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Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. 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 Cloughjordan No.1 N.S. 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* and in *Appendix A* of this policy.

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

- Each class teacher will deal with any incident of bullying that arises within his/her class and will inform the principal. The principal/a teaching colleague may assist the class teacher in dealing with any incident of bullying that arises.
- If the bullying occurs in the playground, the teacher on duty in the playground will deal with the incident and inform the class teacher and the principal at the earliest opportunity. The principal/a teaching colleague may assist the teacher on duty in the playground to deal with the incident.
- Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

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*):

- ✓ Promote an atmosphere of happiness, friendship, openness, mutual respect and tolerance;
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ Notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention – Catch them being good;
- ✓ Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are ignored;
- ✓ Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language;
- ✓ Foster positive self-esteem among pupils by celebrating individual differences/ achievements;
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ Help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and emotions, by trying to put themselves in the place of others and by giving them a forum for expression in an open and democratic environment;
- ✓ Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In this way pupils will gain confidence in “telling”. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

- ✓ Use of the S.P.H.E. curriculum, including the Walk Tall, Stay Safe and R.S.E. programmes, throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy;
- ✓ The school will implement the advice in “Sexual Orientation – Advice For Primary Schools” in *Appendix B* of this policy.
- ✓ Positively encourage pupils to comply with school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules;
- ✓ Cyber bullying requires access to technology. Pupils are supervised at all times when using technology in school;
- ✓ Use of resources on www.antibullyingcampaign.ie
- ✓ Use of resources on www.webwise.ie
- ✓ Members of staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/being bullied, with particular regard to pupils with SEN. Teachers will respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying. All disclosed incidents of bullying will be investigated.
- ✓ Members of the Board of Management are familiar with the school’s anti-bullying policy and promote its implementation among all stake holders in the school community, by example and by annually reviewing the policy;
- ✓ Parents contribute to and support the school’s anti-bullying policy. The NEWB publication “*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*” recognises the role of all adults, including parents, in modelling good behaviour and states “*The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school’s standards of behaviour, in their dealings with pupils and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for pupils. Parents should be expected to model the standards that pupils are asked to respect. In order to do this, they need to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting pupils to behave according to these standards. The ways in which parents and teachers interact will provide pupils with a model of good working relationships*”. Parents can support the school’s anti-bullying policy by modelling and encouraging positive behaviour at all times, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others and by communicating concerns to the school at the earliest opportunity;
- ✓ Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.

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*):

The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);

Reporting Bullying behaviour:

- ✓ Any pupil(s) or parent(s) may bring a bullying incident to the attention of 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), 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:

- ✓ When investigating bullying we use aspects of best practice from evidence based interventions. (Pg. 29 of the *Anti Bullying Procedures*)
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ All reports of bullying will be investigated by the relevant teacher. It will be made clear to all pupils when they report incidents of bullying that they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving very responsibly;

- ✓ 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;
- ✓ Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
- ✓ Incidents are generally best 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 pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way;
- ✓ When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will 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. Afterwards, 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 accounts. It may be necessary to speak with members of the group individually following a group meeting;
- ✓ Each member of the group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;
- ✓ Those involved may/will be asked to write down their account of the incident(s);
- ✓ If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will 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;
- ✓ In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will invite parents to discuss ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;
- ✓ Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil(s) being bullied;
- ✓ It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, in accordance with the school's *Code of Behaviour*, that this is a private matter between the pupil(s) being disciplined, his/her/their parents and the school;

Follow up and recording

- ✓ In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, as part of hi/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; and
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the other school staff;
- ✓ Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may/will be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect;
- ✓ Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s) should refer to the school's complaints procedures as part of the school's *Home-School Communication Policy*.
- ✓ In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the parents have the 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 must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Written records will be stored securely by each teacher in his/her classroom. 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.
- ✓ Written records stored securely by staff must be given to the principal before the end of the school year for secure storage by him in his filing cabinets.

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. Written records will be stored securely by each teacher in his/her classroom. Written records stored securely by teachers in their classrooms must be given to the principal before the end of the school year for secure storage by him in his filing cabinets.
- ✓

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

- ✓ In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed **within 20 school days** after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at *Appendix 3* (See Section 6.8.10(iii) of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures For Primary and Post-Primary School*);
- ✓ In certain circumstances bullying behaviour will be immediately recorded by the relevant teacher using the recording template at *Appendix 3* (See Section 6.8.10(iii) of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures For Primary and Post-Primary School*) and immediately reported to the principal;

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Written records will be stored securely by each teacher in his/her classroom. Written records stored securely by teachers in their classrooms must be given to the principal before the end of the school year for secure storage by him in his filing cabinets.

Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour;

Bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. The school may refer cases to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate, in accordance with this policy and with the school's *Code of Behaviour*. In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil and/or where the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive the school may seek the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) and advice will also be sought from the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan.

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*):

All staff dealing with a bullying incident will, as well as reasoning with the pupil(s) perpetrating the negative behaviour, also offer support and comfort to the victim. All pupils who have been bullied and/or engaged in bullying behaviour will be supported in the first instance by the class teacher. The class teacher will discuss the incidents with the pupils; reassure them that they were right to bring the events to the attention of the staff, that they were behaving very responsibly and that their actions will help others. They will be reminded that they should tell again if they have any new concerns.

Pupils who have been bullied may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience

whenever this is needed. The school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying behaviour or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need ongoing assistance. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities for increasing their feelings of self worth will be beneficial. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Pupils 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.

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 *10th March, 2014*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *10th March, 2015*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *18th January, 2016*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *13th March, 2017*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *5th March, 2018*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *4th March, 2019*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *9th March 2020*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *17th May 2021*.

It was reviewed by the Board of Management at its meeting on *9th March 2022*.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parent Teacher 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, will be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parent Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Terence Mitchell
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Ivor Hayes
(Principal)

Date: 9th March 2022

Date: 9th March 2022

Date of next review: March 2023

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Types of Bullying

Appendix B: Sexual Orientation – Advice for Primary Schools

Appendix 3: **Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour** in cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed **within 20 school days** after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred;
Page 44 of Ant-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools

Appendix 4: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation
Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy