



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 **Cloonliffen NS** 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 (See Appendix 2) 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
 - involves collaboration among and between staff & pupils and promotes respectful relationships across the school community
 - encourages the work of the student council in this area
- 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 ongoing 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:

‘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

- ✓ 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 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* and appears as **Appendix 1** of this document.

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

- The **class teacher(s)** initially
- The **principal thereafter** if necessary

5. The following **education and prevention strategies**, at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by the school:

- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies needed to build **empathy, respect and resilience** in pupils
- Every effort will be made, through curricular and extra-curricular programmes to provide pupils with opportunities to develop **a positive sense of self-worth**
- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on **cyber-bullying** by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online. See also AUP.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and outings and extra - curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to the Relevant Teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student's use of communication technology within the school.
- Staff will go through the Anti-bullying policy before the start of each new school year and any new staff members will be given a copy of the policy to familiarise themselves with.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils **once a term** and they are helped to examine the issues of bullying in a calm, rational way, outside the tense context of particular incidents. In this way they become aware of the nature of bullying and the various forms it can take.
- All parents /guardians are directed to the school's website every year, where they will have access to this Anti- Bullying Policy.
- **Reform, not Blame** is the approach used by the school. When the alleged perpetrator(s) are interviewed, in return for honesty and for honouring a promise not to re-offend, they are offered amnesty and confidentially (unless a legal requirement dictates otherwise or they reoffend). This approach is considered fair by the general body of pupils who support it and cooperate with it. Since pupils observe almost all bullying in schools, and a

good awareness raising programme helps them to recognise it and encourages them to reject it, this Reform not Blame approach then empowers them to report it to teachers who can deal with it.

- The school encourages a **culture of telling**, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It is made clear to all pupils, that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. - The school ensures that pupils know who to tell, how to tell and when to tell. Implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. Friendship/ Anti-bullying Week, posters around the school promoting the schools key values of **Respect, Trust and Empathy**, designated notice board promoting keys to friendship during Stay Safe Lessons on same.
- There are a number of **curriculum components and programmes** which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.
 - **The SPHE curriculum** makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
 - The **Stay Safe** programme taught in all classes in our school each year is a personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children’s self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.
 - Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour e.g. Headbombz, ISPC Blue Flag
 - The work could be extended into many other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education, and Physical Education. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects

6. Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying

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,

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). With this in mind the schools procedures are as follows:

- i. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved
- ii. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). In that way, pupils will gain **confidence in ‘telling’**. This confidence factor is of vital importance. 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
- iii. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher

- iv. 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
- v. It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset
- vi. Teachers should take a **calm, unemotional problem-solving approach** when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents
- vii. Investigations of bullying will be done outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved
- viii. 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
- ix. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) 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
- x. 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
- xi. Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher
- xii. Where the relevant teacher(s) has/have 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
- xiii. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- xiv. In cases where it has been determined by the "Relevant Teacher" that bullying behaviour has occurred, the pupil(s) involved in the bullying behaviour are asked to **give/sign a binding promise that they will treat all pupils fairly, respectfully and equally** including the targeted pupil(s).
- xv. The 'Relevant Teacher' **does not apportion blame** but rather treats bullying behaviour as a "mistake" that **can and must** be remedied. The 'Relevant Teacher' emphasizes that the intention is not to punish the perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how hurtful and harmful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Pupils who report bullying behaviour therefore are not getting others "in trouble" but rather enabling them to learn from their mistake and avoid the trouble into which they may ultimately get if the bullying continued.
- xvi. When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the 'Relevant Teacher' will **complete a written record** of the reported bullying behaviour, the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.
- xvii. If a pupil has given/signed such a promise but then chooses to break that promise and continue the bullying behaviour, this can no longer be considered a "mistake." In this event, **parents of both parties involved will be informed and requested to countersign their son/daughter's promise**. Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a very grave matter and will, be reported to the Board of Management of the school. A disciplinary sanction may then be imposed by the school authorities. (See sanctions below)

- xviii. In any situation where such sanctions are imposed, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

Sanctions

Where a pupil has been found to be engaging in bullying behaviour, has formally promised to stop and has broken that promise, any of the following sanctions may be imposed:

- She/he may be required to sign another promise, this time countersigned by a parent/guardian.
- Parents/guardians may be contacted by the 'Relevant Teacher' and informed of the nature and extent of the bullying behaviour with a view to agreeing a strategy whereby a strategy to end the bullying behaviour would be honoured.
- Parents/guardians may be invited to a meeting with the 'Relevant teacher' and the Principal and the pupil may be suspended from school.
- The case may be referred to the Board of Management and the pupil may be expelled from the school.

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Relevant Teacher will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- (a) Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- (b) Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- (c) Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
- (d) Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. Procedures for recording bullying behaviour

The Board of Management will ensure that the school follows the following clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour as recommended in Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. All records will be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. 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 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.

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 with will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

* The school in consultation with the Relevant Teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the Relevant Teacher.

Formal-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The Relevant Teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 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 must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal. There should be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the Relevant Teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. These records will be kept in the Relevant Teacher's locked filing cabinet for the year. At the end of the year they will be handed to the Principal. Principal's copy will be maintained in a file in the office.

Supports for Pupil's Affected by bullying

The school's programme of support for pupils who have been bullied and for those who have been involved in bullying is as follows: -

- Ending the bullying behaviour by seeking a resolution and offering a fresh start with a "clean sheet" and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the 'awareness raising' programme
- Teacher support, monitoring, encouragement, positive feedback and affirmation to help enhance pupils feelings of self-worth.
- Teacher pupil conferencing. - Learning strategies such as Circle Time, Buddy work and group work to facilitate enhancement of the pupil's self-worth.
- Pupils involved in bullying may also need counselling support. The support of NEPS will be requested when/if necessary.

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.

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.

Communication of Policy Document

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website 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.

Review of Policy

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 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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **9-6-2022**

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 9-6-2022

Date: 9-6-2022

Date of next review: **June 2023**

APPENDIX 1: Types of bullying

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

Physical aggression: This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain

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. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

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. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: 'Do this or I won't be your friend anymore'(implied or stated), a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy), non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours about a person or giving them the 'silent treatment'.

Cyber-bullying: This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, email, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face-to face-contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Name calling: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) that hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g. size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers are also targeted

Damage to property: Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. 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. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden

Extortion: Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

General behaviours which apply to all

- ⊗ Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation. These nine grounds are: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community.
- ⊗ Physical aggression
- ⊗ Damage to property
- ⊗ Name calling
- ⊗ Slagging
- ⊗ The production, display or circulation of written words, picture or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- ⊗ Offensive graffiti
- ⊗ Extortion
- ⊗ Intimidation
- ⊗ Insulting or offensive gestures
- ⊗ The “look”
- ⊗ Invasion of personal space
- ⊗ A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber bullying – the use of ICT usually a mobile phone and/or internet to abuse another person:

- ⊗ **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, 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 on-line 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. Use of ‘checking in’ and ‘tagging’ on Facebook to convey exclusion.
- ⊗ **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/Ask.fm/Twitter/You Tube 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

- ⊗ 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

- ⊗ Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religion beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
- ⊗ Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

Relational

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviour include:

- ⊗ Malicious gossip
- ⊗ Isolation & exclusion
- ⊗ Ignoring
- ⊗ Excluding from the group
- ⊗ Taking someone's friends away
- ⊗ "Bitching" – Bad mouthing others
- ⊗ Spreading rumours
- ⊗ Breaking confidence
- ⊗ Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- ⊗ The "look"

Sexual

- ⊗ Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- ⊗ Harassment

Special Educational Needs, Disability

- ⊗ 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

APPENDIX 2: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use
- Follow-up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying 'hot spots' and 'hot times' for bullying in the school
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision
 - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils

Appendix 3: Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class: _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report -tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents -tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour - tick relevant box(es)

Physical aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip	
Name calling			
Other (specify)			

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____
(Relevant Teacher 1)

Date _____

Signed _____
(Relevant Teacher 1)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____