

Anti-Bullying Policy

Gaelcholáiste Mhic Shuibhne

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 Terence MacSwiney Community College / Gaelcholáiste Mhic Shuibhne 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 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
- 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.

<p>EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS</p> <p>GENERAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • 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 • Graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>CYBER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, 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 • Cyberstalking: 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 eg Facebook/Askfm/ Twitter/Youtube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSGENDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
RACIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
RELATIONAL	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look”
SEXUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome sexual comments or touching • Harassment

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

6.8.2 A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

6.8.3 In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher". At primary level, the relevant teacher will normally be the class teacher. At post-primary level, the school will determine, having regard to its own circumstances, which members of teaching staff have this responsibility

6.8.4 The school's anti-bullying policy must clearly indicate the relevant teachers in its school. It is not necessary to specify the relevant teacher(s) by name in the policy so long as it is made sufficiently clear to all which teachers in the school have this responsibility.

The Relevant Teachers in this school are:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Class Teachers
- Teachers
- Care team personnel

However, any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances are appropriate.

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):

The education and prevention strategies that may be used by the school are as follows:

- Full implementation of the SPHE, RSE, and CSPE programmes and curricula to ensure that school culture supports a safe social and personal environment. Training for staff (CPD) in delivering these programmes.
- School wide training on bullying (to include all school personnel, students and parents and wider community)
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying (e.g Cool School Lessons, Stay Safe Programme)
- School wide delivery of lessons on **relational aggression** (e.g. A friend in Deed), **Cyber Bullying** (e.g. Be Safe-Be Webwise, Think Before you Click, Let’s Fight it Together), **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (e.g. Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme) **Diversity and interculturalism** (e.g. Spotlight on Stereotyping) (Changing Perspectives)
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at Post- primary level. These lessons, delivered by community Gardaí cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- Training for SPHE teachers on: resolving bullying; internet safety and cyber bullying; sexual orientation and homophobia
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures. For example: annual Friendship Week and parent seminars; annual or term or monthly student surveys; regular school or year group assemblies by Principal, Deputy, Year Heads.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in common areas of the school and in classrooms
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Encouragement of the Student Council (Student Voice in TMS/GMS) to become involved in contributing to a safe school environment. Buddy, mentor and other student support activities can help to support 1st year students transition confidently, and encourage a culture of peer support. Check & Connect in TMS/GMS
- Jigsaw’s One Good School

- Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Anti-bully box?
 - Get a parent or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - How can parents tell? – All members of staff are accessible to parents
 - How can bystanders tell? – Contact the Principal / Deputy Principal
- Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all students

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):

Procedures for investigating and following up bullying behaviour		
1. Initial report/disclosure of bullying behaviour		
Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include
Subject teacher or any teacher. Class Teacher / Year Head Member of the Care Committee If the teacher feels that they can resolve the situation. Always consult with an appropriate colleague or management	Challenge the behaviour as being unacceptable. Speak to both (all) students separately and try to resolve the issue using an established intervention technique e.g. Restorative Approach) Keep a record (informal) Copy to Class Teacher Teacher will follow up progress with: victim and bully, bystanders or others involved. If the incident has not been resolved within 20 days the relevant teacher must record the behaviour on the incident template below	Serious talk with student(s) re effects of their behaviour. Verbal warning. Student/s involved warned to stop. Seek verbal agreement re future behaviour. Outline a fair outcome <i>if appropriate:</i> e.g. an apology, return of property etc.

Subsequent report /disclosure e.g. second incident by the same student

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or sanction <i>may</i> include:
<p>Relevant teacher Teacher, Year Head involved Junior / Senior Cycle Co-ordinator. Member of the Care Committee may be involved.</p>	<p>Incident investigated by the Year Head using for example, Cool School Restorative Approach. Principal/ Deputy principal informed. Parents/ Guardians informed by the Year Head Keep a record. Year Head follows up progress with victim and bully, bystanders or others involved.</p>	<p>Serious talk with the student re: behaviour and future behaviour. Sign written agreement re future behaviour. Parents/Guardians sign written agreement re future behaviour. Speak with school counsellor. Detention /other agreed sanction from school's Code of Behaviour Monitor future behaviour.</p>

Where bullying behaviour persists / serious incident of bullying

Action taken by	Procedure	Support and/or Sanction
<p>Relevant teacher Principal or Deputy Principal involved Junior / Senior Cycle Co-ordinator Year head Care Committee may be involved. The incident may be referred</p>	<p>Parents and student meet with Principal / Deputy Principal. Use established intervention strategies Feedback to Year Head. Record kept. Follow up progress with</p>	<p>Detention / Suspension / other agreed sanction from school's Code of Behaviour. Parents are met and conditions set regarding student's future behaviour. Counselling offered</p>

<p>to the Board of Management at the discretion of the Principal.</p>	<p>victim and bully, bystanders or others involved and continue to monitor the situation.</p>	<p>Referral to child psychologist/ Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer.</p> <p>Contact with other support agencies e.g. re anger management</p> <p>The future of the student in the school may be considered.</p>
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Recording of bullying behaviour

6.8.10 The Board of Management must ensure that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these must be documented in the school's anti-bullying policy. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour must adhere to the following:

- (i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) 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.

