

SCOIL Uí MHUIRÍ
Anti -Bullying Draft policy 2022



Scoil Uí Mhuirí
Post Primary School

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE

Start of review	February 2022
Student focus groups	
Parent/Guardian review	
Staff review	
Ratified by Scoil Uí Mhuirí Board of Management	
Ratified by LMETB Board of Management	

Updated	
Next full review scheduled	2025/2026

GLOSSARY

BITC	Business in the Community
CAO	Central Applications Office
CL	Circular Letter
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DLP	Designated Liaison Person (Child Protection)
DDLDP	Deputy Designated Liaison Person
DSGC	Directors of Studies in Guidance Counselling
ESL	Early School Leavers
ETB	Education and Training Board
FET	Further Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
HPS	Health Promoting Schools
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IGC	Institute of Guidance Counsellors
JC	Junior Cycle
JCPA	Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement
JCT	Junior Cycle for Teachers
LC	Leaving Certificate
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
LLG	Lifelong Guidance
LMETB	Louth and Meath Education and Training Board
NBSS	National Behaviour Support Service
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
PDST	Professional Development Service for Teachers
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
SC	Senior Cycle
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SGH	School Guidance Handbook
SUM	Scoil Uí Mhuirí.
SOL	Statement of Learning
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SSE	School Self-Evaluation
SUSI	Student Universal Support
TY	Transition Year
WSG	Whole School Guidance

1. INTRODUCTION

Scoil Uí Mhuirí is a co-educational school managed under the patronage of Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB).

The school's mission statement states
Mission Statement:

In Scoil Uí Mhuirí we are a learning community committed to the development of the whole person within a context which values each of its members. In Scoil Uí Mhuirí we have a vision that all of our students will develop a love of learning and a keen sense of social responsibility through a positive and happy school experience. We hope they will develop as caring, well-adjusted individuals, who will succeed in life and contribute positively to the wider community. Our caring and dedicated staff is committed to helping each student achieve his/her potential.

The school community strives to create a learning environment that provides its students with the academic, social and cultural training necessary for success in life.

The student population is drawn from varied communities and cultures. There are approximately fourteen feeder primary schools. The school is a designated DEIS school .

The school offers the following programmes - Junior Certificate/Cycle (JC), Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP), Transition Year (TY), Established Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA).

1.1 Scope

The anti-bullying policy concerns all aspects of school life and as such it is a whole school activity.

The anti-bullying policy applies to all school staff, the board of management, parents/guardians, students and others (including prospective or potential students and their parents/guardians and applicants for staff positions within the school) insofar as the measures under the plan relate to them.

While the Board of Management and the school principal has the overall responsibility for the oversight and implementation of the policy, all members of staff have a contribution to make.

The various members of the school educational team aspire to provide students with the best possible service. Members of this team include, among others:

- School Management
- Year Heads
- Class Tutors
- Subject Teachers and Departments
- Special Needs Co-ordinator
- Special Needs Assistants
- Programmes Co-ordinator
- School Completion Programme
- Home School & Community Liaison Officer
- Parents/Guardians
- School administration

- School maintenance

1.1. Policy and Legislative Context

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 SUM adopts the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour and within the context of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) child protection guidelines.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

Other requirements and guidelines include:

- **Circular 0045/2013** - Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2019.pdf
- **Anti-Bullying Support Materials**, PDST, 2013 - <https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Anti-Bullying%20Support%20Materials.pdf>
- **Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023**, DES, 2018. <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy-statement-and-framework-for-practice-2018%E2%80%932023.pdf>
- **Wellbeing Guidelines for Junior Cycle**, NCCA, 2017. https://www.ncca.ie/media/2487/wellbeingguidelines_forjunior_cycle.pdf
- **Looking At Our School 2016** - A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools, Inspectorate of Department of Education and Skills, 2016. <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/Looking-at-Our-School-2016-A-Quality-Framework-for-Post-Primary-schools.pdf>
- **School Self-Evaluation Guidelines 2016 – 2020**, Inspectorate of Department of Education and Skills, 2015. http://schoolself-evaluation.ie/post-primary/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/01/School-Self-Evaluation-Guidelines-2016-2020-Post-Primary_web.pdf
- **Framework for Junior Cycle**, NCCA, 2015. <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-2015.pdf>
- **Well-being in Post-Primary Schools. Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention**, NEPS, 2013. <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Resources-Guidance/Well-Being-in-Post-Primary-Schools-Guidelines-for-Mental-Health-Promotion-and-Suicide-Prevention-2013.pdf>
- **Education (Welfare) Act 2000 –** <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/enacted/en/html>
- **Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools**, TúsIa/NEWB, 2008 - https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

