



Our Lady Queen of the Apostles

Clonburris National School

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 Our Lady Queen of the Apostles 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; 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*.

4) The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) all class teachers, Deputy Principal and Principal. Any teacher may act as 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:

- Staff will adopt a school wide approach to the fostering of respect and at all times encourage pupils to show respect for each other and all members of the school community
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The full implementation of the SPHE, RSE, and Stay Safe Programmes:

□ The Stay Safe Programme will be fully implemented in the school annually. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit the Stay Safe website and a link is provided from the school website.

□ The SPHE and Drama curriculum provides opportunities for role-playing bullying incidents and conflict resolution. Group discussion eg. Circle Time is used throughout the school.

□ CPD for staff in delivering these programmes. School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, such as

- Stay Safe
- Walk Tall
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- FRIENDS Programme
- Be Safe-Be Web wise
- Restorative Practices
- Restorative Practice takes incidents that might otherwise result in punishment and create opportunities for students to:

□ Become aware of the impact of their behaviour

□ Understand the obligation to take responsibility for their actions

□ Take steps toward making things right. Through this process, students learn how to interact and manage their relationships with adults and peers. They become better equipped to understand how their actions impact others and how to monitor future behaviour. Restorative practices encourage accountability, improve school safety, help strengthen relationships and create more positive outcomes for students and the school community.

● Curricular and Extra-curricular activities are encouraged to help develop pupils self esteem and experience the discipline of following rules in areas such as sport. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self worth through formal and informal interactions.

● Whole staff CPD on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts children's lives and the need to respond to it: prevention and intervention

● School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community.

- Speakers will be invited to address staff and parent groups in relation to cyber-bullying.
- Information relating to cyber-bullying will be made available on the school website
- An Internet Safety Week and Internet Safety Day will be held annually
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra curricular activities. Non teaching staff and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring pupil use of communication technology within our school.
- FRIENDS – self-esteem and resilience programme. 10 teachers are now trained and the programme is run in 2nd and 5th classes every year.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with a particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In this way, children will gain confidence in “telling”. It should 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. Teach children our anti-bullying strategies – **SAY NO, GET AWAY AND TELL** with special emphasis for children with SEN.
- All children will be educated on what bullying is, prevention strategies and its impacts on a continuous basis. Development and promotion of Anti Bullying Policy for the school to be included in school journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and common areas of the school building. The implementation of regular whole school measures may include:
 - The holding of a Friendship Week and Wellbeing Week each year
 - Agreed whole-school timetabling of lessons on anti-bullying (Stay Safe and RSE)
 - Poster and slogan competitions, visual reminders throughout the school
 - Questionnaires/surveys in senior classes
 - Positive behaviour reward systems – Teddy Bear books in infant classes, Going for Gold in 1st – 6th
 - Meetings with student council to discuss anti-bullying policy
 - Ensuring that children know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.
 - Direct approach to teacher at appropriate time, e.g. after class
 - Hand note up with homework
 - Worry Box
 - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf

- Use of a buddy bench on yard
- Administer a confidential questionnaire to pupils in senior classes
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
 - Involvement of Community Garda to deliver Garda SPHE Programmes which cover areas such as personal safety and cyber-bullying.
 - The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
 - Links to other policies:
 - Code of Behaviour and Discipline
 - Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Communication Policy
 - DEIS Plan
 - Special Educational Needs
 - Acceptable Use Policy

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:

- 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). 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;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach;
- Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- Questions to be asked when responding to challenging behaviour include: (Rest. Practice)
 - What happened?
 - What were you thinking at the time?
 - What have your thoughts been since?
 - Who has been affected by what you did?
 - In what way have they been affected?
 - What do you think needs to happen next?
- Questions to be asked when responding to those harmed include: (Rest. Practice)
 - What happened?
 - What were you thinking at the time?
 - What have your thoughts been since?
 - How has this affected you / others?
 - What has been the hardest thing for you?

If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved will 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 school will afford parent(s)/guardian(s) the opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a

private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/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;
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures (see Communications Policy)
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records, using the recording template (Appendix 1), which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. Any written records will be kept in a secure filing cabinet.

- The relevant teacher must use the recording template (see Appendix 2) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

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.

- The relevant teacher may consult with the Principal or Deputy Principal at any stage in relation to a case.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to the relevant teacher in the school.
- All reports of bullying, including a suspicion of bullying should be raised with the relevant class teacher first and then if necessary with the Principal.
- Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to speak with relevant class teacher if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- 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), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Periodic summary reports to the Board of Management

The Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management at each Board meeting setting out:

- (i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 2) since the previous report to the Board and;
- (ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above 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 minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

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

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

- Restorative Practice Conflict Resolution Programme
- Circle Time activities
- SPHE Programmes e.g. Walk Tall
- NEPS - Friends for Life
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Support from HSCL teacher
- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a relevant 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 28/03/23.

11) This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) 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.

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: Kieran Cullen
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Fiona Marley
(Principal)

Date: 28th March 2023

Date: 28/03/23

Date of next review: March 2024

Appendix 1

Form for investigating alleged bullying behaviour

1. Name(s) of pupil(s) subjected to the alleged bullying behaviour

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

3. Date on which the allegation was made _____

4. How behaviour came to light

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

5. Where behaviour took place

Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other (specify)	

6. Brief description of behaviour and its impact

7. Details of actions taken

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8. Does the behaviour constitute bullying behaviour? Yes ____ No ____

Signed _____ **(Relevant Teacher)**

Date _____

● Appendix 2

- 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

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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"/>

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

Yard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<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 _____