



CLONAKILTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE COLAISTE PHOBAIL CHLOCH NA GCOILLTE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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 Clonakilty Community College 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.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students or staff 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 students and staff 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 students;
 - ✓ Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying;
 - ✓ including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students.
- 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.

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.

Those who bully others in a non-physical way often do not realise that their actions may have serious legal consequences for them. **The reality, however, is that bullying may constitute a criminal offence.**

The college reserves the right to apply its anti-bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function, or program that is not college related if it is in the opinion of the Principal and/or Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at the school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school

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.

The people who establish the facts in alleged Bullying are:

- The relevant Year Head & Deputy Principal
- Deputy Principal / Principal

The Prevention and Education Strategies that will be used by the school are as follows:

- Develop a school wide approach to deal with Bullying.
- Positive school culture incorporating a print rich environment highlighting the fact that bullying in any form is unacceptable in our college.
- S.P.H.E. programme specifically devised to raise awareness and prevention of and consequences of bullying.
- School's R.S.E. programme raising awareness.

- Outside agencies e.g. H.S.E, Gardai, N.E.P.S. ,where/when necessary.
- School's Mentoring System for first years – anti bullying activity afternoons.
- Student Council members are encouraged to bring concerns about bullying behaviour to the attention of the relevant year head/member of the pastoral care team.

The school establishes the facts, records and follows up on bullying behaviour as follows:

STEP 1: Teacher observation identifies potential bullying behaviour/ Students reports Bullying behaviour to a member of staff/year head/deputy principal/principal or Staff report Bullying behaviour to Year Head. (Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them.)

Step 2: Year Head speaks to pupils involved pointing out that bullying is not tolerated in any form in the college .Year Head establishes the facts using **Form 1** and in accordance with procedures set out in section 6.8 of the Anti-bullying procedures for Primary & Post Primary schools.

STEP 3: If bullying behaviour has been identified by this process we will try to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. The parents of students involved will be contacted by Deputy Principal/Principal to inform them and to explain the actions being taken in line with this policy. The pupil(s) involved will be given the opportunity to redeem themselves and given a second chance by making a promise never to bully again. **Form 2: The Student Behaviour Promise.** The College will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school.

STEP 4:

The Chaplain will meet with all the relevant parties to support them in restoring relationships. As a follow up to a bullying issue being resolved, the Deputy Principal/Principal will meet separately with the relevant parties to review progress **within 20 school days after it has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred**, by taking the following factors into account:

- Has the bullying behaviour ceased?.
- Have the issues between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable?
- Have the relationships between the parties been restored as far as is practicable?
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

STEP 5: Where the Deputy Principal/Principal consider that the bullying behaviour is continuing the bullying incident must be recorded in **Form 3**.

- A meeting may then take place with the school Principal, Deputy Principal, Relevant year head, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the student where the details of the initial incident will be read out.
- The details of the second meeting with the Deputy Principal/Principal, showing how the student continued to bully, after signing a promise not to bully again will also be read out.
- At that meeting the Principal may then decide the sanction, using the school's Code of Behaviour and inform the parent(s)/guardian(s). Sanctions may include detention; a written letter of apology; withdrawal of privileges; exclusion from certain school activities; a suspension from school for several days with work assigned. The student is informed that the incident(s) will go on their school record and that the Board of Management will have to be informed. This student will have to sign a second **Form 2 'Student Behaviour Promise'** along with his/her parents/guardians.
- The parents/guardians may be told at that meeting that the school may have to consider the expulsion of the student if they bully again. All records are kept in the students file.
- Where a parent/guardian or a student older than 18 is not satisfied that the College has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, s/he will be advised of his/her right to make an appeal to the Board of Management. Such appeals shall be submitted, in writing setting out the grounds for the appeal, to the Chairperson of the Board within 15 school days of the parent/guardian informing the School/College principal that s/he is of the opinion that the School/College has not dealt with the bullying case in accordance with the [Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#).
- Where a parent/guardian, having exercised his/her appeal to the Board of Management, is still not satisfied s/he will be advised of his/her right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

The College's support for working with pupils affected by bullying is:

- Students who have been bullied will be:
 - ✓ Offered support from Guidance Counsellor/ Chaplain
 - ✓ Made aware of opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
- Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:

- ✓ Provided with support to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others; and
- ✓ Made aware of opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.
- Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and their parents and to avail of support where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced. The College is of the opinion that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander and endeavours to educate pupils in this belief.

In cases where the school has serious concerns in managing the behaviour of a pupil the advice of N.E.P.S. , H.S.E, Gardai(or other relevant agencies) will be sought (dependant on availability)

Supervision and Monitoring of Anti-Bullying in College:

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 College will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or the harassment of students 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 adopted by the Board of Management on 8-4-14 and will be reviewed on May 2015.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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 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: **Richard Jennings** (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: **Anne Dunne** (Principal) Date: 8-4-2014