Policy documents which impact on the formation and delivery of the anti-bullying policy:

LMETB Policies

- Acceptable Use ICT Policy
- Admissions Policy & Procedures
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Educational Tours and Field Trips Policy
- GDPR Policy and Privacy Notices

- Invited/External speakers policy
- Records Management Policy
- Suspension and Expulsion Policy & Procedures

SUM Policies

- Acceptable Use Policy for Network and Internet
- Admissions policy
- Child Protection Risk Assessment and Statement
- Classroom and corridor management
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Critical Incident Management Policy
- DEIS plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy
- Social Political and Health Education Policy
- Special Needs Education Policy
- Strategy re Attendance and Participation
- Tutor Policy

1.3 Rationale for an Anti-Bullying Policy

The DES (2005) Guidelines state that schools should “...develop a comprehensive guidance plan as part of their overall school development plan, taking into account the needs of students, available resources and contextual factors” (DES, 2005; pg. 4).

Scoil Uí Mhuirí (SUM) believes that all members of the school community are entitled to a school environment, which is free from bullying and the fear of bullying. All members of the school community will be encouraged to support such an environment and will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying.

1.4 Principles of Whole-School Anti-Bullying plan

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 with 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 have at their objective the restoration of positive relationships between students;
- **Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;**
- **Supports for staff;**

- **Consistent recording, investigation and follow up** of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies);
- **On-going review and evaluation of the effectiveness** of the anti-bullying policy;
- **Transparency and accountability.**

1.5 Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of the policy is to resolve any issues and restore relationships as far as is practicable.

The objectives of this Anti-Bullying Policy are to achieve the following outcomes:

- To create a positive school culture and climate that is inclusive and welcoming of difference
- To create a school climate that is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss bullying behaviour
- To raise awareness amongst the entire school community that bullying is unacceptable behaviour
- To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour
- To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour
- To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour
- To work with and through external agencies in countering all forms of bullying and;
- To facilitate ongoing reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy

2. DEFINITIONS, EXAMPLES & EXCLUSIONS

2.1 Definition of bullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as **“unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (s) and which is repeated over time.”**

2.2. Examples

Examples may include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

Type	Explanation & Specific Examples of Behaviour
Verbal	Name-calling, jeering, teasing, taunting, slagging, threatening.
Physical aggression	Hitting, spitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, stealing, vandalising, intimidating.
Psychological	Excluding, isolating, ridiculing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, passing notes, using peer pressure to intimidate, threatening gestures or looks.
Reciprocal	Aggression with ongoing hurtful banter.
Sexual	Unwelcome sexual comments, touching body parts, spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation, taunting a person of different sexual orientation.

Racist	Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, or cultural ethnicity.
Relational	Victimisation, manipulating relationships eg. Ignoring or excluding from the group, ostracism, breaking confidence, spreading rumours, huddling together as a way of excluding others, talking loudly so that the excluded person can hear, looking “daggers”, abusive letters, drawings, texts, e-mail, social media messages, phone calls.
Extortionate	Bullying to extort items such as money and other property or to force students to carry out actions against their will.
Identity-based	Homophobic, transphobic or transgender bullying; or bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs. It also includes bullying based on a person’s membership of the traveller community.
Cyber	A form of social bullying that uses technological communications to humiliate, harass, embarrass tease, intimidate, threaten or slander an individual or group of people. Cyberbullying or cyber harassment is a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means. Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are also known as online bullying.
Damage to property	Damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books, learning materials, pupils locker, bicycle...etc.

2.3. Exclusions

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. The school recognizes it’s limitations in dealing with some on line activity.

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

3. INDICATORS & IMPACT OF BULLYING

3.1. Indicators of Bullying

While the indicators of bullying can vary for each individual, the following signs and symptoms *may* suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- 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
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, argumentative regarding attending school, truancy
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;

- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- 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
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting, self-harm
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling them

There may be other signs depending on the individual and their 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 pupil.

3.2. Impact of Bullying

Individuals involved	Potential impacts
Pupils who are being bullied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable ➤ Lowering of self-esteem ➤ Changes in mood and behaviour ➤ Extreme cases may result in self-harm
Pupils who witness bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. ➤ Pupils may also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.
Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can be at higher risk of depression ➤ Increased risk of developing an anti-social personality ➤ Anxiety disorders ➤ Likelihood of substance abuse, law-breaking behaviour in adulthood ➤ Decreased educational attainment, decreased occupational attainment

4. REPORTING A BULLYING INCIDENT

Students, parents, non-teaching staff, visitors or members of the wider community should feel welcome to report any concerns regarding bullying behaviour to any member of school staff.

Reports of bullying behaviour can be made to:

Any staff member	Principal
Caretaking staff	School supervisors/monitors
Deputy Principal	SCP staff
Guidance Counsellor	Student – student mentor/friend/classmate
HSCL staff	Tutor
Office staff	Year Head/Assistant year head

Reports of bullying behaviour can be made via:

- ✓ Verbal report
- ✓ Note to staff member
- ✓ Through a parent / friend

5. PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING, RECORDING & FOLLOW UP OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher*.

The intention of dealing with any bullying incident is to apply restorative practice approaches with the aim of resolving any issues and restoring relationships as far as is practicable.

The following procedure serves to guide relevant teachers through the process of investigating allegations of bullying behaviour. Investigations can take a considerable amount of time.

- Initially, the relevant teacher may gather as much information as possible regarding the allegation of bullying behaviour. This usually involves speaking directly with the student who alleges the bullying behaviour. The student(s) may be requested to give a verbal and written account of the incident(s) with other teachers.
- The relevant teacher may also speak with the student(s) against whom the allegation of bullying behaviour has been made. The relevant teacher may speak to students individually or in groups depending on the nature of the allegation. The student(s) will be requested to give a verbal and/or written account of the incident(s)
- Where possible, allegation/incidents are investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- Students may be required to be excused from a lesson in order to meet/speak with a relevant teacher. This will be facilitated as discretely as possible but total discretion may not be possible in a school environment.
- All investigations will be conducted with sensitivity and due regard to all the students concerned.
- When investigating allegations of bullying behaviour or incidents, 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 with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- It will be made clear to students that when they provide information, they are not considered to be 'telling tales' but are behaving responsibly and that the well-being

of other students is dependent on them reporting such behaviour.

- The relevant teacher may consult with a staff member or other persons involved in the incident during the course of their investigation in order to seek guidance or further relevant information.
- The relevant teacher may seek the assistance and support of a Tutor, the learning support teacher, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, the Deputy Principal or the Principal at anytime. The Tutor of the student(s) involved may be able to provide more detailed information about the students.
- Where the relevant teacher is concerned that a particular allegation of bullying is causing serious upset and risk to harm to a student, staff member or other person, then they should bring it to the attention of the Principal or Deputy Principal at the earliest opportunity.
- All interventions will be noted by the relevant teacher on the (yellow) *SUM Bullying Report Form*. All forms must be completed in full and maintained in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation.
- If the alleged bullying behaviour continues and / or the situation is not resolved this form will be passed to the year head / D. Principal / Principal / care team** for further action. This may include seeking the assistance of outside agencies where appropriate and available.
- When the intervention is complete the files will be passed on to the appropriate year head(s) for retention

*The 'relevant teacher' is the member of staff to whom the report is made.

