

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Revised Anti-Bullying Policy for children at Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa, Glounthaune.

June 2014

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

For the purposes of school life we define bullying 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.

Vision Statement:

"Inspired by its Catholic ethos, Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa aims to educate in a professional, caring, safe and respectful environment where every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential".

The review of this policy began in March of 2014 and was completed in June 2014. The Board of Management acknowledges the right of children, to be free from victimisation and intimidation of any kind by others.

Why is an Anti-Bullying Policy necessary?

In this school, we believe that every child has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation of any kind. A supportive, caring and safe environment is a pre-requisite for this to occur. Such an environment is undermined by bullying and as such we aim to minimise its occurrence.



1. (a) As a Pupil:

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is WRONG!
- b) Be proud of yourself and of who you are – it is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but the pupil engaged in bullying behaviour may thrive on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive – shout "NO"! Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or SNA and tell them.
- f) Generally, it is best to tell a teacher or an SNA straight away. You will get immediate support.
- g) The teacher/SNA will take you seriously and will deal with the pupil in a way which will work towards ending the bullying and will not make things worse for you
- h) Always tell your parents/guardians and teacher or other trusted adult

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



If you know someone is being bullied

- TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour. It makes the target of the bullying feel more unhappy and on their own.
- You should always tell a teacher or an SNA in the school in confidence. Teachers in a school have ways of dealing with the pupil and in dealing with confidential information without getting you into trouble. You will be taken seriously and your concern for another person will be seen as something to be admired.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with the pupil who is involved in this type of negative behaviour. It is always OK to tell on the pupil.

1 (b) As a Parent / Guardian

As outlined in many of our school policies, open communication between parents and the school is most important. If a parent has a concern in relation to any possible bullying incident in this school, please contact the Principal in confidence to discuss your concerns. The Principal or class teacher(s) are always available to parents who may have a concern in relation to bullying in this school.

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that your child is being bullied:

- a) Anxiety about travelling to and from school.
- b) Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend.
- c) Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
- d) Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches)
- e) Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour. It may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or, more especially, after longer school holidays.
- f) Visible signs of anxiety or distress – withdrawing, nightmares, stammering, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, bedwetting.
- g) Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either children or teachers.
- h) Possessions missing or damaged,
- i) Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- j) Unexplained bruising or cuts of damaged clothing.
- k) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Note:

- These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the child.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent, etc.
- If you feel your child may be the target of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your concerns will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.



2 The Board of Management

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 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;
- 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 transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



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

Examples of Bullying (this list is not intended to be exhaustive)

- a) **Physical Aggression** – includes pushing, shoving, pinching, kicking, poking and tripping people up, choking, scratching, biting, punching, spitting or similar acts of aggression
- b) **Damage to Property** – interference with personal property, e.g. uniform, school bag, books, lunch
- c) **Extortion** – demands for lunch, money or personal property may be made
- d) **Intimidation** – use of aggressive and/or inappropriate body language with or without verbal expression.
- e) **Abusive telephone calls** – abusive anonymous telephone calls are a form of verbal intimidation
- f) **Cyber-bullying** – utilises web pages, e-mails and text message
- g) **Relational Bullying:** – a certain person or persons are deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by an individual or group.
- h) **Verbal** – name-calling directed at the same individual which hurts, insults or humiliates him/her – can include taunts, cruel criticism, racist slurs, sexually suggestive or sexually abusive remarks, includes malicious rumours & gossip
- i) **Bullying of School Personnel** – bullying by means of physical assault, damage to property, verbal abuse, threats to people's families, etc.
- j) **Identity Based Bullying:** such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Travelling Community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



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. Bullying behaviour itself is also subject to the school's Code of Behaviour and the sanctions therein will be applied if deemed appropriate. Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools available on the DES Website*.

3. **The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying** is (are) as follows: Class Teacher or Resource Teacher
Deputy Principal
Principal

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



4. **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:
 - a. **September:** Each class will devise a set of Classroom Rules at the beginning of the school year. These rules will promote inclusion, acceptance of difference, tolerance, and respect for one another. A specific Anti-Bullying Rule/guideline will be included in each set of Classroom Rules on public display in each class.
 - b. **Playground:** Playground Rules to be agreed upon with input from the Student Council. These rules to be prominently displayed on the external wall of the school. A specific Anti-Bullying Rule/guideline to be included.
 - c. **Friendship Week:** Class based/school based fun activities which promote co-operation, sharing, friendship. Circle Time/class discussions on friendship, making friends, maintaining friendships, resolving conflicts, responsibilities towards one another etc.
 - d. **Bullying Awareness Week:** The school will run an awareness week where various classes and events will be held to increase knowledge and understanding of bullying and its impact.
 - e. **All Year Round:** Promotion of pupil self-esteem highlighting achievements, both academic and non-academic both inside and outside of school. This will be done at class level and at morning assembly from time to time.

The following school based programmes will assist in delivering some of the above:

- * SPHE Programme
- * Stay Safe Programme
- * RSE Programme
- * Guardian Angels
- * Playground Pals
- * Friends for Life
- * Zippy's Friends



5. **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 **Appendix 1** below for procedures for investigation

*Appropriate written records maintained by the relevant teacher (see **Appendix 2** below)

*Recording Template at **Appendix 3** used in certain cases

*Copy of Template in **Appendix 3** given to Principal.

