



Antibullying Policy

Gaelscoil Cholmille



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 Gaelscoil Cholmille 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;
 - 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.

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.

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

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

All class teachers:

Aaron, Keith, Marie, Áine, Aoife, Dónal, Maria, Aodhfin, Eimear, Clíodhna.

All SET:

Caitríona, Yvonne, Aodán.

Principal:

Neasa

Substitute Teachers/Students on Teaching Placement:

Will be made aware to report any incidents they observe of a bullying nature to the class teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal.

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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- Monthly Antibullying Lessons as part of an ongoing cycle of work on the topic
- Weekly reminders to classes on antibullying behaviour by class teachers
- Reminders from principal at assemblies about positive school culture and climate and anti-bullying initiatives
- Promotion of kindness, respect and manners as part of whole school culture
- Promotion of self esteem and self respect as a preventative measure towards antibullying
- Promotion of a positive school culture with positive affirmation, praise and encouragement as an integral part of our teaching and learning
- Use of programmes such as Weaving Wellbeing, Mo Dhalann Folláine, Friends for Life, Fun Friends, Zones of Regulation, Stop Think Do, Antibullying resources from antibullyingcampaign.ie, antibullyingcentre.ie, webwise.ie.
- Visits from outside agencies such as Barnardos/Sticks and Stones to give workshops to students during their time in Gaelscoil Cholmcille particularly if there are persistent issues with bullying in a certain class.

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*):

- Each class teacher will document individual incidents between children in their class in their own journal/diary as notes (as observed by themselves or reported from parents or children)
- If an incident arises between the same two children for 2nd time this will again be documented and may be reported to parents depending on the nature of the incident.
- A third incident occurring between the same 2 pupils within one school term is defined as a bullying incident. At this point the incident will be reported by the teacher on Appendix 3 of the antibullying protocols as set out by the Department of Education. A copy of said report will be given to the principal and added to the bullying report for subsequent BOM meeting. Parents of both children will be notified.
- A mediation programme will be begin between the children to resolve the issue and upskill the children going forward if it has not been put in place already.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- Mediation process with children involved in the bullying.
- Positive affirmation from staff as to the incident(s) being wrong and reassured to report going forward if there are any further incidents
- Structures reviewed in terms of adequate supervision on yard, in class and in school
- Children involved engage in restorative practice to develop skills going forward
- Children involved encouraged to see the other person's perspective and apologise if appropriate to the context.
- Parents encouraged to be supportive of school intervention so that children hear the same message at home and at school in relation to incidents

- Code of discipline applied when necessary and followed through
- Teachers document all stages of intervention, update principal and principal updates Board of Management where necessary.

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 21/06/23.

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 (where one exists). 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: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 21/6/23

Date: 24/06/23

Date of next review: 2024