**The care team will include the Principal and/or Deputy, Year Head, Form Teacher, HSCL, Guidance Counsellor, SCP staff.

N.B. THE STAFF MEMBER TO WHOM THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS INITIALLY BEEN REPORTED IS REQUIRED TO CHECK THAT THE INCIDENT HAS BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS OF THE REPORT BEING MADE.

SHOULD THEY NOT BE SATISFIED THAT THAT IS THE CASE, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL / D. PRINCIPAL.

6. EDUCATION & PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) in place in the school include:

6.1. Education Strategies

To create the positive school environment in which an anti-bullying ethos and culture is maintained, it is important to ensure that all members of the school community are made aware and are prepared to meet the challenges and issues presented by bullying incidents.

In this light, the following educational strategies form part of the SUM anti-bullying approach:

- ✓ Anti-bullying policy to be included in the Information pack issued to all parents/guardians.

- ✓ All students to be informed of the anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- ✓ 1st years to be informed of these during the induction days.
- ✓ Policy and strategies to be outlined to parents/guardians of incoming first years at the Information meeting.
- ✓ SPHE programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying)
- ✓ RSE programme (includes material on cyber, homophobic and transphobic bullying)
- ✓ Theme weeks such as Anti-Bullying Week
- ✓ Acceptable use of the internet policy (includes material on cyber bullying).
- ✓ Specific action plan to prevent bullying in the classroom.
- ✓ Subject dept. plans to explore of issues such as inclusion, diversity and interdependence when relevant.
- ✓ Support for those affected by bullying.
- ✓ Guest speakers for parents, students and professional development for staff.
- ✓ School clubs, teams etc highlight interdependence.
- ✓ Support programmes for those affected by bullying eg SCP, HSCL, Counselling, AEN, JCSP
- ✓ Reward system which promotes positive behavior.
- ✓ Counselling service for individuals affected.
- ✓ Collation and dissemination of background information from primary schools to teaching staff.
- ✓ Check ad Connect

6.2. Preventative Strategies

To perpetuate SUM anti-bullying ethos it is important that the anti-bullying message is kept to the forefront of everyone's mind.

6.2.1. Students

The following measures are undertaken to raise awareness of the need of positive school climate among the student body.

- ✓ Reinforcing positive student efforts
- ✓ Building student self-confidence
- ✓ SPHE programme
- ✓ Subject specific preventative measures
- ✓ Assemblies
- ✓ Liaising with primary schools
- ✓ Anti-bullying week
- ✓ 1st year induction
- ✓ Graduation ceremony for 6th years
- ✓ School tours / bonding trips
- ✓ Inclusive & Anti-bullying posters / leaflets
- ✓ Mentor "buddies" for 1st years
- ✓ Student surveys
- ✓ Visible teacher presence and supervision
- ✓ Check and Connect
- ✓ Support programmes from SCP / HSCL / AEN / RSE / JCSP
- ✓ Clear instructions about "who to tell" & "how to tell" & "what to expect"

6.2.2. Staff

The process of raising awareness among all staff members in the school community is achieved in the following ways.

- ✓ Staff meetings
- ✓ Information in relation to an anti-bullying programme be available to all staff.
- ✓ C.P.D. and sharing of the policy and procedures with all staff
- ✓ Whole staff participation in awareness raising events eg Anti-bullying week, Subject dept. plans to include plan regarding preventative measures
- ✓ Support programmes in SPHE / RSE / SCP / HSCL / Guidance / JCSP / AEN.

6.2.3. Curriculum

The curriculum actively supports the creation of a positive school culture with a focus on preventing and minimising the impact of bullying on students.

- ✓ SPHE - an anti-bullying programme is integrated into the school curriculum. It is taught to all incoming 1st classes. Strategies suggested in the programme will be used as appropriate.
- ✓ RSE programme
- ✓ Wellbeing initiatives.
- ✓ Each subject dept. promotes an anti-bullying ethos and has agreed specific preventative measures.
- ✓ The 1st year induction program includes an anti-bullying section.