Incident Record

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 _____

*** Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all students
- Negotiating agreements between students and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parents to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby;

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

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) :

- Pastoral system
- Use of teacher/Year Head structures
- Care team / Student Support Team (TMS/GMS)
- Individual counselling for students where appropriate
- Group work such as circle time where appropriate

A programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will ensure that they receive 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.

A programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour will also be part of the school's intervention process. Pupils involved in bullying behaviour will receive assistance on an on-going basis where necessary. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Learning strategies applied within the school will allow for the enhancement of all pupil's self-worth. 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 who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

Internal Supports available to Schools in Countering Bullying

Team /Personnel Structures	Policy Documents	Material Resources
<p>Board of Management, Principal and staff. SDPI Task Groups. HSCL Officer. School Completion Co-ordinators. National Behaviour Support Service Special Needs Assistants</p>	<p>Whole School Plan. Code of Discipline. Acceptable use Policy. Child Protection Policy. Attendance Policy. Admissions Policy. Induction for new students / staff. Health and Safety Policy. Dignity in the Workplace. Critical Incident Policy.</p>	<p>School Development Planning: Guidelines for Post –Primary Schools (1993). Looking at Our School - A Guide to Self-Evaluation in Second-Level Schools.</p>
<p>SPHE Co-ordinators and teachers.</p>	<p>SPHE Policy. Anti-Bullying Policy.</p>	<p>Template for developing an Anti-Bullying Policy (DES 2006). SPHE Curriculum / Syllabus SPHE School Handbook On My Own Two Feet Healthy Living Healthy Times Healthy Choices Relationships and Sexuality Education Resource Materials (Junior and Senior Cycle) Pastoral Care Junior Cycle Workbook Substance Abuse Prevention Programme SPHE Resources in Education Centres Cool School Programme</p>
<p>Pastoral Care Personnel Guidance and Counselling Programme Chaplain / RE Team Year Heads / Teachers</p>	<p>Pastoral Care Policy Guidance and Counselling Plan</p>	<p>Guidance and Counselling Programme RE Syllabus / Curriculum</p>
<p>CSPE Team</p>	<p>CSPE Policy</p>	<p>CSPE Starter Pack - syllabus and guidelines</p>
<p>Student Council Buddy / Mentor System Parents' Council</p>	<p>Anti-Bullying Policy</p>	<p>Cool School Lessons, booklets and support for Friendship week. Cool School Programme Seminar for Parents.</p>
<p>LCA / JCSP Co-ordinators</p>		<p>Level Playing Field LCA Programme Materials JCSP Pack</p>

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.

PROMPT QUESTIONS

- What supervision is needed for the control of school activities on a rota basis?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified in collaboration with students?
- How will teaching staff be involved?
- How will non-teaching staff be involved?
- How will the student support/care structures (including Year Heads, Class Teachers, SPHE, Guidance, RE, CSPE, HSCL, Learning Support teachers) support measures to counter bullying behaviour?
- How will students, in particular, senior students be involved as a resource to assist in countering bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the student council, school clubs and societies be involved?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
 - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
 - Does the school regularly monitor students' Internet usage?
 - Have students been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under supervision by, or permission from, a teacher?
 - Have students been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which has been provided for educational purposes).

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.

Student Pledge

- Geallaim gan bhulaíocht a dhéanamh ar éinne, go mbeadh meas agam ar dhaoine eile agus geallaim gan ainmeacha a chur ar éinne nó cúlchaint mhailíseach a scaipeadh faoi aon duine.
- Geallaim go mbeadh mé deas le gach duine, geallaim gach uile duine a chaitheamh le meas agus mo dhícheall a dhéanamh chun a bheith deas le cách i gcónaí.
- Geallaim chun daoine eile a chaitheamh le cineáltas agus mo dhícheall a dhéanamh an scoil a dhéanamh níos sábháilte do gach duine.
- Geallaim chun níos fearr a dhéanamh, gan aon duine a ghortú. Geallaim chomh maith go mbeidh mé cinéalta le cách agus mo dhícheall a dhéanamh i gcónaí.
- Geallaim go mbeidh mé cinéalta, geallaim má fheicim aon rud, táim chun labhairt amach agus stop a chur air, geallaim le labhairt amach agus seas suas do chách.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **04.11.2021**

11. This policy has been made available to the whole school community: Copy in the school office, published on the school websites, and emailed to staff. 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, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: Phil O'Flynn

Principal

Date: 08.12.2022

Signed: Catherine Clancy

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 08.12.2022

Date of next review: **December, 2023**