

## **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 Scoil Cholmcille Drumman 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 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 the 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;
- \* Support 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 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological 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 messages 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.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: The teacher to whom the alleged bullying incident is reported to deals with the incident. That teacher may deem it necessary to involve the principal.

If an incident is reported to a non-teaching member of staff, they should report the incident to the relevant teacher i.e. the class teacher of the pupil involved.

## **Prevention and Awareness**

**5. Prevention and Awareness** raising measures in relation to bullying are covered in the following areas: Alive O Programme, Stay Safe Programme, R.S.E, Walk Tall Programme and Health Education in S.P.H.E and through Roots of Empathy.

In relation to internet and cyber bullying materials are taken from Web wise and other sources such as Prim Ed. We also invite speakers from outside agencies such as Donegal Youth Service & An Garda to give talks in the school.

Circle time is used to address issues that arise and as a forum for discussion in S.P.H.E. lessons.

Restorative Justice is another approach that is used both as a means of addressing potential difficulties and/or responding to information given to teachers.

## **6. Procedures for investigating, follow up and recording of bullying 7**

**behaviour.**

1. The primary aim for the relevant teacher investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and help to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationship(s) between the student(s)/person(s) involved.

2. In investigating all reports of alleged bullying behaviour, the teacher should exercise his/her professional acumen to determine whether or not bullying has occurred, through taking a calm, non-judgemental, approach when dealing with an incident reported by students, other staff members or parents and assessing how a situation might be resolved.
3. All reports of bullying behaviour should be conducted with sensitivity taking into account the rights of those involved. Any investigation should be carried out outside the classroom situation in order to maintain the privacy of those concerned. It is also recognised that students not directly involved could confidentially provide useful information.
4. The relevant teacher should complete the school's Bullying Report form in order to assist with analysing allegations of bullying behaviour.
5. It shall be made clear to all students that reporting allegations of bullying behaviour will be viewed as responsible behaviour.
6. Where a group is involved in bullying behaviour, each student shall be interviewed individually. In order to assist with the investigative process students may be asked to give a written account of the incident(s).
7. Following individual interviews the students involved may be met as a group where each of the students will be asked to repeat their accounts in order to ensure that the group is clear about all of the statements made with regard to alleged incident(s).
8. Where a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them that they are in breach of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and that their Parents/guardians will be informed.
9. Efforts shall be made to try and get the offending student to understand the situation from the point of view of the student being bullied.
10. When it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, parents/guardians of the student involved shall be contacted in order to inform them of the situation and to explain the actions to be taken in accordance with the school's policy.

11. Parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to discuss ways in which they can support and reinforce the actions taken by the school in relation to their child.

12. It shall be made clear to all parties involved in incidents of bullying that require disciplinary sanctions, that this shall be a private matter between the offending student, his/ her parents/guardians and the school authorities.

13. Follow-up meetings may be arranged with a view to supporting the individual students involved in a bullying situation and assessing the appropriateness of bringing the conflicting parties together.

14. Pupils will be asked to complete an Anti Bullying Agreement signed by their parents/ guardian.

In any situation where the relevant teacher ascertains that the bullying behaviour was not adequately or appropriately dealt with, haven taken the following factors into account:

- Whether the bulling behaviour has ceased;
- Whether the issues between the persons involved have been satisfactorily resolved;
- Whether the relationships between the persons involved have been restored as far as it practicable; and
- The feedback received from any of the parties involved with the incident;

The teacher must report his/her complaints to the Principal.

15. Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has not dealt with a case of bulling behaviour in accordance with the procedures they can bring their concerns to (a) School Principal. (b) Board of Management.

7. The school programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows: Through the curriculum (particularly SPHE) we endeavour to equip the children with strategies on how to cope with bullying situations, and also who to report the situation to. Follow up meetings with the children involved will take place to ensure the bullying has ceased. If there is still a

concern over bullying we would seek advice from N.E.Ps. on how to help the child concerned.

**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.** The policy was adopted by the Board of Management on ....2.../....4..../....2014.....

**11.** This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents 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 every school year.

**Signed.....Fr.Stephen Gormon.....(Chairperson of Board of Management).....**

**Date .....16..../...11...../.....2021.....**

**Signed...Rosemary McGee.....(Principal)**

**Date ..16...../...11...../.....2021.....**

**Date of next review .....Next school year 2022/23**