6.3. Initiatives

Other examples of school initiatives which support the creation of a positive environment and the anti-bullying ethos include:

- ✓ Display anti-bullying and welcoming diversity posters.
- ✓ Liaise with primary schools.
- ✓ 1st year induction days
- ✓ Anti-bullying programme (Classroom Guidance) completed with all 1st year students
- ✓ Supervision for all social areas before and after school and during morning and afternoon breaks.
- ✓ Group exercises eg school trips, extra-curricular clubs and societies, team sports.
- ✓ Student council and student surveys to raise concerns
- ✓ Raising awareness among non-teaching staff.
- ✓ Parent courses in positive parenting.eg. Settling your child into secondary school.
- ✓ School brochure issued in September outlining how to support your child.
- ✓ Cyber bullying lesson plan available for any staff member.
- ✓ Student mentor involvement with 1st years.
- ✓ SCP programme.
- ✓ HSCL home visits.

7. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Prevention of bullying behaviour and incidents is not the remit by any one individual or group, but rather of all members of the school community. A whole-school approach benefits from the synergy of many working together with a shared vision towards a common goal.

A Whole School Approach thus ensures that our school maximises its resources through the identification of roles and responsibilities for school management and staff in the provision of appropriate support to students. The main roles and responsibilities within our School are outlined below.

The following are guidelines which may inform procedure:

All members of the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere • Report any incidents of bullying behaviour that you observe • Model the school standards of behaviour and demonstrate the school values • Recognise the potential of all students to behave in bullying ways • Have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of fellow students and school staff
Parents/Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Equip the student with a range of life skills • Since their example is a powerful source of learning for pupils, parents should model the standards that students are asked to respect • Monitor student use of technology at home.
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report any concerns regarding bullying to any member of staff • Look after and out for each other • Have a responsibility not to engage in any bullying behaviour • Report any bullying behaviour that you observe or hear about to a member of staff
Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally adopt and implement an Anti-Bullying Policy that fully complies with the DES procedures (2013) • Ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed and recommendations are communicated to the school community. • Ensure the policy is highlighted and promoted on a schoolwide basis within the school, with particular attention being given to incoming pupils and their parents • Ensure that all members of school staff (under the direction of the Principal) have sufficient familiarity with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy (under the direction of the Principal)

School Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Anti-Bullying Policy • Implementation of policy
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring & review of policy • Apply Code of Conduct when necessary • Report to Board of Management regarding Anti-Bullying • Raise awareness of anti-bullying procedures and prevention strategies • Exploit opportunities provided by the school curriculum to raise awareness, foster an attitude of respect for all and influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner • Support and lead initiatives with Other staff members • Consult with and seek assistance from external agencies (NEPS, HSE, social workers, community workers, bus drivers, Gardaí...etc.) where necessary • Make referrals to Túsla (as Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection) in cases of severe bullying
All School staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by a member of the school community • Model the school standards of behaviour and demonstrate the school values • Strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable • Be fair, consistent and clear in disciplinary measures • Organise events, themed weeks, performances, speakers, projects, displays and lessons to highlight the Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures to the whole school e.g. Anti-Bullying Week
Year head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with relevant teacher, as requested, in relation to abullying incident • Apply the Anti-Bullying procedures • Retain the Bulling Report Form and ensure it is completed correctly

Relevant teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to any concerns • Follow procedures as outlined • Investigate allegations of bullying • Consult with any staff member or other persons during the course of their investigation in order to seek guidance or further relevant information • In collaboration with colleagues exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved • Help to resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties • Complete relevant forms and keep records • Liaise with Principal and Anti-Bullying co-ordinator • Liaise with students and parents-in conjunction with YH • Decide post-investigation, whether allegations of negative behaviour fall under the definition of bullying • Take whatever follow up actions are necessary in order to intervene in cases of bullying • Report any concerns where a particular bullying episode is
	causing serious upset to a student, staff member or other person, to the Principal or Deputy Principal at the earliest possible opportunity

Other members of staff – Tutors, Guidance counsellors, HSCL officer, SCP staff, AEN staff – may have specific role in dealing with individual bullying incidents when the circumstances require their intervention.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Referral of serious cases

SUM reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6.3.5 of the DES procedures to seek the assistance of agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS), the HSE, Túsła, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to dealing effectively with bullying.

