

**Timahoe NS, Timahoe, Co. LAOIS**

**057 8627051**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Scoil Mhuire Fatima

Timahoe Co. Laois

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**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 Mhuire Fatima, 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 and was compiled following a thorough process involving parents, BOM, BOM subcommittee and staff.

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Fatima, recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour: A positive school culture and climate which:

* 1. Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  2. Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying and behaviour in a non-threatening environment;
  3. Promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

1. Effective leadership;
2. A school-wide approach;
3. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
4. Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measure) that;
   1. 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.
5. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
6. Supports for staff;
7. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour including use of established intervention strategies and
8. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

(See Appendix 1)

**What is bullying:**

Bullying is defined by *the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as unwanted negative behaviour; verbal, psychological or repeated aggression, physical or otherwise conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in this non-exhaustive definition:

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.

In addition, in the context of these procedures 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.

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 this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in schools under equality legislation. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

(See appendix 2)

**The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying within the school are as follows:**

1. Classroom related incidents will be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher.
2. Incidents which occur in the yard will be dealt with by the supervising teacher, or it may be passed onto the class teacher and or Deputy Principal or Principal.
3. Incidents which occur at school events will be investigated and dealt with by the supervising teacher and may be passed on to the class teacher/Deputy Principal or Principal.

**Education and 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)* that will be used by the school are as follows *(See section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)* :

* A culture of respect, responsibility, encouragement, positivity, support, enabling, consideration and tolerance for all within the school is encouraged throughout every school day.
* Supervision of pupils during the school day and at school events with particular attention given to SEN pupils and pupils where there may be a concern.
* The encouragement of empathy, respect and resilience amongst pupils.
* Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth.
* Develop pupils’ awareness and understanding of bullying and how the school deals with bullying including its causes and effects to include where age appropriate cyber bullying, identity-based bullying and homophobic/transphobic bullying.
* Education of pupils, where age appropriate, on appropriate online behaviour.
* Close supervision of access and use of technology by pupils in school.
* Development of social skills and inclusion amongst pupils particularly focusing on those children with SEN.
* Use of curriculum programs such as the Stay Safe programme, RSE curriculum and SPHE curriculum which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness as well as inter-related areas of belonging, integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
* Respect is fostered across all curriculum areas and all teaching and curriculum opportunities are used to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Co-operation and group enterprise are particularly encouraged through school activities and all pupils are encouraged to participate in the wide variety.
* Using PrimEd Bullying Pack and Posters around the school to visibly highlight the schools stance on bullying and cyber-bullying.
* Staff development.
* Quizzes and surveys on bullying behaviour.
* Implementing the Friendship Train and Friendship Bench.
* Developing a script for staff using the ‘Stop! Talk! Walk!’ principles.
* All pupils are taught the CALM strategy and laminated cards are made available for SEN pupils.
* Implementation of a school anti-bullying campaign, with the creation of an “Anti-Bullying Wall” and signed pledges from all pupils.
* Communication box provided to each class room to open up dialogue from students regarding bullying and negative 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 (see section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):**

*Procedures for recording bullying behaviour:*

The schools’ procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour adhere to the anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools as outlined in section 6.8.10.

* All reports of concern regarding bullying behaviour, made by a child will be noted by the relevant teacher. The teacher will include in the note actions taken and a note of discussions held with those involved. The teacher will attach any written account from the children to this note. A copy of this should be given to the principal.
* The school has a clear and consistent approach to dealing with reports of bullying.
* All members of the school community are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour.
* Teachers will take a calm, unemotional approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

**Immediate Response:**

Staff Script – “Stop! Talk! Walk!” and the teacher involved investigates.

**Short Term Response:**

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

These reported incidents will be investigated outside the classroom by the relevant class teacher. All concerned will be questioned individually at first (who/what/where/when/why?). The children will be given opportunities to tell their side of the story (or may write/draw details).

The teacher records the details using the schools template for reporting such incidents (see appendix 3).

Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after the initial interview by the teacher.

Regardless of the outcome of the initial investigation, the Parents/Guardians of the children involved will be contacted.

Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from perspective of the pupil being bullied.

It must also be made clear to all those involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addresses within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be referred to the Principal with the record.

**Long Term Response:**

This process will be followed by a review involving the child, parents, class teacher and principal. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school’s complaints procedures.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school’s complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary):

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be in place.

Such pupils may require counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the school’s intervention process.

Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupils.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

**Referral of serious cases to the HSE:**

In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.

Serious instances of bullying behaviour either by pupils or adults will in accordance with the Children First and the Child Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, be referred To the HSE Children and family Services and/or Gardai where appropriate.

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

**Supports for Pupils affected by bullying:**(see appendix 4 and 5)

The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools):

Pupils affected by bullying both those who have been bullied and those who have bullied may need counselling. The school will advise parents of counselling services available to the child.

The school runs a wide variety of activities throughout the year such as Anti-Bullying activities , Stay Safe programmes and “Safer Internet Day” (http://www.saferinternetday.ie).

**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 it’s 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:

1. Gender-including transgender.
2. Civil status.
3. Family status.
4. Sexual orientation.
5. Religion.
6. Age.
7. Disability.
8. Race.
9. Membership of the Traveller community.

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

This policy has been made available to school personnel 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.

**Parents Review Oct 2013 Ratified by BOM April 2014**

**John Delaney Ann Bergin Martina Mulhall**

**John Delaney Ann Bergin Martina Mulhall**

**Chairman BoM Principal Deputy Principal**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1**

**Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate:**

Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.

Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language key 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 in and around the schools. 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 absent.

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 schools rules on mobile phones and internet use.

Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.

Actively involve parents and/or the 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.

School staff can get pupils to help them identify bullying “hotspots” 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 pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
* Support the establishment and work of student councils.

**Appendix 2.**

**Indicators of bullying behaviour:**

*The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:*

1. Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents drive or collect him/her , changing travel routes , avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school.
2. Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy.
3. Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
4. Pattern of physical illness e.g. headaches, stomach aches.
5. Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or especially after longer school holidays.
6. Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
7. Spontaneous out of character comments about either pupils or teachers.
8. Possessions missing or damaged.
9. Increased requests for money or stealing money.
10. Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing.
11. Reluctance and /or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

**Appendix 3:**

**Template for recording bullying behaviour.**

1. **Name of pupil being bullied and class group**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Source** of bullying concern/report **4. Location** of incidents (tick

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Playground |  |
| Classroom |  |
| Corridor |  |
| Toilets |  |
| School Bus |  |
| Other |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupil concerned |  |
| Other Pupil |  |
| Parent |  |
| Teacher |  |
| Other |  |

(tick relevant box(es))\* relevant box(es))\*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

1. **Name of person(s) who reported** the bullying concern

|  |
| --- |
|  |

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical Aggression |  | Cyber-bullying |  |
| Damage to Property |  | Intimidation |  |
| Isolation/Exclusion |  | Malicious Gossip |  |
| Name Calling |  | Other (specify) |  |

1. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Homophobic | Disability/SEN related | Racist | Membership of  Traveller community | Other (specify) |
|  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

9. **Details of actions taken**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

**\* Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

**Appendix 4:**

**WHAT PARENTS CAN DO? : Anti-Bullying Centre, Trinity College Dublin**

**Prevention is better than cure: Empower pupils to report incidents**

Statements to children like 'you shouldn't tell tales' and discouraging "whistleblowing" at a young age, can have detrimental repercussions when it comes to incidents of bullying. Always make it clear to your children that it is always right to tell when they see something wrong.

**Discuss Bullying Behaviour with your children**

Make them aware that bullying is not simply "physical" and discuss what kind of effects it can have.

**Challenge every incident of Bullying Behaviour that is witnessed**

Lead by example. Where you see negative behaviour highlight it.

**Be aware of your own behaviour.**

Don't confuse your children by talking one way and acting another, avoid inconsistent discipline and power-assertive methods of discipline. Exercise democracy in your home, give the children responsibility. Promote confidence and enhance their self-esteem.

**WHAT TO TELL CHILDREN IF THEY ARE BEING BULLIED**

**What to Do**

Act as confident as you can. Face them and tell them clearly to stop. Try and be calm and move away from them.

**Don't Hit Out**

If someone is bullying you don't try to hit/kick them. You may get badly hurt in a fight and even if you don't, the bully can sometimes use how you hit them against you, and make it seem like you are the bully.

**If They Call You Names**

If they tease you or slag you off, try and laugh it off. Don't let them see that they have hurt you. Bullies like to get a reaction, if they don't get one there is no point in them bullying you.

**Remember, It's Not About You**

Often people who bully other people do it to make themselves feel better, because they are unhappy, at school or at home. Remember that they have the problem not you. Don't believe what they say to you, and don't blame yourself.

**Tell Your Friends/People You Can Trust In Class**

Tell them what is going on and how you feel. Ask them to come with you to tell a teacher if you are afraid. Ask them to stand up with you against the bully.

**Tell Someone**

If you're being bullied, try and tell someone about it.

**Talk to :**

- Your parents  
- Someone in your family  
- Your teachers  
- A Helpline

If your school has a peer mediation or mentoring program try to use it. No one can help you if you don't tell them.

**Don't hit back with violence. Getting into a physical fight with someone can be dangerous.**

If you are afraid to tell because it might make things worse, tell the person you talk to that you are afraid if they do anything it might make it worse, ask them to find a way to help you deal with it that won't.

**What To Say When You Tell**

- Tell them what has happened;  
- Who is doing it;  
- How often it has happened;  
- Did anyone see or hear what went on  
- What have you tried to do about it.

Tel: (01) 896 2573 / 896 3488  
E-mail: [**lmcguire@tcd.ie**](mailto:%20lmcguire@tcd.ie)

Anti Bullying Centre, Trinity College Dublin

**Appendix 5:**

**Directory of Support Services**

Anti-Bullying Centre (01) 6082573

CAB – Campaign Against Bullying (01) 2887976

Childline Freephone 1800 666660

Irish Association for Counselling

and Psychotherapy (01) 2300061

ISPCC (01) 6794944

The National Association

for Parents Support (NAPS) (057) 86 20598

Parentline (Parents under Stress) (01) 8733500

Samaritans (Callsave) 1850 609090

Sticks and Stones Theatre Company (01) 2807065

Trinity College Dublin –

Anti-Bullying Research Centre (01) 6601011

Victim Support 1800 661771

***Useful Websites:***

Bullying @ school information –

**www.scre.ac.uk/bully**

Bullying information on Bully/Parents/Teachers

**www.lfcc.on.ca/bully**

Bullying in schools

**www.ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/banks97**

What Parents should know about Bullying –

[**www.accesseric.org/resources/parent/bully**](http://www.accesseric.org/resources/parent/bully)