

CARRIGTWOHILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Introduction

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 Carrigtwohill Community College has adopted the following Anti-bullying Policy within the framework of the College'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.

Rationale

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
 - 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
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

Definition

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 bullying of LGBT students, 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*.

Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

A student should feel able to report a bullying incident to any member of the whole staff they are comfortable approaching.

Our Student Support Services (SSS) Team includes:

- Year Head(s)
- Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator (Chaplain)
- Principal and/or Deputy Principal.

Also involved;

- Relevant Class Tutor(s)

A student should feel comfortable reporting a bullying incident by using one, or any, of the following approaches:

- Directly approaching a member of the whole staff at any time.
- Handing up a note with homework or classwork, or during assembly
- Contacting the SSS team. A student can address a specific member of the SSS team if they feel more comfortable. A list of the care team members will be made available to students.
- Getting a parent to contact the school by ringing to make an appointment with a member of the SSS team.
- Participating in one or more positive behaviour strategies at any point during the academic year.

Strategies to Prevent Bullying

- Our Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of Carrigtwohill Community Code of Behaviour.
- Everyone in Carrigtwohill Community College has a duty to look out for any behaviour which can be deemed bullying (from list above). This includes parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- Class teachers can remind students regularly of effects of bullying.
- Supervision and monitoring of students' behaviour, in all areas of the school and the school grounds, and during all school activities
- Inclusion in the curriculum – create awareness in a wide range of subjects.
- Positive behaviour activities are planned that raise awareness and prioritise anti-bullying interventions.
- School-wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying to include pupils, parents / guardians, whole staff and wider school community.
- Future provision of a Buddy System which provides support to incoming students and encourage care and empathy from established students promoting a culture of peer respect.

- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- Carrigtwohill Community College is committed to surveying the student body regularly to identify the extent of bullying and, in so far as is possible, the students who are affected by it.

Links to Other Policies and to Curriculum Delivery.

This policy is consistent with Carrigtwohill Community College's Code of Behaviour.

It links to the following Curriculum areas:

- SPHE: the issue of bullying is dealt with in each of three years of Junior Cycle SPHE.
- Anti-bullying lessons are taught by subject teachers such as CSPE (Human Rights), English (personal accounts), and PE (Q of sporting exclusion).
- A conscious effort is made by all staff members to address the issues surrounding bullying as they arise.

Dealing with Reported Incidents of Bullying

- Mindful of potential impacts of bullying on students, all incidents will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.
- All reported incidents of bullying to be noted on the Bullying Incident Report form.
- The Bullying Incident Report form is to be filled in by the teacher who observed the bullying or to whom it was reported. Copies of the Bullying Incident Report Form are available in the staffroom.
- Where a teacher is concerned that bullying is taking place, s/he should bring it to the attention of a member of the SSS team at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Allegations of bullying will be fully investigated before action is taken.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the focus will be on resolving the interpersonal issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved rather than apportioning blame.
- The rights of all students will be respected and a fair hearing will be given to all students.
- Forms are to be filed by members of the SSS Team.

The College reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6.3.5 of the DES Procedures, to seek the assistance of agencies such as CAMHS, NEPS, TUSLA, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary in dealing effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where the College deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (see sections 6.8.12, 6.8.13 and 6.8.14 of the DES Procedures) it will consult with TUSLA to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response, to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report in accordance with DES *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Support for Students Affected by Bullying

The College provides a programme of supports for students affected by bullying. This programme will involve the following elements.

- Students who have been bullied will be offered appropriate counselling and provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem and build their resilience.

- Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. They will also be provided with appropriate 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 counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.

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.

Staff Members will be made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy to include procedures documented within. The Policy will be available for all teachers in the Policy Folder.

Students affected by bullying will be flagged, without details, in the staffroom, when necessary. Data gathered through the Anti-Bullying Form will be collated and analysed annually with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying issues requiring attention.

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

- the overall number of bullying cases reported
- confirmation that all cases referred 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 Board of Management meetings will not include any identifying details of the students involved.

The school reserves the right to apply its Anti-Bullying Policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or programme that is not school related if, 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.

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.

Policy Review

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the *Anti-Bullying*

Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools using the checklist included at Appendix 4 of those procedures.

The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas for improvement identified by the annual review.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association.

Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management' meeting that adopted the review and a record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, will be made available to the Patrons and the DES. In the case of the DES, it is appreciated that the Inspectorate will place a strong focus on the actions the College takes to create a positive school culture and to prevent and tackle bullying.

Communication of Policy

A copy of this policy will be provided upon request from the secretary's office. It will also be published on the College's website.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Date of next review: _____