



# Gaelscoil Choráin Eochail

## Polasaí Frithbhulaíochta/Anti-Bullying Policy

### **Réamhrá/Introduction**

Gaelscoil Choráin believes that each student has a right to education free from fear and intimidation.

The school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the self-esteem and self-confidence of targeted student(s). Therefore, it does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Every report of bullying is treated seriously and dealt with, having due regard for the wellbeing of the targeted student(s) and perpetrator(s).

A 'Care Team' made up of staff members, exists to cultivate an environment free from bullying.

The immediate priority should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, (thereby protecting the person(s) being targeted and resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved insofar as is practicable using a 'Reform, not Blame' approach.

All students are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe environment in the school. On becoming aware of any bullying situation, in or outside the school, involving members of the school community they should notify a trusted responsible adult. Bullying behaviour is too serious not to report. Parents have a role in encouraging their child/ren to tell a trusted adult at school should a bullying incident occur.

Students' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing school structures. Awareness of bullying and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

### **Réasúnaíocht/Rationale**

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 Gaelscoil Choráin 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 with circular 0045/2013.

### **Príomhphrionsabail de Dhea-Chleachtais/ Key Principles of Best Practice**

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin 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.

### **Sanmhíniú ar Bhulaíocht/Definition of Bullying**

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

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

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

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- cyber-bullying
- identity based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

Aguisín I/Appendix I gives a list of specific examples of bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.

### **Múinteoirí Ábhartha Chun Imscrúdú A Dhéanamh Ar Eachtraí Bulaíochta/Relevant Teachers For Investigating & Dealing With Bullying Incidents**

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

Caitríona Ní Riada - (Príomh-Oide)

Carmel Ní Chiardha-Uí Bhriain – (Príomh-Oide Táinisteach)

All mainstream class teachers

Special Education Teachers

SNAs will keep a watchful eye on students in their care and on others and inform the class teacher or teacher on yard of any behavioural issues.

### **Cur Chuige Na Scoile Ina hIomláine/Whole School Approach**

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:

- The SPHE curriculum, including the Stay Safe, the RSE and the Walk Tall programmes, are used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy.
- The 'Mind Me-Mind You' programme is taught in all classes. This programme focuses on well-being and developing key social and emotional skills in primary school

students.

- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the students by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- A visit to students in Rang 5 from the local community liaison officer.
- Students are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to students who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the students.
- Staffs are particularly vigilant in monitoring students who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- Broadband is used for educational purposes only. All social media sites including you tube are blocked by our filtering system. I-pad and tablet classes are closely monitored by the class teacher or by the SNA working individually with a child or a group of children.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.

Gaelscoil Choráin emphasises and reinforces the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by:

- Using termly school assemblies and regular class visits by the Principal to remind students of the school's anti bullying policy and to recognise students who display positive traits and characteristics in their dealings with others.
- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable... visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE, Religious Education, games.
- Staff, students, parents and Board of Management (BOM) will be made aware of issues surrounding cyber bullying through the use of appropriate awareness-raising exercises and cyber bullying talks and workshops.
- Students will learn about cyber bullying through Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), assemblies, friendship week activities and other curriculum projects.
- Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) will assist in learning about current technologies.
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat cyber bullying through school website such as "Webwise", "Internet Safety" and 'Family E-Safety Kit'.
- Parents will be expected to sign an Acceptable Use of ICT contract prior to enrolment and to discuss its meaning with their children.
- Students and parents will be urged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to the school.
- All reports of cyber bullying will be investigated, recorded, stored in the Principal's office and monitored regularly.

- The gárdaí will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content.
- This policy will be reviewed annually. Students parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and any related school procedure.

Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.

### **Gnásanna Chun Bulaíocht A Fhiosrú & A Láimhseáil/Procedures For Investigating & Dealing With Bullying**

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

The school's procedures 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:

- I. All incidents of bullying will be recorded on the standardized recording template (Aguisín 3/Appendix 3, Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools), which will be retained in the school.
- II. Pupils will be informed that when they report incidents of bullying they are acting responsibly.
- III. A calm unemotional problem solving approach will be used to deal with bullying. The methods of intervention as outlined on Page 28 of the Anti Bullying Support Material by the PDST will be followed taking into account the nature of the case.
- IV. Incidents of bullying will initially be dealt with by the class teacher. Where incidents are of a serious nature, or those that involve pupils from a number of classes, the Principal will be involved.
- V. On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings that the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour. An interview will then take place with the alleged perpetrator(s). All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. If the bullying involves a group of pupils, members of that group will be first met individually and then as a whole. The teacher will decide on the best intervention strategy and address the situation calmly and effectively. All issues will be endeavoured to be resolved and as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved will be restored. If on the conclusion of the

preliminary investigation the teacher is convinced that bullying has occurred the Principal will be informed and parent(s)/guardian(s) of all concerned will be contacted.

