

Anti-Bullying Policy of

St. Conleth’s National School

# AR AGHAIDH LE CHÉILE



ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

St. Conleth’s National School

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**Anti Bullying Policy.**

**St. Conleth’s National School, Derrinturn.**

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. Conleth’s National School 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.

1. 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:
   1. 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;
   2. Effective leadership;
   3. A school-wide approach;
   4. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
   5. 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.
   6. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
   7. Supports for staff;
   8. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour

(including use of established intervention strategies); and

* 1. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

1. 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*.

1. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are all the members of the teaching staff. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.
2. 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:-

Through a programme of positive action the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance, particularly during Friendship Week. Respect for all members of the school community is fostered.

Whole staff professional development on bullying is organised to ensure that all teachers develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils’ lives and the need to respond to it (prevention and intervention).

Awareness-raising and training, including sessions for pupils, parents and the wider school community is organised from time to time.

The SPHE curriculum, including Walk Tall and Stay Safe Programme and RSE is used throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy.

The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils. A wholeschool awareness Assembly is presented to students at the beginning of each year, with termly reminders during assembly presentations.

Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others, for example during Circle Time activities and drama.

Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences and achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.

Internet safety is encouraged throughout the school supported by the school AUP Policy and the Web Wise Programme published by the NCTE.

All parents receive a copy of the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour upon enrolment and copies are made available upon request. The school website displays both.

The playground, classrooms and corridors are supervised at break time and when children are going to and from yard and going home. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to the relevant teachers.

Our Buddies System and Playground Pals Programme (during Friendship Week) support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.

Particular consideration is given to the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

A culture of ‘telling’ is promoted, 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 acting responsibly.

Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.

The staff is particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying or being bullied.

1. 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:

*Investigation:*

* + Upon report or witnessing bullying behaviour, the relevant class teacher initially will investigate the behaviour/complaint.
  + Parents who have a concern regarding bullying behaviour will be referred directly to the class teacher as per complaints procedure.
  + Non-teaching staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying to the relevant class teacher.
  + In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should first be raised with the staff member in question and if necessary, the principal.
  + 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.
  + In investigation and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgment to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
  + Teachers will take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach. All incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying behaviour. In any incident of bullying, two staff members will speak to each pupil involved separately, in a room away from the view of other children in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
  + When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
  + Children may also be asked to write down their account of the incident.
  + If a group is involved, each member of the group will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, they should be met as a group and each member will be asked for his or her account so that everyone in the group is clear about each other’s statements.
  + Each member of the group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview with the teacher.
  + In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/guardians of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter. They will be given an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
  + Where it has been determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy. Efforts will be made to get him/her to see the situation from the point of view of the pupil being bullied.
  + It will be made very clear to all involved that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents/guardians and the school.
  + The staff will closely monitor the children who are at risk of being bullied or bullying.
  + Parents and pupils are required to cooperate with any investigation and assist the school in involving and restoring as far as practicable the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
  + Serious cases of bullying will be referred immediately to the Principal or, in her absence, the Deputy Principal.

*Follow-Up:*

* + In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must take the following factors into account:
    1. Has the bullying behaviour ceased?
    2. Have the issues between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable?
    3. Have the relationships between the parties been restored as far as is practicable?
    4. Has any feedback been received from the parties involved, parents/guardians or the school Principal?

* + Follow-up meetings with the parties involved will be arranged when the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
  + Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent/guardian must be referred to the schools complaints procedures.
  + In the event that a parent/guardian has exhausted the school’s complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the

parent/guardian of the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children

*Recording of Bullying Behaviour.*

* + All procedures of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in reporting. This confidence factor is of vital importance.
  + Incidents witnessed or reported to teachers will be recorded on the incident report sheet (Appendix 4) along with the actions taken.
  + The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template (Appendix 3) 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, or in serious cases of bullying. A copy must be provided to the principal or deputy principal.

* + The principal will provide a regular report to the Board of Management setting out the following
    1. the overall number of bullying cases reported by means of the bullying recording template, to the Principal or Deputy Principal since the previous board meeting.
    2. confirmation that all these cases have been, or are being dealt with in accordance with the school’s anti-bullying policy.

*Intervention Strategies*

* + The Traditional Disciplinary Approach (Rigby’s ten recommendations to support this approach)

* 1. It is made as clear as possible to the staff and to the pupils what bullying is, the forms it takes and especially the harm it does.

* 1. Classroom discussions are carried out with pupils on the issue of bullying and especially, on the kinds of rules that ought to govern relations between pupils in the school. Classes compile a list of reasonable guidelines for pupil behaviour.

* 1. As far as possible acceptance is gained from the pupils that some ‘consequences’ are justified in cases of bullying. When more pupils are involved in the formulation and development of an anti-bullying policy, acceptance will be more widespread.

* 1. Intervention takes place *as soon as possible* after an act of bullying has been identified so that the memory of the nature of the offence is present in the

mind of the pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour.

* 1. Where possible, sanctions are applied that are appropriate to the behaviour; for example, sanctions requiring recompense and restorative action to be undertaken rather than largely unrelated impositions such as writing ‘lines’.

* 1. Positive reinforcements are applied whenever the pupil acts constructively or helpfully towards another pupil, thus setting up habits that are incompatible with bullying.

