of action taken

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

