



Cahergal N.S.

Scoil Náisiúnta An Chathair Sheal

Roll No: 17807r

Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy – Cahergal NS

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 Cahergal National School has adopted the anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. The school community believes strongly that respect for all at all times must be promoted and become intrinsic in the ethos of society. This is fundamentally, the biblical principle of the 'Golden Rule'. Matthew 7.12 – "So always treat others as you would like them to treat you."

The children are taught that society is made up of a variety of different people, all of whom deserve our respect, all of whom have the right to be treated equally and to have the fundamental right to be allowed to exist in society and be content in their lives. No bullying can therefore be tolerated and no discrimination based on the nine stated grounds included in equality legislation, i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community, can be allowed.

The Board of Management and the staff of Cahergal N.S. are therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

- A **positive school culture** and climate which –
 - 1) acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
 - 2) acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being;
 - 3) models and promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
 - 4) displays key respect messages in classrooms and around the school;
 - 5) consistently tackles the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school;
 - 6) is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - 7) recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.
 - 8) staff members sharing a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community
 - 9) encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
- 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, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- Support 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.

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, may 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 Appendix A of this policy

Who will deal with accusations of bullying:

As with all instances of misbehaviour in school, if there is an accusation of bullying in school, the class teacher (or the teacher on yard, if the incident occurs on yard) will investigate and deal with the incident in the first instance. The teacher on yard will discuss the incident with the child(ren)'s class teacher.

If there is an acceptance that the behaviour constituted bullying, or the behaviour is repeated, the matter is brought to the attention of the principal. The principal will contact the parents of all parties involved and advise them that a Bullying incident involving their child is being investigated.

The principal and the class teacher will speak to all the children involved and the incident will be recorded on the 'Template for recording bullying behaviour' (Appendix B) by the relevant teacher.

Sanctions will be imposed in line with the school's behaviour policy.

These may include in no particular order:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Seek an explanation
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention.(as explained below)
- Communication with parents. Note in Homework Journal / Informal chat with parents
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Detention : Level 1 : Detention in pupil's classroom during break

Level 2: Supervised detention in designated room involving separation from peers. Prescribed work may be given. A teacher will supervise.

- **In the case of serious misbehaviour such as Bullying early sanctions may be skipped.**

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 implementation of the following programmes:

- The Stay Safe Programme (personal safety skills programme)
- SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education)
- RSE Programme(Relationships and Sexuality Education)
- Walk Tall Programme(Substance Misuse Programme)
- Alive O/ Grow in Love (Religion Programme)
- Anti-Bullying website (to be set up by the DES in conjunction with this initiative)
- Friends First Programme

- Developing a whole school Anti Bullying Policy in collaboration with the whole school community of all staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management.
- A copy of the school's Anti-bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour will be given to the parents of the incoming Junior Infants class at the Open Day. Parents/guardians will be required to sign an undertaking which supports the policy. All parents will be advised of any changes to these policies.
- The whole school community will be encouraged to become a 'reporting school' whereby the whole school community are encouraged to report/speak out if they are being bullied or if they witness a bullying situation.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds and school outings. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- 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.

Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g:

- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class
- Hand a note up to teacher.
- Anti-bully/worries/fears box for senior classes.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Posters addressing bullying displayed
- Level 3 Content Filtering for the school which blocks 'you tube' and websites that are categorised as Personal, Personal Storage and Social Networking.

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.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parents(s)/guardian(s)) understand these procedures from the outset.

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:

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All 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), caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents

- 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 will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents may be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews will 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 may seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
- If a group is involved, each member may be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member may 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 will 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.
- 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 Code of Behaviour policy). Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given an 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 will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's

anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

- It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, 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 will, 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;
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s) guardians(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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) will be referred, as appropriate to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school advises the parent(s)/guardians(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

All recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff record any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Records will be made in the incident book if witnessed on the yard. Incidents will be reported to the relevant teacher also.
- All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. They will keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher keeps 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.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix B

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix B** 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.

Behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal are the bullying behaviours as listed in **Appendix A**.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. These records are kept in the relevant teachers personal class notes and the copy is kept in the filing cabinet in the principal's office. The deputy Principal has access to these records. They may be viewed by relevant parents on request. These records will be kept in the file for as long as the chairperson and the I.S.M. team deems necessary. The School Policy on Record Keeping may be referred to.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Circle Time
- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim--- As far as is practicable, pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Implementation of the following programmes:

The Stay Safe Programme

SPHE

RSE Programme

Walk Tall Programme

Alive-O

Friends for Life

- Awareness of the importance of Prevention strategies being used.

The school will also work with the alleged bullies and their victims in an effort to resolving the issues raised.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves discussing the incidents with the pupils, reassuring them that they were right to bring the

events to the attention of staff, that they were not telling tales and their actions will help others. They will be reminded that they should tell again if they have any new concerns. The teacher(s) involved and the principal will check from time to time with the child that everything is ok.

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.

Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 11th May, 2022.
It will be reviewed annually.

Signed: _____ Chairperson B.O.M.

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Principal

APPENDIX A:

Types of bullying

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

- **Physical aggression:** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'mess fights', they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- **Intimidation:** Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike; invasion of personal space; unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching; taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying and to understand social situations and social cues.
- **Isolation/exclusion** and other relational bullying: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"(implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing e.g. "The Look"; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".
- **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.
- **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.
- **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or

bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

- **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Appendix B 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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1. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

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		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

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9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal _____