St. Coen's N.S.
Merrymeeting
Rathnew
Co. Wicklow

Roll no: 20208M
Registered No: 20205289

Anti-Bullying Policy

FULL COMPLIANCE

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 St. Coen's N.S. 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 that were published in September 2013.

KEY PRINCIPALS OF BEST PRACTICE

2. The Board of Management recognizes 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;
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

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); and**

i. **On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.**

THE DEFINITION OF BULLYING

3. In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying, extortion, isolation, persistent name-calling and intimidation.
- 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's 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.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Exclusion (isolation) • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any the types listed.
Cyber	• Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies, gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok • Abusive email • Abusive website comments/blogs/ pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

Identity Based Behaviours Any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian … used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Use of terminology such as "nerd" in a derogatory way • Malicious gossip • Isolation and exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognize and defend themselves against bullying. • Taking advantage of some pupils, vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

Relevant teachers:

Principal: Lee Kavanagh

Phone: 0404 31200 Email: secretary@stcoens.com

Deputy Principal: Bernie Watson

Class Teachers of children involved.

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues such as prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both the curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. 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 included in student journals and displayed in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code Behaviour of the school.
- The implementation of regular per term whole class awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; annual Friendship week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; annual or term or monthly student surveys; regular school assemblies by principal.
- Differentiate between tales and telling to keep you or another safe.
- Class lessons to be provided to pupils on "how to tell" (telling protocol).
- Bystanders who witness bullying behaviour should always tell a teacher. This is not telling tales but a means of protecting victims.
- A "worry box" in each class. Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by: Display school's anti-bullying statement in each classroom and corridors.
- School Assembly – (what is bullying? What is not bullying? What to do if you feel you are being bullied? What to do if you see somebody else being bullied.
- Formal Teaching in class -SPHE/RE (Research materials on. Identity bullying)
- Annual Friendship/Kindness week
  Strategies: S.P.H.E. -Walk Tall, Grow in Love, Webwise, Stay Safe, Roots of Empathy programme, positive reinforcement by class teachers:
- 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 should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considering to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Hand note up with homework.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour are the established interventions used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post=Primary Schools):

6.8.9 Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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, parent(s)/guardians(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

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

Incidents of Bullying will be dealt with on a staged basis.

Initially the class teacher is the relevant teacher and deals with the allegations.

Stage 1

- It is important to gather all of the facts from both sides (What, where, when, who, why?). This will involve an interview with the pupil who may be a victim of bullying and with the alleged bully.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation.
- The aim of the teacher 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).
- The investigating teacher should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional or judgmental language.
- Instances are investigated outside the classroom for senior classes to avoid public humiliations but may be investigated discretely where possible with other classes within the classroom.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regards to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way. (See Anti bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 6.8.9 page 30-31) for further suggestions.
- Where possible, a witness is present.
- It is explained to the child who is alleged to have shown bullying behaviour how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.
- All information relating to the incidents are kept of file on an Aladdin document.
- Children are informed that the matter will be returned to, to ensure that there are no further incidents. The children are reminded that this is a confidential matter so does not need to be discussed in general conversation with other children in the class.
- The child(ren) involved are asked to sign the Declaration to Cease Bullying Behaviour

Stage 2

- In the event that the matter does not appear to be resolved within the 20 days, the

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

Child who was bullied

- Reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- Strategies for restoring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parents/guardians. -Ms. Duignan will act as the liaison staff member to assist parents with strategies to restore self-esteem.
- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling or play therapy.
- Staged approach -class support, school support (as per Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social difficulties -NEPS
- The parents of the pupils concerned will be advised to contact the local Gardaí (juvenile liaison officer) if appropriate.

Child who was engaged in bullying behaviour

- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling or play therapy. They may need to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Empathy awareness needs to be developed.
- Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- Staged approach -class approach, school support (as per Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties -NEPS).

All Children

- Must be made aware that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant/investigating 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 resolved as far as is practicable;
  -Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s)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,
- 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 Pupils.

Recording of bullying behaviour:
It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must 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 must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them.
- If it is established that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher/investigating teacher must keep written records, to be stored on Aladdin, to assist in keeping track of progress on the matter.
- The Principal is informed of all matters being investigated and is referred to the records which are available on Aladdin.

Formal-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant/investigating teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a) in cases where he/she considers that bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 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. When the recording template is used, it must be stored on Aladdin.

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 _7/4/2022___ (date) and reviewed on 21/3/24.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents through the administrative office. 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, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request from the administrative office. A record of review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Mary Murphy Lee Kavanagh

Chairperson BOM Principal