

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Coláiste Íde

1. 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 Coláiste Íde** school 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.

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 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;

ganging up against a person or non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the “silent treatment”

o **Cyber-bullying:** 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.

o **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.

o **Damage to property:** This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil’s locker or bicycle.

o **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats

### **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;
- 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.

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

- 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. 39

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

### **Definition of Bullying**

*In the context of these procedures, bullying is defined as 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 this non-exhaustive definition:

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

### **Types of Bullying**

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

- o **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault.
- o **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.
- o **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. Or a group

- Principal/ Deputy Principal
- Class Teachers
- Guidance Counsellor
- Student Support Team

5. 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 :

### **Role and Responsibilities**

The Board of Management is responsible for ratifying the policy and the school staff are responsible for implementing the policy on a daily basis.

### **Pupils**

All pupils are required to follow and adhere to the Code of Behaviour always.

If a student is suffering from bullying or witnessed bullying they are obliged to inform the class teacher, the counsellor, the deputy principal or the principal. The report will then be investigated as per school policy to establish the facts as much as possible.

### **School Staff**

The school recognises the role of the school staff in developing and supporting the policy. The school recognises the main role of the teacher in teaching and learning as the pivotal role they have in managing students behaviour and to encourage and promote good positive behaviour at all times.

- Be role models in word and action at all times.
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying, by active patrolling during supervision
- Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons.
- Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- School staff will provide extra-curricular opportunities for students on an ongoing basis
- Staff will provide opportunities that help with the improvement of self esteem

- Class Teachers: Class teachers will discuss and highlight the code of Behaviour and the Anti-Bullying Policy on a regular basis at the class meetings, and will encourage good behaviour at all times. Class teachers will give students appraisal when deserved and once a month as per school policy
- Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member such as the Principal, Deputy-Principal, Pastoral Care Staff who will follow the designated procedure
- School staff can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives, e.g. SPHE and in particular *The Growing Up LGBT* resource, The RSE programme, CSPE and Religion classes
- By organising educational days, e.g. drama's, guest speakers, posters, anti-bullying week
- All staff will have the opportunity to attend in-service in relations to Pastoral Care/ Anti Bullying on a regular basis
- The staff will review the Anti-bullying policy on a yearly basis

**The school acknowledges the important role of parents promoting and implementing the policy. We would expect that parents would support the policy and encourage their daughters to abide by it and to**

**The School recommends that parents**

- Watch for signs of distress in their children, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising;
- Take an active interest in their children's social life and acquaintances.
- Advise their children to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible allow them to report and deal with the problem themselves. Confidence and respect can be gained through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement.
- Inform the school if bullying is suspected.
- Keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how)
- Do not encourage their children to retaliate.
- Be willing to attend interviews at the school if their child is involved in any bullying incident.
- Inform the school of suspected bullying even if their children are not directly affected.
- Students should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.

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

**Procedure for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**  
**Policy regarding Pastoral Care Spot Check**

The following questions are asked to all pupils:

1. **Is there any pupil upsetting you?**
2. **Do you know of any other pupil in the school who is upset because of another pupil?**
3. **Is there anything else you would like to share?**

*All students will put their name and date on the sheet*

**Intervention Strategies**

Students will answer the questions in their own time and leave their sheet in "Bosca Bob"

If any concern is expressed the students may be spoken to informally and in confidence

The principal or deputy principal will speak with the class group with a summary of any concerns expressed

An email will be sent to the parents also with a brief summary of the spot check details

Where necessary the guidance teacher will develop a counselling plan for students in question

The principal and deputy will continue to monitor the concerned students in an informal manner

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

**Procedures for dealing with bullying**

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

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of **what, where, when, who and why** (This should be done in a calm manner)
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
- It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;
- The approach taken should be a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach one when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied
- Counselling will be available for the student suffering from bullying to assist them in dealing with the situation. This assistance will be available for a continued period afterwards to assist them in developing personal social skills
- Counselling will be provided to the students causing the bullying behaviour to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others
- It will be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required will be implemented as per the Code of Behaviour
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template of the Department of Education

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

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

## 9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or 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 **30 January 2014** and was reviewed on:

- January 2015
- 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016
- 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017
- 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018
- 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021
- 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- 13<sup>ú</sup> June 2023

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: *Michelle Uí Murchú*  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 13/6/2023

Signed: *Conall S. Guadhlaoid*  
(Principal/secretary)

Date: 13/6/2023

*Date of next review: June 2024*