In situations where an incident (bullying or misconduct) is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the matter will be referred to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The school may consult with Túsła or other relevant agencies to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the Túsła or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

8.2 Prevention of Harassment

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

Please note that bullying and harassment is not tolerated in SUM. Under the Anti-Bullying Policy, breaches may be referred to be dealt with under the Code of Conduct. This will include the full range of sanctions of the Code of Conduct, up to and including Suspension and Exclusion.

8.3. Confidentiality

Students are assured of being treated in a just and fair manner when dealing with a bullying incident. Exceptions to confidentiality are where there is danger to the student or to someone else and/or where the law requires disclosure.

9. MONITORING, REVIEW & EVALUATION

This anti-bullying policy is made available to school personnel, the parent's association and members of the school community. A copy of the policy is published on the school website

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the principal and updates reported to the Board of Management. Reports shall include the overall number of bullying cases reported since the previous meeting and confirmation that all cases reported to the Board of Management, have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the Anti-Bullying policy and its implementation in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, using the checklist included as Appendix 4.

The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas of improvement identified by the annual review. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website. Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management meeting that adopted the review and a record and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to LMETB and the DES.

On-going review and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy and support plans will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Department of Education and Skills or the Department of Children and Youth Affairs), legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others.

The plan will be reviewed every three years. The next date for a full review is during the academic year 2024/2025.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:	
This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on:	
This policy was ratified by LMETB on:	
Signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management:	
Date:	
Date of next review:	2025/2026

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Anti-Bullying Procedures in Scoil Uí Mhuirí

Anti-bullying policy and procedures are to be read and followed in the context of the DES Child Protection Guidelines.

Teachers should take a calm, unemotional, problem solving approach when dealing with reported incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.

Following the steps and prompts in the *Bullying Report Form* (see Appendix 2) will ensure that teachers and year heads are following the procedures as outlined below.

LEVEL ONE

The procedures to be followed at Level One (Relevant teacher) are as follows:

- Adopt an informal approach to resolving the issue.
- Speak to all parties in private. Useful questions...who what where when why.
- Ask the student how they would like the situation to be resolved.
- Ask students for a written account.
- If a group is involved interview each member individually. Thereafter, if appropriate, interview the group together when each member should be asked for their account.
- If it has been determined that bullying has happened the offence should be made clear to the student and efforts should be made to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied. Relevant teacher may liaise with colleague to determine this
- Record all steps on the bullying report form and give the report to the year head for a) filing b) further action.
- If the bullied student is agreeable, follow up meetings with those involved should be arranged
- Contact parents to inform them and explain actions being taken and to give parents an opportunity to discuss how they can help.
-

LEVEL TWO

- YEAR HEAD INVOLVEMENT.
-
- If the incident is deemed serious, remains unresolved or part of a pattern of bullying behaviour, report the matter to the Year Head.
- Year Head will consult with staff members and form teachers.
- Collate all evidence.
- Contact parents / guardians
- Maintain regular links with the bullied student.
- Monitor the student who has bullied. Refer those affected to a relevant agency as appropriate eg. HSCL / Guidance / SCP/ NEPS / other. The Code of discipline may be used as an intervention.

LEVEL THREE

The procedures to be followed at Level Three (Principal/Deputy Principal) are as follows:

- If the problem persists, refer to the care team (Guidance /HSCL / SCP/ Form teacher/ Year Head /SPHE rep. / Deputy Principal / Principal) who will inform parents/guardians and meet, if necessary.
- Liaise with bullied student Monitor student who has bullied. Liaise with HSCL / SCP / Guidance / NEPS / HSE Child & Family services/ Social services / Gardai /other agencies.

N.B. IF THE RELEVANT TEACHER CONSIDERS THAT THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS AFTER IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY.

APPENDIX 2 MUST BE ON YELLOW PAPER

Relevant teacher reporting form.

Name of student making report .

Have you had difficulties with this student/group of students previously?

Have you mentioned this to any other staff member?

What happened – your summary and attach student account if written.

Where?

When?

Name /names of those involved

Account of situation by those who were allegedly involved. -your summary and attach student/s account if written.

Outcome of discussion with colleague?

Actions .

Conversation with student/s

Reprimand

Sanction

Contact with parents(-both sets) -liaise with YH

Offer of RP meeting

Referral to guidance

Other actions.

Copy to YH for filing.

YEAR HEAD

Year Head may get involved if situation persists despite actions of relevant teacher .
Meeting with student making claims.

Summary of their account. – your summary and attach theirs if given.

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Outcome of discussion with colleague ?

Actions .

Conversation with student/s

Reprimand

Sanction

Contact with parents (both sets)

Offer of RP meeting

Referral to guidance

Meeting with parents if appropriate

Other actions

Deputy / Principal

P/DP may get involved where situation persists despite action .

Meeting with student making claims.

Summary of meeting

Meeting with students involved

Summary of meeting

Liaison with YH

Action -as appropriate

Student making claim .

Referral to guidance

Contact with home

RP offered

Supports advised as appropriate

Plan for ongoing monitoring of situation

Student/s against whom the claim is made

Reprimand

Reflective work

Sanction

Communication with home

Other actions

(

Appendix 3 – Form for Recording Bullying Behaviour and Report to Principal or Deputy Principal

This form is to be used in the case whereby a staff member considers the bullying incident HAS NOT been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after it has been determined that bullying has occurred.

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

3 Reported by ?

4. Summary of report

5. Summary of how adjudication of bullying was reached.

6. Summary of action taken to date .

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4 – Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

	Y/N
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> ?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
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?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
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?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
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?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Chairperson, BOM

Date

Principal

Date

Appendix 5 – Guidance for Parents/Guardians

What can parents do to help their children cope during a bullying incident?

- It is not advisable to advocate hitting back
- Teach them some coping strategies
- Encourage them to tell
- Stay with friends - avoid bullies
- Avoid provoking a bully
- Encourage assertiveness and not aggression
- Save any abusive phone, online or multimedia message should you report the bullying to the Garda.

What should a parent do if they know that their child is being bullied?

- Assure them that it is not their fault and that you will help them sort it out
- Contact the school - arrange an appointment with the relevant teacher
- Prepare for that meeting - bring notes and details of the events from your child's point of view
- Ask that the incident be investigated and what supports the school can offer your child
- Work with the school to develop a strategy to deal with the problem

Appendix 6 - Useful Guidance, Resources and Contact Information

How to contact online service providers

Instagram

Staying safe on Instagram

<https://about.instagram.com/blog/tips-and-tricks/privacy-and-safety-tips-for-instagram>

Reporting bullying and harassment on Instagram

<https://help.instagram.com/547601325292351>

Whatsapp

How to stay safe on Whatsapp

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/general/security-and-privacy/staying-safe-on-whatsapp/?lang=en>

How to block and report contacts on Whatsapp

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/iphone/security-and-privacy/how-to-block-and-unblock-contacts>

SnapChat

Staying safe on SnapChat

<https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/safety-tips-resources>

Reporting bullying and harassment on Snapchat

<https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/report-abuse-in-app>

Facebook

Staying safe on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/help/592679377575472>

Reporting bullying and harassment on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/help/116326365118751>

YouTube

Staying safe on YouTube

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/9563682?hl=en>

Reporting bullying and harassment on YouTube

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802268?hl=en>

TikTok

Bullying Prevention

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-us/bullying-prevention/>

Parent/Guardian Guide

<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-us/guardians-guide/>

Reporting bullying and harassment on TikTok

<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/taking-action-against-bullying-and-harassment/>

Useful advice and resources

Webwise

www.webwise.ie

Provides parents, teachers and students advice and information about potential dangers online

ISPCC

Parent Support Hub

<https://www.ispcc.ie/parenting-hub/>

Abuse and Bullying

<https://www.ispcc.ie/category/parenting-hub/abuse-and-bullying/>

Child Line

www.childline.ie

Advice on child protection issues