

Cloghroe National School

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Cloghroe NS

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Cloghroe N. S. endeavours to cater for the full and harmonious development of each child by providing a broad and flexible curriculum meeting the needs of all intellectual abilities. The school recognises the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being. The various strands in the different subjects of the Curriculum are regarded as important to allow all children some opportunity to express their individuality and to experience success and satisfaction in what they do in school. Games, competitions and play are also important elements in the socialisation process. We aim to build a warm, caring, respectful and compassionate school atmosphere where each child feels accepted, trusted and valued. At the end of primary school, we would hope that pupils will leave the school as well adjusted individuals integrated into the community and willing to take their place as responsible citizens.

The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community, particularly its pupils and teachers (staff), to enjoy school in a relatively safe and secure environment. It recognises the uniqueness of each individual, endeavours to promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy, good manners and encourages qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members. A school reflects the society and location that it serves. Due to the very confined space available for approximately 506 pupils it is inevitable that children will sometimes feel overcrowded and overawed. Moving around in such close and confined proximity imposes its own strains and the options available for disengagement are not as readily available in school as they would be at home or in their neighbourhood. In order to address any potential difficulties, children are assigned to three different yard spaces, depending on their class level. Alternative play activities are provided on a rota basis on the astro-turf and the halla.

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 St. Senan's School Cloghroe 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.

The following indications, either alone or in combination, **may** indicate that there is a problem with bullying:-

- a. Anxiety about attending school.
- b. Deterioration in educational performance.
- c. Pattern of physical illness.
- d. Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour.
- e. Visible signs of anxiety or distress.
- f. Possessions missing.
- g. Increased requests for money.
- h. Unexplained bruising.
- i. Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her.

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

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety •Silent telephone/mobile phone call •Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls •Abusive text messages •Abusive email •Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/ YouTube/Snapchat/ Instagram/Tiktok/Discourse/ Roblox or on games consoles. •Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures •Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours 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).	
Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation •Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation •Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner •Physical intimidation or attacks •Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background •Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Malicious gossip •Isolation & exclusion •Ignoring •Excluding from the group •Taking someone's friends away •Spreading rumours •Breaking confidence •Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear •Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching •Harassment

Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule.
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3. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

All Class Teachers

All S.E.N. Teachers aligned with that particular class level

Deputy Principal

Principal

Our SNA staff report bullying or potential bullying issues to the supervising teacher or alternatively to the class teacher if the supervising teacher is not available.

4. 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 :

Education and prevention strategies used in Cloghroe N.S.

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. Messages of respectful behaviour will be on display throughout school.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' 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 pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school. (See separate internet policy)

- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals in next printout and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is available on the website and parents/guardians are welcome to discuss it with the school. A copy of the Code of Behaviour of the school is given out at enrolment. Clear protocols are identified with parents on how to approach the school regarding bullying behaviour (see reporting bullying behaviour on next page).
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- www.antibullyingcampaign.ie provides an easy to use school-wide framework to deal with the problem of bullying.

In the infant classes it provides exercises to foster friendship, kindness and respect.

From ages 7-12 there are 2 strands.

Strand 1 consists of exercises to help children to recognise, reject and report bullying. These will be incorporated into the SPHE programme.

Strand 2 outlines 4 essential steps to resolve most bullying situations without blame and so enable the restoration of normal relationships. This strand includes step-by-step instructions for the teacher as well as steps to be taken if incidents re-occur. Any written material related to this intervention programme will be securely stored in the school on Aladdin. All surveys taken as part of the intervention are anonymous.

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum, the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes, to include lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme and Web wise.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level, where available.
These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai (usually from Blarney), cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- 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.
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

Links to other policies

Guidance regarding bullying can also be found in Cloghroe schools' Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, Supervision of Pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance policy and our protocols around sporting activities.

5. 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 :

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 will be consistent with the following approach.

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

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil 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.
- 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 (see section 6.8.9)

- 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 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;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- 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, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should 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 should 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 pupil 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 pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil 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 inform parties of the procedural outcomes and be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing the parties together at a later date if the pupil 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 Children.

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 should keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- 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 of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-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.
- This will be recorded on a template which will be stored in (with BOM records).

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3 of the DES Procedures** 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) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school should list behaviours that when repeated (link with Code of Behaviour), must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These should be in line with the school's code of behaviour:

- I will, at all times, listen to and follow the instructions of the teachers. I will show courtesy, consideration, respect and tolerance to each member of staff, to my schoolmates and to all visitors to the school.
- I will not hurt others in any way either physically or by saying nasty things or things that are untrue.
- I will speak nicely to others and use polite language at all times. I understand that bad language and swearing are not allowed.
- I must not bully others. I understand that bullying is a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour.
- I will line up in the yard with my class in an orderly manner after lunchtimes when teachers blow the whistle or ring the bell/siren and for fire drills.
- I will stay within my class yard area at break-times.
- I will respect school property and keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- I will eat healthy food as set out in the school's Healthy Eating Policy.
- I will go directly to my classroom when gates are opened each morning.
- I will not enter the school grounds before the gates open or after school hours (unless I am accompanied by a teacher or other adults approved by the Board of Management).
- I understand that I must not use a mobile phone when I am on the school premises or on school outings. (I have read the important note below in relation to pupils' use of their own technology).
- I will work to the best of my ability. I will complete my homework every night. I will make sure my journal (or homework itself in the case of infants) is always signed by my parent or guardian.
- I will make sure that I have all my books, copies and anything else I need for school ready for class at all times. My parents/guardians will help me with this.
- I will enter and leave the school in an orderly fashion.
- I will not leave the school premises without the permission of the Class Teacher or Principal. If I must leave the school, a note/e-mail, appointment card or personal call from my parent or guardian must be provided. I know that my parent/guardian must

collect me from the school office and that late arrival and/or early collection of children is recorded on Aladdin by the secretary.

- I understand that alcohol, solvents, smoking and drugs are strictly prohibited. Prescribed medication will be administered strictly subject to our school's Administration of Medication policy and only on the written request of my parent/guardian.
- I will wear the school uniform every day. My teacher will tell me what days I must wear my school tracksuit e.g. for gymnastics or PE. I can wear the navy crested school shorts in warm weather.
- I understand that I should not wear jewellery to school and that I may be asked to remove jewellery that might pose a risk to the safety of myself or others.
- I will keep my hair neat and tidy. Long hair will be tied back off my face. Unusual hairstyles are not allowed. Only natural hair colours are permitted
- I will not wear make-up to school.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained in the child's file by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Access to this information will be with the principal's approval.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative Practice

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby;
[www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools%20Ken%20Rigby.pdf)

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice.

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

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - SPHE lessons
 - Stay Safe Programme
 - Walk Tall
 - Fun Friends, Friends for Life
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system

- Support teacher/care team
 - Group work such as circle time
 - Support of the wider school community e.g. SNA's where relevant.
- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. **NEPS may be contacted for advice.**
 - Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

7. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both. All staff work closely together to identify potential areas for bullying on the yards and in school and also support the measures in place to counteract bullying behaviour in general. Buddy systems are put in place where deemed appropriate. In relation to internet usage, all sessions are supervised by teachers.

(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).

8. 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.

9. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29/03/2022.

10. This policy has been made available to school personnel, will be published on the school website (when available), and is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and a copy is provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

11. 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 (when available), 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.

Signed:

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date:

25-10-23

Signed:

Principal

Date:

25/10/23