



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

This policy aims to produce a safe and caring environment in which all children can develop to their full potential.

The school does not tolerate or condone bullying of any form or at any level of the school community. Further to this, the school does not tolerate accusations of bullying that are false or malicious and recognises the effect that this can have on a child. The Board of Management is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community – pupils, staff and parents – are enabled to act effectively to deal with bullying. This policy guides recognition, action and organisation within the school for preventing and responding to bullying.

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 Clooney 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 the 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. 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
  - B. Effective leadership
  - C. A school-wide approach
  - D. A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
  - E. 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.
  - F. Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
  - G. Supports for staff
  - H. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)
  - I. 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 (Sept 2013) 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.

4. The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher. The principal thereafter if necessary.

"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. see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

Any teacher may act as a 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 can be used by the school are as follows:

**Programmes** that help prevent bullying by fostering empathy, respect, resilience, self-worth e.g. S.P.H.E including sections from:

- Stay Safe
- Walk Tall
- Relations and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- My Selfie and the Wider World
- Webwise Primary Teachers Handbook
- Weaving Wellbeing Programme
- Circle Time
- Garda SPHE Programme

**6.** The school's procedures for reporting, 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:

### ***Reporting***

- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher

### ***Investigation***

- In investigation and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement (taking into account the age of the pupils involved) to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parents 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 when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.
- Where possible, incidents will 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 will seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be encouraged to meet as a group if appropriate. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened;

- 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 parents of the parties involved may be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their 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 should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied:
- In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

### ***Follow Up***

- 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; and
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal;
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged where appropriate;
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### ***Recording***

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

#### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the teacher

- While all reports must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a 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 must keep appropriate 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 1**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template attached to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) in cases where 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) All confirmed instances of bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

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

- 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.
  - SPHE Lessons
  - Stay Safe Programme
  - Walk Tall
  - NEPS programmes on [www.neps.ie](http://www.neps.ie)
  - Anti Bullying Week
  - Buddy system
  - Care Team Support inc Social Skills Group
  - Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. **NEPS can also be contacted for advice**
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

## **8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring procedures 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 and 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council. 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. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson)

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

**Appendix 1: 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 where relevant

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents -tick where relevant

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 where relevant

Physical aggression	
Damage to property	
Isolation/Exclusion	
Name calling	



## **Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate**

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school.
  - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
  - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms

**Appendix 3: Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation**

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	Yes
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	N/A
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	Yes
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	Yes

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Appendix 4: Questions based on the DES definition of bullying**

##### **Is it bullying? Checklist**

	Consider	Yes	No
1	Is the behaviour repeated? Only repeated incidents can be regarded as bullying. Once off incidents fall under the Code of Behaviour. However, see 2 below.		
2	Have there been any offensive or hurtful public messages or images placed on a social networking site or other public forum? Can the bullying image, statement or message be viewed or repeated by other people? NB: Once such incident qualifies as cyber bullying.		
3	Is the behaviour planned?		
4	Is there unwanted negative behaviour inflicted on the victim?		
5	Is the unwanted negative behaviour of a physical, verbal, or psychological character?		
6	Is the behaviour inflicted by one person, or is there a group involved?		
7	Is the victim deliberately targeted?		
8	Do the behaviours involve deliberate exclusion, isolation, malicious, gossip or other forms of relational aggression?		
9	Are the behaviours targeting an aspect of the victim's identity? For example, physical, verbal or psychological aggression which is directed at their sexual orientation, their race, religion, ethnicity, or traveller background.		
10	Are the behaviours targeting the victim because they have Special Educational Needs?		

**Appendix 5: Class/Yard Observation Sheet**

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Name of pupil/s	Behaviour	Directed towards

**Appendix 6 Friendship / Anti-Bullying Questionnaire**

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to talk to someone about bullying?      YES                      NO

Do you know anyone who is having a hard time?      YES                      NO