

## **Respect for others Policy of Tullow Community School.**

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 Tullow Community 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* which were published in September 2013 and also recognises and adheres to the Cinéaltas plan of 2023.
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 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;
  - 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 in particular, homophobic and transphobic 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); and
  - 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* 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(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

-The relevant Year Head in consultation with the class tutor/teacher.

-The Year Head may decide to refer the issue to the Deputy Principal/Principal depending on the seriousness or the continued occurrence of the bullying.

-If the bullying is continuing after intervention by the Year Head it should be referred on to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

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 will be used by the school are as follows:

Publication of Policy on the website;

- Transfer & Transition Year Programme;
- Use of School Completion Programme initiatives
- Specific anti-bullying classes provided annually.
- Use of SPHE classes.

6. 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 as follows:

- Use of SPHE classes;
- Transfer & Transition Year Programme;
- Publication of Policy on the website
- Use of posters on notice boards;
- Reference to Cyber-Bullying in Code of Behaviour;
- Provide workshops for parents and students.
- Use of SPHE classes

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 as follows :

Bullying including Cyber Bullying will be deemed a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies, as well as other relevant policies, and will attract serious sanctions, up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Allegations of any type of Bullying may also be reported to the Gardaí or other outside agencies as appropriate. Any misbehaviour, including inappropriate use of social media, impacting on the health and safety of any member of the school community, will be treated with the utmost seriousness by the Principal and the Board of Management.

### **Reporting procedure and investigation**

1. Any student or staff member who believes she/he has, or is being, subjected to bullying including Cyber Bullying, as well as any person who has reason to believe a student or staff member is being subjected to (or has been subjected to Bullying) shall report the matter to the Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal or any other staff member if the situation allows.
2. The Head Year, Deputy Principal, Principal shall investigate all reports of such conduct in line with agreed school procedures. Bullying including Cyber Bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline and sanctions, to be decided by the Principal or the Board of Management. The seriousness of the violation will determine the sanction to be applied. This may include suspension or expulsion though it may be decided that the most appropriate response is to provide an educational intervention rather than a sanction.
3. All involved parties will be informed of the results of investigations into Bullying. If the bullying issue has not been resolved after twenty days then the formal recording document must be filled out.
4. A report each term will be provided to the Board of Management of any cases of bullying under long term investigation and a review of the policy will take place each year.

### **Consequences for false accusation**

7. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another member of the school community of an act of Cyber-Bullying range from positive behavioural interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
1. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have maliciously accused another employee of an act of Cyber-Bullying is that she/he may be disciplined. Such discipline will be in accordance with relevant legislation and the school's Dignity at Work Policy.
2. In circumstance where an investigation of Cyber-Bullying is not proven, but the Board is satisfied that a genuine and reasonable complaint is made, no action will be taken against the complainant.
8. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Counselling may be provided by appropriate staff within the school or by outside agencies if deemed necessary.
- Intervention work may take place from the School Completion Programme
- Work with the school pastoral team may be deemed necessary.

## 9. 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.

## 10. 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.

11. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on June 2018 and reviewed in June 2023.
12. 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.
13. 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 website 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: P. Thornton  
Principal

Date: 22/6/2023\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Pauline Egan  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 26/06/23\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_2024.\_\_\_\_\_