* 1. Staff engage in ‘serious’ talks with the pupil to be punished (and if appropriate the parents too), giving the reasons for the actions being taken by the school.

* 1. A practice of rigorous surveillance of pupils’ interpersonal behaviour in the classroom and playground is maintained. Punishment is more likely to work if behaviour is being carefully monitored.

* 1. All efforts are made to ensure that the authority of the school and teachers is justified and respected. This is particularly important among older pupils who are generally more distrustful of institutional authority than younger pupils.

* 1. It is recognised that any action taken by teachers at the school that is widely seen as unfair or arbitrary will increase the distrust and disrespect felt by pupils, and result in disciplinary action taken in cases of bullying being less than effective.

1. The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

The following suggestions will be implemented at an age-appropriate level:

* + Buddy system to support the pupil(s) involved in developing friendships.
  + Classroom lessons dealing with raising self-esteem, for example Circle time.
  + Providing a block of time with the learning support teacher for social and emotional development with parental permission.
  + Revise school rules with all children at Assembly.
  + Encourage friendships and positive relationships through Friendship Week.
  + Host an information evening for parents and children on cyber safety and cyber bullying.
  + Seek advice and support from outside agencies such as NEPS and CAMHS.
  + Refer to Behaviour Support Guidelines published by NEPS.
  + Encourage participation in outside clubs and sports etc. to build confidence and friendship.

1. **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.

1. This policy was first adopted by the Board of Management on February 26th 2015 and has been reviewed and updated annually.

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

Website, [www.stconlethsns.weebly.com](http://www.stconlethsns.weebly.com/) and provided to the Parents’ Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

1. 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.

Signed: *Pat Carty* Signed: *Finnuala Kirk* (Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: 23rd May 2022. Date: 23rd May 2022.

Date of next review: Final Term (May – June )2023.

**Appendix 1 – EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying. | Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation. (Gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief or membership of the travelling community.)  Physical aggression  Damage to property  Name calling Slagging  The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person  Offensive graffiti  Extortion  Intimidation  Insulting or offensive gestures  Invasion of personal space |
| Cyber | **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 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  **Cyber Stalking:** Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety  Silent telephone/mobile calls  Abusive telephone/mobile calls  Abusive text messages  Abusive e-mails  Abusive communication on social media networks  Abusive website blogs, comments or pictures  Abusive posts on any form of communication technology |
| Identity Based Behaviours | Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in the equality legislation |
| Homophobic and Transgender | Spreading rumours  Taunting or teasing a person  Physical intimidation or attacks  Threats |
| Race, Nationality, Ethnic  Background & Membership | Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background |
| of the Travelling Commnity | Exclusion based on any of these |
| Relational | This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:-  Malicious gossip  Isolation & exclusion  Ignoring  Excluding fro the group  Taking someone’s friends away  Spreading rumours  Breaking confidence  Talking loud enough for the victim to hear and be offended |
| Sexual | Unwelcome or inappropriate comments or touching Harassment |
| Special Educational Needs & Disability | Name calling  Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs  Taking advantage of someone’s vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying  Taking advantage of someone’s vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues  Mimicking  Setting others up for ridicule |

**Appendix 2 – HOW TO TELL**

Pupils need to know how to tell. These are some of the possible approaches to telling.

* Direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.

* Hand a note up with homework.

* Make a phone call to the school.

* Put a note in the ‘Worry Box’ or ‘Problem Box’.

* Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.

* Speak without naming individuals at Circle Time.

* Speak out as a bystander.

* Speak to the teacher on duty at break-time.

* Knock on the Principal’s door and explain the situation.

**Appendix 3 – RECORD OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

## 1. Details of pupil being bullied

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Class** |

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Class** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

## 3. Source of bullying concern/report 4. Location of incidents

(tick relevant box(es)) (tick relevant box(es))

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pupil concerned |  | Playground |  |
| Other pupil |  | Classroom |  |
| Parent |  | Corridor |  |
| Teacher |  | Toilets |  |
| Staff member |  | School Bus |  |
| Other |  | Other |  |

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

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 6. Type of bullying behaviour(s) tick relevant box(es)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical Aggression |  | Cyber Bullying |  |
| Damage to Property |  | Intimidation |  |
| Isolation /Exclusion |  | Malicious Gossip |  |
| Name Calling |  | Other (please specify) |  |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Homophobic | Disability/ SEN related | Racist | Membership of the Traveller Community | Other (Specify) |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact.**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 9. Details of actions taken

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant teacher) Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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

## Appendix 4 – INCIDENT REPORT SHEET

**Name of person completing this form Date:**

## Incident

|  |
| --- |
| **Date and time of incident:** |
| **Name/s of person/s involved in the incident:** |
| **Brief description of the incident:** |
| **Witnesses:** |

**Actions taken:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Actions taken:** (including filing this record, reporting to Principal/Deputy Principal, speaking to parties involved, resolving issue) |
| **Conclusion reached:** (Is this an Bullying incident or not? Has it been resolved already?) |

## Date Signed

## Appendix 5 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 *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? |  |
| 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? |  |
| Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school’s handling of a bullying situation? |  |
| Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school’s handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? |  |
| 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? |  |
| Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement? |  |

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Principal

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

To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 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 of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [date].

* 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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Principal