



## Scoil Mhuire National School, Rosslare, Co. Wexford

**Principal:** Bobby Kenny      **Board of Management Chairperson:** Fr. James Murphy  
**Roll No:** 168790      **Telephone:** 053 9132501      **Email:** scoilmhurensrosslare@gmail.com

*Acceptance, Appreciation and Achievement for All*

# Anti-Bullying Policy

**Review – March 2023**

## 1. Full Compliance

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 National School Rosslare 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. This policy was reviewed by the staff of our school on 14th March 2023.

We strive to nurture the full potential of both staff and pupils in a secure, friendly and stimulating environment.

This policy aims:

- To encourage and develop respectful relationships between children and between staff and children.
- To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, staff, pupils, parents/guardians
- To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour
- To develop procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour
- To develop a programme of support for targeted children and for those affected by bullying and for these involved in bullying behaviour
- To work with and through various agencies/organisations/individuals in countering bullying and anti-social behaviour e.g. community garda, guest speakers, National Educational Psychological Service.

We aspire to fulfil the above aims by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the school, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

**2. 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;
  - and 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.
- 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.

**3. 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.

This definition includes a wide range of behaviour, whether verbal or written, whether physical or social, whether targeting person or property, whether carried out directly or indirectly or through any electronic or other medium, which could harm a pupil or undermine her/his self-esteem or self-confidence.

*Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and appears as Appendix 2 of this document.*

The following are a list of examples of bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.

## **Types of bullying**

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

### **Physical aggression:**

This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in ‘mess fights’, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

### **Intimidation:**

Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike or contempt. Invasion of personal space can be included here.

### **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:**

This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by others. Relational bullying occurs when a person’s attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. One of the most common forms includes control: “Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore”(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the “silent treatment”.

### **Cyber-bullying:**

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying.

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 /text messages/emails/communication on social networks or games consoles/website comments/blogs/pictures/posts on any form of communication technology

**Name calling:**

Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour.

**Damage to property:**

Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. If items of personal property are defaced, broken, stolen or hidden this may be regarded as bullying.

**Extortion:**

Demands for personal property may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

**Teasing/Mocking/Mimicking:**

Teasing/Mocking/Mimicking are regarded as bullying behaviour and are not acceptable.

**Harassment:**

Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.

**Bullying in written form** –production of, display or circulation of written words, pictures, or other materials aimed at intimidating another person. Offensive graffiti.

**Verbal**

Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour.

Insulting or offensive gestures are included.

**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 Bullying**

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

Malicious gossip/backbiting

Isolation & exclusion

Ignoring

Excluding from the group

Taking someone's friends away

Spreading rumours

Breaking confidence

Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear

The "look"

Use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way

**Sexual**

Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching

Harassment

**Special 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

Bullying behaviour can consist of any one of the above behaviours or a combination of the above.

**4. The 'Relevant Teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in the school are as follows:**

The relevant teacher in our school is the class teacher.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will be informed once an investigation into bullying is about to begin and maybe asked to be present/act as recorder.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it, however it is best to talk to the class teacher. The Deputy/Principal maybe called upon by relevant teacher to assist if required.

**5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:**

- 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.
- Professional development on bullying for staff.
- School wide awareness raising and training on aspects of bullying, to include parents/guardians through Parent's Council Workshops or Board of Management organised workshops.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom, in common areas and assembly.
- Actively promote the inclusion of all in our school community regardless of race, religion, ability and so on.
- 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.
- Availability of Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour on our website. Parents of new students to the school are required to sign an undertaking which supports the policy on our enrolment policy.
- Supervision and monitoring will be undertaken in 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.
- Encourage a culture of reporting, with particular emphasis on the importance of the role of bystanders with the aim of pupils gaining confidence in 'reporting'. 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.
- Time to Talk – where necessary
- Zones of Regulation – where necessary
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell. Some methods can be used as follows:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Tell a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Anti-bully or Worry box
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
  - Anti-Bullying Class Survey

### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes to include evidence based programmes also such as The Walk Tall Programme.
- ‘Friends for Life’ is used when deemed necessary.
- Weaving Well –Being Programme – 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class
- Zippy’s Friends – mental health/wellbeing programme for Senior Infants
- Zones of Regulation - when necessary
- Time to Talk – when necessary
- Cyber-Bullying to be addressed in every class through the Prim-Ed ‘Cyber-Bullying in a Cyber World’ resource and other resources and annual workshop on cyber-bullying from 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes. Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules of the ‘Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy’ along with the ‘Acceptable Use Policy’.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary to cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying when available. This will be aimed at 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes.
- Dedicated notice board to the promotion of positive behaviour in the school GP Hall and at another area of the school. Signs around the school to promote positive behaviour and demote unwanted bullying behaviour.
- Assembly time is used to reward, encourage and promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines. Certificates are given weekly specifically for good/improved behaviour and acts of kindness. This encourages implementation of whole school awareness.  
Assembly of every week is dedicated directly to promoting good behaviour.  
Assembly in this context may discuss the ‘5 Golden Rules’, what being kind looks like, sounds like and so on, role-plays etc.
- Yard Wardens in our school help promote positive and acceptable behaviour amongst our students to report any inappropriate or unwanted behaviour on our school yard that they witness
- Bullying Awareness Week  
Anti-bullying week will be held every school year. Cyber-bullying workshops also run this week (where possible). Various different activities take place each day of the week in the classroom to help raise awareness of bullying. Children are reminded that all they learn should be put into practise daily in school and not just for that week.
- Buddy Systems  
Paired Reading, computer buddies, maths buddies and learning buddies are buddy systems which enable peers and older children to model appropriate behaviour for younger children. This system also enables older children to develop a sense of empathy for younger children and also helps them to develop qualities of tolerance, kindness and leadership.
- Bystanders -Our school endeavours to educate the children about the role of the ‘bystander’ and the importance of the bystander in combatting bullying.
- Hotspots and hot-times -School staff has identified bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school and endeavour to monitor these closely.
- Parental Involvement  
We have a very active Parents’ Association who seek training for the parent body on bullying, internet awareness and safety and so on.

- Friendship Day - friendship Day will run during the school year to promote friendships, positive relationships etc.
- Class anti-bullying surveys- used in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class to identify bullying issues that maybe occurring. (Seán Fallon – Anti-Bullying Approach)

### **Links to other policies**

Other relevant school policies relevant to bullying are:

Code of Behaviour

Child Protection Policy

Acceptable Use policy

ICT Policy

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy

### **6. 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:**

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools – September 2013)

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and staff) understand this approach from the outset.

#### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parents/guardians may bring a bullying incident to the attention of any teacher in the school. We ask that parents/guardians bring incidents to our attention as soon as is possible so that the issue can be dealt with immediately. Historical evidence is almost impossible to address.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s).
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher(s).

#### **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 relevant teacher will exercise professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports including anonymous reports will be dealt with by the relevant teacher(s), promoting a 'reporting' school as per Stay Safe Programme.
- 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. It is school policy to request the presence of another staff member in such investigations when necessary.
- 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, and will be expected to assist in the investigation. Children should understand there are no innocent bystanders if they remain passive where bullying is concerned. All bystanders must report bullying.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) **should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.**
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved can 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.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher as far as is practicable.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage by the relevant teacher to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the relevant 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. Actions taken should be recorded by the relevant teacher.
- 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.
- The situation will be monitored to ensure that the problem has been resolved.
- 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.

### **Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher(s) must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
  - Whether 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) s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal or other staff members
- 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.
- 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.

### **Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

Recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents of bullying witnessed by them or notified to them on a specific template/yard notebook that should be filed thereafter in principal's office. A note of such filed documentation should be put on relevant student(s) file on Aladdin. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- The relevant teacher will keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same on Aladdin.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal/deputy principal of all incidents being investigated.
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must 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. These notes should be maintained on school template in the principal's office (where all central records of bullying are kept) and referenced on student(s) file on Aladdin.
- Teachers will submit any notes on incidents of bullying to the principal at the end of every school year (Template 1a and 1b). These will be stored in the principal's office and used for annual comparison.
- The relevant teacher must use the DES recording template to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - a) 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/ Deputy Principal as applicable. (Where it has been determined bullying behaviour has occurred in our school, Appendix 1a is completed by relevant teacher and submitted to principal/designated other and stored.)  
  
and
  - b) In cases where 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 occurred; (Appendix 1b is completed by relevant teacher and submitted to principal/designated other and stored.)