* **Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

The Board of Management has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these are documented in this anti-bullying policy. All records are maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour adhere to the following:

(i) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying shall be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In general though anonymous reporting is not encouraged as it is very difficult to deal effectively with anonymous complaints. People are encouraged to come forward and deal openly with this issue in line with the guiding principles of this document. The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

(ii) 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. **See Appendix 2.** SNCN has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in all circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable by using **Appendix 2.**

(iii) The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying has occurred.

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

* Pupils who have been bullied will be provided with support from the class teacher/SEN teacher with a view to restoring their confidence and self-esteem. These pupils will be provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self esteem to develop their friendship and social skills and build their resilience.

* Pupils engaged in bullying will also receive support from the Class Teacher/SEN teacher to assist them in changing their behaviours.

* In the case of children for whom bullying is having a serious impact which cannot be dealt with satisfactorily in school, consultation will be made with NEPS as to whether formal referral to an outside agency is required to support the pupil concerned.

* Any parent who considers that their child's mental health is being adversely affected by bullying, should also be advised to contact their GP for referral if necessary to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMS)

7.

Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools be referred to the HSE and /or the Gardaí as appropriate

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



8. 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.

9. 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 the harassment of pupils 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.

10.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in June 2014_____

11.

This policy will be 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.

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



12.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____



Appendix 1: Procedures for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with alleged bullying

(i) (a) The primary aim for the relevant 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);

(b) It is important that the Principal and Deputy Principal is made aware of any bullying allegation immediately.

A senior member of staff may be asked by the Principal to assist the teacher with the investigation.

(ii) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher, in consultation with the Principal will examine the findings to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

(iii) 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;

(iv) Parents 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;

(v) Where there is a bullying complaint anonymity is not encouraged as it frequently leads to unsatisfactory conclusions and can hamper the investigation.

(vi) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;

(vii) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;

(viii) Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

(ix) All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way. Sometimes a teacher may decide to speak to children on a one to one or small group basis as this slightly informal approach may be helpful. At other times a more formal approach may be adopted involving the presence of another staff member.

(x) 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;

(xi) 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;

(xii) Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



(xiii) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s); In addition a class questionnaire may be used to determine certain aspects of the allegation.

(xiv) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;

(xv) 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;

(xvi) SNCN will utilise a restorative practice model in its initial stage of resolving the situation. The perpetrator will be required to give an undertaking that the offending behaviour will stop and will also apologise to the target of the bullying in the presence of the Principal and the investigating teacher.

(xvii) It must also be made clear to all 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;

(xviii) 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. This can have a therapeutic effect;

(xix) In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 3.

(xx) 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;

Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and

Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

(xxiii) In cases where bullying has been proven the Principal decides whether sanctions should be imposed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy

(xxiv) 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;

(xxv) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school advises the parent of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

NOTE: Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Appendix 2: Recording allegations of bullying (Teacher records)

This template should be used in the investigation of all bullying allegations. The teacher retains a copy for her records.

A copy should be given to the Principal only in cases where the teacher judges that bullying has occurred.

Template for the recording of allegations of bullying behaviour

1. Date: _____
2. Name of pupil(s) who is the target of the alleged bullying _____
3. Name of pupil (s) who are allegedly involved in the bullying behaviour _____
4. How the teacher learned of the alleged bullying: Please tick relevant box(es)

From a pupil at 2 or 3 above	From teacher's own observation
From a parent of children at 2 or 3 above	Told by another member of staff
From a student directly involved	School told anonymously
From a student not directly involved	Other

5. When did the alleged incidents take place? Please tick the relevant box(es)

Today	Yesterday	Last week
At the weekend	One month ago	More than one month ago
Other (Please specify)		

6. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground
Classroom
Corridor
Toilets
School Bus
Other

7. Were the alleged incidents repeated by the same person or persons previously?
? _____
8. Were these alleged incidents reported to any adult at the time? _____
9. If so was any action taken? _____

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Investigation:

Methods used: Please tick relevant box(es)

Interviewing children individually	Class or group questionnaire
Interviewing children in small groups	Speaking to other relevant school personnel
Other: (Please specify)	

1. Findings of investigation

Facts of the case:

2. Did bullying behaviour take place (Yes/No) _____ (If Yes then questions 3-6 must be completed)

3. If Yes by whom? _____

4. Who was the target of the bullying _____

5. Follow up meetings with children affected, (Names and dates entered)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

6. Communicating with parents (Names and dates entered)

1. With the parents of the target of the bullying _____

2. With the parents of the children involved in the bullying behaviour

* If bullying is deemed to have occurred a copy of this must be given to the Principal

* If bullying is deemed not to have occurred a copy of this is retained by the class teacher

Signed: _____ (relevant teacher)

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



Appendix 3: Template for recording unresolved bullying behaviour after 20 days

The relevant teacher must use this recording template in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she had determined that bullying had taken place.

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

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

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa



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 actions taken

**10. Communicating with parents
(Names and dates entered)**

With the parents of the target of the bullying:

With the parents of the children involved in the bullying behaviour:

.....

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa

