

Coláiste Mhuire



# **Anti-Bullying Policy 2023-2024**

## **Rationale**

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 Colaiste Mhuire 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.

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 behavior in a non-threatening environment;
  - 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;
  - 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);
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

The school reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, if it is in the opinion of the Principal and/or Board of Management that the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at the school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

## Definition

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
- 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 will 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*.

**The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in Colaiste Mhuire are as follows:**

Principal

Deputy Principal

Coordinator of Behaviour

Guidance Counsellor

**The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying, e.g. homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:**

1. Publishing an Anti-Bullying Code
2. Supervision and Monitoring
3. Inclusion in the Curriculum, e.g. SPHE, CSPE, RSE
4. Involving Parents, Guardians and the wider community – Parent Talks
5. Friendship Week
6. Stand Up Week
7. Class Teacher system
8. Student Support Team
9. Buddy system
10. Buddy Box
11. Student seminar at beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year
12. Use of resources, e.g. “Be Safe, Be Webwise”, CSPE pack on Interculturalism, etc
13. Continued Professional Development for teacher

**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:**

- ✓ Preliminary investigation by teacher informed to establish facts
- ✓ Teacher to report to ‘Relevant Teacher’ (Principal / Deputy Principal/Coordinator of Behaviour)
- ✓ All pupils involved to be interviewed individually by relevant teacher
- ✓ Restorative Practice to be the preferred intervention – pupils involved to be brought together in an attempt to find a solution
- ✓ If it is confirmed that bullying has occurred, the response to a first offence will be a verbal warning (parents to be informed immediately), the second offence will incur a written warning and the third / subsequent offence will result in suspension.
- ✓ Staff to be informed as required
- ✓ Counselling for all involved
- ✓ Follow up includes monitoring behaviour of all involved for 20 school days after the incident
- ✓ If the reporting teacher feels the incident has not been adequately addressed, he/she fills out Form A3 (as per Department Guidelines).
- ✓ The school will continue to liaise with the parents of those involved
- ✓ Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt effectively with the case, he/she is referred to the school’s complaints procedures.
- ✓ If a parent has exhausted the school’s complaints procedures and is still dissatisfied, the school will advise them of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children

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

- ✓ Counselling for all involved
- ✓ Notification of all staff to be vigilant
- ✓ Support through the Student Support Team and Class Teacher system
- ✓ Support from NEPS where necessary
- ✓ Monitoring of the situation for 20 school days after the incident
- ✓ Continuous liaison with parents / guardians of those involved

**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 behavior 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.

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department if requested.

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 Department.

Signed:

*Alan Edwards*

Chairperson

Date: 11/9/23

*Donal O'Sullivan*

Principal

Date of Next Review: September 24





## Form A3 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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### 6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \*

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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### 9. Details of actions taken

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	✓
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	✓
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	✓
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	✓
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	✓
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	✓
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	✓
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	✓
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	✓
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	✓
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	✓
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	✓
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	No

Signed : *Alan Edwards*

Date 11/9/23

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed : *Donal O'Sullivan*

Date 11/9/23

Principal





## Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: Parents

The Board of Management of Coláiste Pobail Naomh Mhuire, Buttevant wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed : *Alan Edwards*  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date : 11/9/23

Signed: *Donal O'Sullivan*  
Principal

Date: 11/9/23