Completed recording templates will be retained by the relevant teacher and a copy maintained by the principal on file until those mentioned in the template are 21 years of age.

### **Established intervention strategies**

- Elements of Sean Fallon's Anti-bullying campaign

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements/undertakings between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative Practices
- Friendship Programme - What is friendship?
- Friends for Life Programme
- Social Skills Groups -These groups aim to develop social skills in children to deal in different social settings and incidents with their peers. They promote confidence, healthy social interactions, self-esteem and offer training in dealing with peer difficulties.
- Prim-ed – Conflict Resolution Programme
- Prim-ed – Self-Esteem – Skills to Build Self Worth
- Any other resources as they become available

**7. The schools’ programme for support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:**

- 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.
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  - Teacher support
  - Group work such as circle time
  - Social skills development sessions
  - Relevant Curriculum areas
  - Assembly Awards
  - Teacher Class Reward Systems
  - Involvement in extra-curricular activities
  - ‘Assertiveness Chapter’ – Talkabout for Children by Alex Kelly
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to advise parents/guardians of the appropriate agencies to contact. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

**8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils:**

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to help prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

Parents and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks, including Facebook, Instagram and snapchat etc.

9. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps as 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.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 14th March 2023

The policy will be reviewed on 14/03/24 .

11. 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 of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

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 to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

Fr.James Murphy

Bobby Kenny

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

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

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

(Principal)

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

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

# Bullying

## Information for parent(s)/Guardian(s)

### Impact of bullying behaviour

Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying may result in self-harm/suicide. It is, therefore, essential to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention can be very effective.

Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. For example, pupils who witness identity-based bullying and share that identity can experience anxiety and feel under threat themselves. Pupils can also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.

There are also consequences for individuals who engage in bullying behaviour. Pupils who become involved in such behaviour can be at higher risk of depression. Other possible long-term consequences may include an increased risk of developing an anti-social personality, anxiety disorders, a likelihood of substance abuse and law-breaking behaviour in adulthood and decreased educational and occupational attainment.

### Indicators of bullying behaviour

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

- (i) Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- (ii) Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy;
- (iii) Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- (iv) Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches;
- (v) Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- (vi) Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- (vii) Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- (viii) Possessions missing or damaged;
- (ix) Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- (x) Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- (xi) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the child.

(Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools – September 2013)

### **What do I do if I'm being bullied – help your child to do the following?**

- If someone bullies you, always tell someone you trust.
- If an adult is bullying you, then look for help from another adult you can trust.
- Choose when to resist – sometimes the only sensible thing to do is give in. Just get away and tell someone.
- Try not to use violence – it never solves anything and usually makes the situation worse.
- Practise assertiveness – stand tall, look the bully in the eye, breathe steadily, speak calmly and firmly.
- Have an answer ready – well-chosen words can often make a bully look foolish and that's the last thing they want.
- Try not to show you are upset or angry (even if you are). Reaction gives the bully what they want.
- If there's a gang involved try to approach them on their own rather than when they're together – if you talk straight to them, you'll probably find that they're not so confident without the protection of the group.
- Keep a diary – record who, when, where, when, how? Keep texts/screenshots of material. Tell as soon as possible.
- Ask friends to support you.
- Try to make new friends.
- Change your routine – try to avoid being on your own in places where you are likely to be picked on.

### **How can I tell if my child bullies others?**

Here are some indicators:

- A tendency to bully family members
- Being a victim of bullying
- Regularly witnessing bullying behaviour in their environment
- Being frequently short-tempered and/or aggressive
- Having past experiences which can still cause negative feelings
- Bringing home items that you know weren't bought
- Speaking of others in a negative way, perhaps on the basis of their appearance or beliefs of social status
- Showing an interest in violent behaviour
- Showing little sensitivity towards others
- Having low self-esteem/confidence
- Being the subject of previous complaints or suggestions of bullying behaviour

- Although these can also indicate problems other than bullying, it's important that you don't ignore them. Try to encourage your child to talk about what's going on, either to you or to another trusted adult.

