

**Scoil Chormaic**  
**COMMUNITY NATIONAL SCHOOL**  
**SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA POBAIL**



Castlemill, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin  
*Muileann an Chaisleáin, Baile Brigín, Co. BÁC*

# Anti-Bullying Policy

2021

## Introduction

This policy was formulated in consultation with

- Teachers
- SNAs
- Ancillary staff
- Pupils through Stay Safe lessons
- Parents via Parents Association
- Board of Management

## Introduction

At Scoil Chormaic CNS, we believe that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation. The school regards bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the self-esteem and self-confidence of targeted pupil(s). Therefore, it does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Every report of bullying is treated seriously and investigated in order to prioritise the well-being of the children involved.

The immediate priority, should a bullying incident occur, is ending the bullying, resolving the issues and restoring the relationships involved insofar as is practicable.

Pupils' participation in school life in general is encouraged through existing school structures. Awareness of bullying, and willingness to take action to prevent or stop it, is part of this participation.

This policy was drafted by the In-School Management team, in consultation with the teaching staff of Scoil Chormaic CNS. The draft policy was disseminated to parents and feedback was sought. The policy was then ratified by the school's Board of Management. This policy is intended to inform the whole school community about Scoil Chormaic CNS's Anti-Bullying procedures.

## Rationale

It necessary to devise/revise the anti-bullying policy at this time for the following:

- It is a recommendation from the Department of Education and Skills following the publication of *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (DES September 2013)
- It is a priority area identified by the school.
- To ensure the health and safety of the whole school community
- To have preventative strategies in place
- To have responding strategies in place in the school to deal with incidences of bullying

## Relationship to the Characteristic ethos of the School

Please refer to the Community National School vision, mission and ethos statements in Appendix I.

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 Scoil Chormaic Community 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.
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;
    - 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.

## Definition of Bullying

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 conduct, 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, transgender 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*.

## **Education and Prevention Strategies**

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:

Social and Personal Health Education (S.P.H.E.) curriculum including:

- Stay Safe programme
- Relationships and Sexuality programme
- Goodness Me! Goodness You! Programme
- Webwise
- Making the Links

(see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

### **Scoil Chormaic fosters a positive school ethos among pupils, staff and parents**

There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying:

- *Through a programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.*
- *The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy.*
- *Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success through assemblies and classroom acknowledgement reports to home*
- *Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others*
- *Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying*
  
- *The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.*
- *Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.*
- *All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.*
- *Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.*

*Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.*

### **Scoil Chormaic CNS's School-wide Approach:**

- We model respectful behaviour to all at all times.
- We explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- We notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- We consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school.
- We give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- We have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote positive desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- We highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- We aim to have a Human Rights Month to raise awareness of children's rights and responsibilities. The children will be educated through GMGY about the 9 Grounds of Discrimination throughout their eight years in Scoil Chormaic CNS i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. (See Equality Policy)
- We promote the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- We foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Staff are reminded to ensure they are knowledgeable about the school's Anti-Bullying policy to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it with both prevention and intervention strategies.
- During the year, some events for parents/guardians will be planned with the intention of spreading awareness about bullying.
- We supervise and monitor classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy.
- An Anti-Bullying code for the school is displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school. This will be discussed regularly at assembly.
- We encourage 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 will 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. This will be explored at school assemblies, during discrete SPHE lessons and incidentally throughout the school year.
- Staff will ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  1. Direct approach to a teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  2. Hand note up with homework.

3. Suggestion (anti-bullying) box / “Worries Box”
  4. Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Parents can approach any member of the teaching staff but are encouraged to go directly to their child’s class teacher. Parents who suspect their child is partaking in bullying behaviour are also encouraged to engage with their child’s class teacher and to work collaboratively with them to resolve the situation.
  - The Acceptable Use Policy in the school includes the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils’ use of mobile phones.
  - The school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour is available online on the school’s website and in the school office for all parents/guardians to view. The Anti-Bullying Policy & Code of Behaviour will be discussed throughout the year with the pupils, in class and at assemblies.

## **Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying**

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

- Deirdre Corcoran - School Principal

(see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

The teacher who observes bullying behaviour or to whom the bullying behaviour is reported to will make the initial recording. When three such recordings or one serious recording is noted about one pupil the class teacher will report the incidents to the school principal.

*Teachers / staff are advised to take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying. (Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 1993)*

All reports of bullying i.e. repeated incidences, no matter how trivial, should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. (Be it the same child doing the bullying and/or being bullied)

- Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour
- Scoil Chormaic Community National School accepts and adapts the procedures outlined in *Anti-Bullying Procedures for primary and post Primary Schools* (DES September 2013) 6.8.10 (i) to (iii)

Behaviour slips have been developed for the recording of incidents (see appendix)

The school principal will maintain records of all instances of bullying.

It has been agreed at staff level that at the investigation stage the relevant behavioural slips will be clipped to the investigation sheet and kept in the child’s file and Principal’s office. All documentation at the investigation stage will have the pupil’s roll number on it.

## **Who is Responsible for Implementation of this Policy?**

- All staff members, school pupils, parents and the whole school community have a part to play in the prevention of bullying in our school.
- Any pupil or parent/guardian may report a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.

**Please be aware that one-off incidents do not constitute bullying, with the exception of cyber bullying. The school principal will make decisions on an individual basis.**

- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners will report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant class teacher.
- The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:
  - The child's class teacher
  - Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.
- The Anti-Bullying coordinators are: ISLT members
- The anti-bullying coordinators will make themselves available in an advisory capacity for teachers concerned about suspected cases of bullying, investigations and they will provide support.
- Staff understand that all bullying incidents are of a serious nature and should not be discussed in an informal setting.
- Whenever an incident is being investigated, the relevant teacher will inform the following:
  - o Principal: Ms. Deirdre Corcoran
  - o In her absence: Mr. Weston
- Parents/Guardians and pupils are required to cooperate 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.

## **Our Procedures for Investigating Bullying Behaviour**

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).

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parents/carers understand this approach from the outset.

This policy applies to activities and events that take place:

- During school time (including break times)
- Going to and from school
- School tours/trips
- Extra-curricular activities (ie. after school clubs)

Scoil Chormaic CNS reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside school time and/or during extra-curricular activities which spills over into the school.

In any case where it has been determined by the relevant person that bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken by reference to the school policy
- The relevant person must keep appropriate written records which will assist them to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. This will include linking in with the Restorative Practice model within the school.

## **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. At least once in every school term, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- The overall number of bullying cases reported to the Principal or Deputy Principal since the previous report to the Board
- Confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools
- The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

## **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.

## **Adult Bullying & Bullying in the Work Place**

For cases of adult bullying the procedures as outlined in the INTO / Management Bodies publication "Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations" should be followed.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

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 this Policy**

- The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be included as an agenda item for all senior management meetings so as to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.
- The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. The school will annually review the prevention and intervention strategies in place. Surveys of pupils (when old enough), staff and parents will be used to provide important information about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying measures in place and identify any significant behavioural trends that may benefit from early intervention.
- Data from Appendix 3 template for recording and reporting bullying to the school principal or deputy principal will be collated and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and made available to the Board of Management. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.



- This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management in June of every year using the checklist in Appendix 4. Written notification that the review has been completed using Appendix 5 will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website, displayed in the school foyer 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: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Board of Management Chairperson) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1 : Scoil Chormaic CNS Anti-Bullying Code**

The following 6 statements will form our Anti-Bullying Code. These will be displayed throughout the school, in the corridors, in every classroom and on windows facing out to the yard where the children are playing.



## Our Anti-Bullying Code

We will not bully others!

We will be buddies, not bullies!

We will include others so no one feels left out!

We will help those who are being bullied!

We will always tell an adult if we are being bullied!

This school is a bully-free zone!



### **BULLYING INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

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	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
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. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**\* 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.