

# Coláiste an Chroí Naofa Anti-Bullying Policy

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

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

- acknowledges the rights of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages students 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 students; 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 students

(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.

#### Examples of bullying behaviours

<b>General behaviours which apply to all</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li><li>• Physical aggression</li><li>• Damage to property</li><li>• Name calling</li><li>• Slagging (This behaviour usually refers to good natured banter /teasing that goes on between friends and classmates. However, when the remark becomes extremely personal and repeated, such as comments on an individual's appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or comments about someone's family, then 'slagging' becomes a form of bullying.</li><li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li><li>• Offensive graffiti</li><li>• Extortion</li></ul>
--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<b>Cyber-bullying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<b>Identity Based Behaviours</b> <b>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).</b>	
<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group</li> <li>• Taking someone’s friends away</li> <li>• “Bitching”</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The “look”</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>• Mimicking a person’s disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

- All Staff members have a responsibility for dealing with bullying.
- All students are encouraged to report incidence of bullying to their Class Teacher, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal, Principal or any teacher of their choice.
- The Year Head will initiate an investigation. S/he can call on any staff member to assist in the investigation.

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

**School-wide approach**

- A school-wide approach is fostered to ensure that respect forms the basis of all relationships within the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- A school Anti-Bullying Code has been developed that is supported by all staff, students and

parents. This code is visible in all classrooms and all social areas of the school.

- The student's School Journal has a section dealing with strategies for dealing with bullying.
- All students are encouraged to take part in extra – curricular activities as they provide opportunities to promote self- esteem.
- The formal curriculum provides opportunities to promote qualities of empathy, respect and resilience that are needed to prevent bullying. Subjects that specifically deal with bullying are C.S.P.E., S.P.H.E. and Religion. However, all subjects provide opportunities for highlighting the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. E.g. Physical Education fosters cooperation, team spirit and respect for all. History and Geography deal with the negative effects of colonisation, exploitation and dictatorships.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying is provided to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on student's lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include students parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will ensure that all new staff and part- time staff are made aware of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti- Bullying Policy.
- There is effective supervision and monitoring of students in classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the Student Council/ Transition Year students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, Lá na Gaeilge and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with students. All parents/guardians of incoming first years and any new students are provided with a copy of the Anti- Bullying Policy. The policy is available to all other parent/guardians from the school website.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures. These include:
  - A Bullying Awareness Week for all first years as part of their transition from primary to secondary
  - Students are educated on how to stay safe online and are encouraged to report all concerns about cyberbullying.
  - An annual 'Mind Your Head' week for all students to promote positive mental health and to increase students' resilience and promote self-esteem.
  - Assemblies on issues of bullying and the importance of respect.
  - Posters and displays that promote bullying awareness (including homophobic and transphobic bullying)
  - Guest speakers are invited to speak on all forms of bullying.
- We ensure that students know who to tell and how to tell
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand a note to the school secretary for a particular teacher.
  - Ask their parent's to make contact with the Year Head.
  - Get a friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place
- A culture of telling, with a particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders is encouraged. It is made clear to students that when they report incidence of bullying that they are not 'ratting' but are behaving responsibly. The mantra in our school is 'Do Not Suffer in Silence'. We emphasise the fact that all students have a responsibility for the safety and well-

being of their fellow students.

- Parents/ Guardians are encouraged to approach the school if they have any concerns about bullying.
- Students who have particular challenges with integrating socially in our school community are helped to develop their social skills to allow them have a positive experience.
- The schools Acceptable Use Policy includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the student's use of mobile phones.
- **The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. GLEN [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie), BeLonGTo [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org)**

#### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g on my own two feet.
- School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational Aggression** (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), **Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack) **Diversity and Interculturalism**. The school should list every resource related to the SPHE curriculum, and make a list of supports.
- 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.

#### **Links to other policies**

- Other policies which are relevant to bullying include:
  - Code of Behaviour
  - Child Protection Policy
  - Supervision of Pupils.
  - Acceptable Use Policy
  - Attendance
  - Harassment and Sexual Harassment 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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

### **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 school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.**

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

#### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. S/he can call on any member of staff to assist in the investigation.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

#### **Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students 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;
- All teachers involved in the investigation will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- All information will be acted upon quickly and discreetly.
- Students who report a bullying incident are made feel secure and confident that the information provided will not be repeated outside of an agreed structure.
- All measures, within reason, will be taken to ensure that incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all student's concerned. Students who are not directly involved may also be called upon to assist the investigation.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will 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 will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;  
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 that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the 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;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student 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 student being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student 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 must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
  - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
  - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- 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 student 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 Pupils.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

#### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the Year Head. **(Appendix 1)**. A report by the student who has made the allegation must also be given to the Year Head.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal/Deputy Principal of all incidents being investigated.



### **Informal-determination that bullying has occurred**

- 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.
- All records will be given to the Deputy Principal where they will be kept on file.

### **Formal-Appendix 2**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 2** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) in cases where he/she 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; and

b) in cases where the Year Head and Deputy Principal/Principal deem the incident of a serious nature, and needs to be brought to the attention of the Board of Management.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. All records dealing with issues brought to the attention of the B.O.M. are kept by the Principal in a secure place.

### **Established intervention strategies that are used in investigating bullying allegations**

- Teacher interviews with all students
- 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) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Mediation
- Restorative interviews

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
  - Pastoral care system
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
  - Tutor/Year head system
  - Care team / Student Support Team
- If students require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the student affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Serious incidence of bullying behaviour will, in accordance with the Children First and the

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, be referred to the H.S.E. Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

- Students should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

#### 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.

**The following 'Prompt Questions' may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:**

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots?
- How will the student support/care structures (including year heads, class tutors, SPHE, Guidance, RE, CSPE, HSCL, Learning Support teachers) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
- How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the Student Council be involved?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
  - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
  - Does the school regularly monitor pupils' internet usage?
  - Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
  - Have pupils been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

### 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 students or staff or the harassment of students 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 \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

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) and provided to the Parents' Association. 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. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Date of Review: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

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