(Information is taken from 'Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying' – Wexford Area Partnership)

It must also be recognised that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or may not recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others. (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools – September 2013)

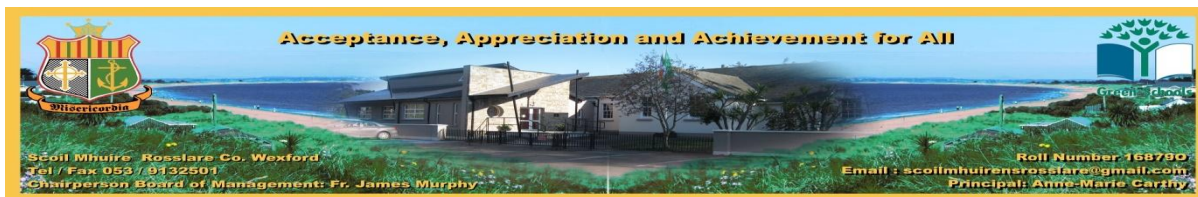
### **What should I do if my child is being bullied?**

- Discuss bullying openly and regularly
- Thank the child for disclosing the problem. Confidence is the first casualty of bullying, so let your child know that you believe them and that you will support them.
- Listen carefully – don't rush the story and show that you are concerned and empathetic.
- Get all the details – who, what, where, when?
- Take action – Don't wait to see does it blow over.
- Bring your information to the relevant authority.
- Make appropriate changes – changes that may help prevent your child being singled out and to build their confidence at the same time.
- Seek professional help if necessary – speech therapy, dental work etc.

### **How do I approach the school if my child is being bullied?**

- These situations are difficult for all concerned and so it is important that all school personnel are approached in a calm and respectful manner.
- Do make an appointment to see the relevant teacher (class teacher) – as outlined in the school's 'Anti-Bullying Policy'.
- Don't exaggerate. Be honest and stick to the facts as you understand them, when speaking to the relevant teacher.
- Use your notes to make sure you don't forget to mention any important points.
- Discuss with the teacher what will be done in terms of dealing with the situation.
- Arrange a follow-up appointment having discussed with the teacher to see how the situation is progressing.
- Always keep in good contact with the school so that the situation can be monitored.

(Information is taken from 'Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying' – Wexford Area Partnership)



## Appendix 1a - Bullying Behaviour Confirmed (Report of Bullying Incident)

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

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


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

### 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"/>
SNA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other - Please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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### 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"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – Please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>		



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

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

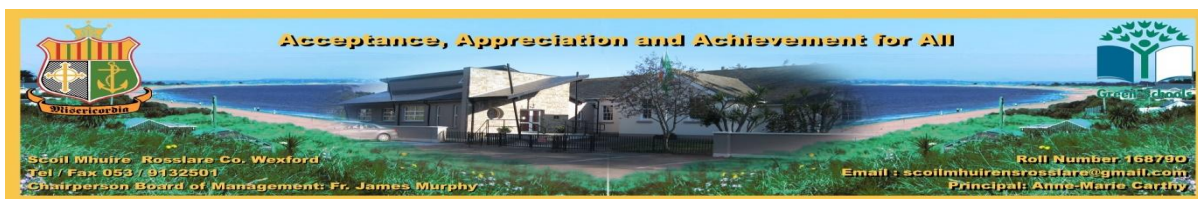
**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

**9. Details of actions taken**

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 1b - Bullying Behaviour has not ceased after 20 School Days (DES Appendix 3 – Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour – Reported to BOM)

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

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


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

### 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"/>
SNA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other - Please specify	<input type="text"/>

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – Please specify	<input type="text"/>

### 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"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – Please specify:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

## Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

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

Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language 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 and around the school. 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 school rules on mobile phone 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.

Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.

School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.

- o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.

- o 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.

**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**

**10. 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.