



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR CARRICK NATIONAL 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 Carrick National School complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for 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
    - address appropriately the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying.
  - (f) Effective 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.

### Definition

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*.

#### Some examples of bullying behaviours

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles</li> <li>Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>  <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malicious gossip</li> <li>Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>Ignoring</li> <li>Excluding from the group</li> <li>Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>"Bitching"</li> <li>Spreading rumours</li> <li>Breaking confidence</li> <li>Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>The "look"</li> <li>Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name calling</li> <li>Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>



#### 4. Investigation and Dealing with Bullying.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Anti-bullying policy. Within the class, teachers monitor pupils. Teachers are aware of places and occasions of where bullying may occur and are proactive about ensuring it doesn't occur. The principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy at staff level annually and reports any review deemed necessary to the staff and the Board.

***'The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school'***(Circular 20/90)

#### 5. Prevention Strategies

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:

Carrick National School fosters a positive school ethos among pupils, staff and parents which focuses on respect for each individual. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying.

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Through a programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of happiness friendship, openness, mutual respect and tolerance. This will be evident throughout the school.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievement and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions. Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and emotions and by being given a forum for expression in an open and democratic environment. e.g. circle time, drama, structured and free play, Golden Time etc.
- The SPHE curriculum, including the Walk Tall, Bí Folláin, Stay Safe and RSE programmes, is used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy. SPHE (Social Personal & Health Education) - Bullying is addressed under the strand: Myself and Others, Strand Unit - My friends and other people, The Fun Friends program to increase the pupil's self awareness and positive self worth.

Other examples include lessons on self-esteem, building good relationships, good and bad secrets, being a 'telling school',

- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils. Positive behaviours are recognised and rewarded. Positive reinforcement is used.



- The members of staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/being bullied. Teachers respond sensitively to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying. All disclosed incidents of bullying will be investigated. In all cases of bullying there is an emphasis on the behaviour, **not** the child.

Teaching of co-operative games and encouraging children to get along.

- Parents are also encouraged to be vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others by communicating concerns to the school. Parents support our policy by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and in school.
- The facility is available to invite an outside speaker to address teachers and parents on this topic.
- Assembly is used to remind pupils of the schools anti-bullying policy.

**PE curriculum:** Sporting activities can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.

**Code of behaviour** - promotion of positive behaviour, positive atmosphere, good relationships ensures a reduction in bullying.

**Child Safeguarding Policy** - Serious instances 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. (See 6.8.13 Anti-Bullying Procedures 2013)

A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is made available to pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) on the school website and all pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school at enrolment.
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year) whole school awareness measures e.g. promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal
- 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 considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
  - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.





- 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 e.g. NEPs and Child Guidance

#### **Relevance to other policies**

Supervision policy, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Sporting activities, Mobile phone policy, Swimming policy and School tour policy.

- 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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)**

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);

**Our school's procedures will be consistent with the following approach.**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(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 special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, bus drivers, coaches, caretakers must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

#### **Investigating and dealing with incidents: (see section 6.8.9)**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) class teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should 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, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;



- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher;  
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 parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the 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;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

### Follow up and recording

- 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;
  - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(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 Children.

### Recording of bullying behaviour

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. Teachers will keep records of same in Pupil Record Book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant class teacher
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written 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 written records using the recording template which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- Records will be kept by class teacher in classroom teacher's drawer. Records of more serious or significant nature will be stored in school office.

#### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 1 (From DES Procedures)**

On using the recording template, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

All recording templates for anti-bullying scenarios will be kept in the filing cabinet in the school office. A specific area for bullying will be assigned. These records can be accessed by the principal, deputy principal, APIL post or the relevant teacher teaching the child. On a written request to the Board of Management, a copy may be given to parents/TUSLA if required. Please see our Data Protection Policy.

Record keeping time frames are laid out in our Date Protection Policy.

#### **Established intervention strategies**

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing

#### **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) :**

**SPHE** (Social Personal & Health Education) - Bullying is addressed under the strand: Myself and Others, Strand Unit - My friends and other people

Other examples include lessons on self-esteem, building good relationships, good and bad secrets, being a 'telling school',

**PE curriculum:** Sporting activities can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.

**Code of behaviour** - promotion of positive behaviour, positive atmosphere, good relationships ensures a reduction in bullying.





When Bullying occurs, it is important that the perspective of the bully and the victim is taken into account. Finding ways of helping children to understand their own behaviour and how they manage their behaviour and relationship is an important facet of managing bullying behaviour. Programmes of support will be available to pupils involved in bullying. This may involve giving children strategies to deal with their aggression - counting to ten, taking deep breaths, think consequence etc.

Outside Agencies will be enlisted to provide Programmes of support for pupils involved in bullying. This may involve referral to NEPS, CAHMS

**8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**  
**School supervision Practices**

- There are clear yard strategies in place. Individual classes encouraged to play and socialise with children from their own class.
- Different parts of the yard are designated for junior and senior classes.
- All sections of the playground are supervised at break times.
- All rough play e.g. wrestling, mess fighting and slide tackling on the Astro Turf Pitch is forbidden.
- Monitoring and supervision; any incidents recorded in yard supervision book.

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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

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. 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: Rena Burke  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Eoin Davern  
(Principal)

Date: 14/11/2022

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Date of next review: Nov 2023