- VI. Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of more serious sanctions as per Code of Behaviour. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying Behaviour.

### Straitéisí Idirghabhála Seanbhunaithe/Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Suitable SPHE lessons
- Social Stories
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013 mention a number of the above procedures and reference Ken Rigby:

[http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/Bullying\\_Prevention\\_Strategies\\_in\\_Schools\\_Ken\\_Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/Bullying_Prevention_Strategies_in_Schools_Ken_Rigby.pdf)

Seo a leanas clár tacaíochta na scoile do dhaltáí a ndearnadh bulaíocht orthu & do dhaltáí a rinne bulaíocht ar dhuine nó ar dhaoine eile/The school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

#### **Bullied students:**

- Ending the bullying behaviour
- Maintaining and upholding the school culture to foster more respect for bullied pupils and all pupils
- Supporting the school culture to foster empathy, and understanding towards bullied

pupils

- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the 'Mind Me, Mind You' programme.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations
- Making parents aware of support facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school)

### **Bullying students:**

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this
- Making parents aware of counselling and play therapy facilities available to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school)
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform

## **Maoirseacht agus Monatóireacht Éifeachtach ar Dhaltaí /Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin 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.

### **An Ciapadh a Chosc/Prevention of Harassment**

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

### **Daingniú An Pholasaí/Ratification Of Policy:**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

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

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

Liam Mac Feorais  
(Cathaoirleach Gníomhach An Bhoird Bainistíochta)

Caitríona N Riada  
(Príomh-Oide)

Dáta: 28.II.2023



## Aguisín I/Appendix I

### Samplaí d'Iompraíochtaí Bulaíochta/Examples of Bullying Behaviours

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

- **Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:**
  - Shouting and uncontrolled anger,
  - Personal insults,
  - Verbal abuse,
  - Offensive language directed at an individual,
  - Continually shouting or dismissing others,
  - Public verbal attacks/criticism,
  - Domineering behaviour,
  - Open aggression,
  - Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact.
- **Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:**
  - Treating in a dictatorial manner,
  - Ridicule,
  - Persistent slagging,
  - Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort.
  - Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual.
  - Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. personal life/family
  - Asking inappropriate questions/making inappropriate comments re. social life or schoolwork.
- **Interference with property, for example:**
  - Stealing/damaging books or equipment
  - Stealing/damaging clothing or other property
  - Demanding money with menaces
  - Persistently moving, hiding or interfering with property
  - Marking/defacing property
- **Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:**
  - Condescending tone,
  - Deliberately withholding significant information and resources,
  - Writing of anonymous notes,
  - Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments,
  - Malicious tricks/derogatory jokes,
  - Knowingly spreading rumours,
  - Belittling others' efforts, their enthusiasm or their new ideas,
  - Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling),

Homophobic references,

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

Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual in his/her absence,

Deliberately refusing to address issues focusing instead on the person.

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

Deliberately marginalising an individual

Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group,

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

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

**Aguisín 3: Teimpléad chun iompar bulaíochta a thaifeadh / Appendix 3: Template for recording bullying behaviour**

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

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

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

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

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

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

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

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

9. Details of actions taken

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

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

## Aguisín 4: Seicliosta le haghaidh athbhreithniú bliantúil ar an mbeartas fhrithbhulaíochta & ar a fheidhmiú/

### Appendix 4: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No

Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	N/A
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	Yes

Liam Mac Feorais  
(Cathaoirleach Gníomhach An Bhoird Bainistíochta)

Caitríona N Riada  
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Dáta: 28.II.2023

**Fógra maidir le hathbhreithniú bliantúil an Bhoird Bhainistíochta ar an mbeartas frithbhulaíochta / Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

To: An Pátrún, An t-Easpag Liam Ó Croidheáin, Foireann na Scoile & Comhairle na dTuistí

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Aguisín 4/Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

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Caitriona N Riada  
(Príomh-Oide)

Dáta: 28.II.2023