

Anti-bullying policy

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 Cadamstown 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 Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013. This policy was formulated by the staff, parents and board of Management of Cadamstown National School. It was reviewed again in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, Dec 2019, Oct 2020 and Oct 2021. This review was co-ordinated by the Principal Teacher.

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.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:
- The two class teachers and the principal teacher.
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:

- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall and Stay Safe programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti-bullying policy. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the interrelated areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.

- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others.
- Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
Programmes are implemented which are focused on developing pupils awareness of bullying, including its causes and effects. These deal explicitly with the identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
- We explicitly aim to raise awareness of and prevent cyber bullying. To this end we will endeavour to educate pupils on appropriate on-line behaviour and how to stay safe on-line. We will also endeavour to support and create a culture where reporting of any concerns about cyber bullying is encouraged.
- The Active School Flag and the Amber Flag which promotes positive mental health are being worked towards.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.
- Cadamstown NS will facilitate a common understanding among staff, pupils and parents on what bullying behaviour is by holding an awareness day as part of Stay Safe in Spring time each year for staff and pupils on the subject of bullying. The teachers will remind pupils of the school's anti bullying policy. On this day, each teacher will remind children of the code of discipline of the school, discuss bullying behaviour and reiterate the procedures for reporting bullying in the school.
- The school will use both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable, e.g. visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE class and co-operative games.
 - The school's supervision policy and practices will also act as a strategy for the prevention of bullying behaviour. The playground is supervised at break times and corridors, cloakrooms and toilets are monitored.

6. 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:
- a. The staff of SN Baile Mhic Adaim see the primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved rather than to apportion blame.
 - b. We acknowledge that given the complexity of bullying behaviour that no one intervention works in all situations. The school will deal with each case on an individual basis.
 - c. Staff of SN Baile Mhic Adaim will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.
 - d. In investigating and dealing (the "what, where, when, who and why") with an incident of bullying behaviour, teachers should try to find out who is being bullied, where and when the bullying took place and what actually happened.
 - e. If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
 - f. Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying will keep a written record of the above (see appendix 1: template for recording bullying behaviour from 'Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools 2013') and of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident. This record and pupil accounts of incidents will be kept in confidential storage. Teachers and B.O.M members will have access to this record. Under fair procedures, the parents/guardians of the pupils involved may have access to these written accounts (names deleted). All records will be maintained in accordance with our data protection policy.
 - g. Incidences within the class room scenario will be dealt with by the class teacher. In cases where bullying has been proven, the bully will be clearly and strongly advised of the harmful effects his/her behaviour may have on the victim. The bully may be given extra homework. If a teacher judges that the bullying is of a very serious nature, or a second or further offence, the bully can be kept in at break times and kept away from the victim until he/she shows remorse, apologises to the victim and gives an undertaking not to engage in such behaviour again. Serious incidences of bullying will be dealt with by the principal.
 - h. Non-teaching staff such as cleaners/caretaker are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the appropriate teaching member of staff.
 - i. In the cases of serious bullying, the bully's parents will be called in to the school to discuss the matter with the Principal. It may be necessary that lessons/programmes with victims, bullies and their peers need to be taught to whole school/class dealing with respect, self-esteem, the issue of bullying etc. If the bullying is of a very serious nature, the B.O.M. will decide how to deal with it.
 - j. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with the bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the School's Complaints Procedure.

- k. Those who need further specific support will be referred to outside agencies such as NEPS
- l. The effectiveness of the school policy will be assessed regularly regarding the level and type of bullying behaviour that may be happening in the school and appropriate action taken as a result of these findings.
- m. For cases of adult bullying the procedures as outlined in the INTO / Management Bodies publication “Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations” will be followed.
- n. Serious incidences of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and /or Gardaí as appropriate.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*) :

The staff of NS Scoil Baile Mhic Adaim realise the need to support pupils who have been bullied. The class teacher will organise and create opportunities for the child to participate in activities to raise their self esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

A programme of support for pupils involved in bullying behaviour is also part of the school's intervention process. Activities in class and in small groups in Learning Support will offer opportunities for those with low self esteem to develop and increase feelings of self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

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 in December 2012
11. 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.
12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year, usually at the last Board meeting of the 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:

Donal O'Sullivan
Chairperson

Martin Lynch
Principal

Date: 20/10/2021

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Next Review: Oct 2022

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.

Scoil Naisúinta Baile Mhic Adaim



Support the establishment and work of student councils.