



Coláiste Pobail Acla

Anti-Bullying Policy

**Coláiste Pobail Acla,
Polranny,
Achill,
Co. Mayo.**

**Roll No.: 76150V
Phone: 09845139
Email: info@cpacla.ie
Web: www.colaistepobailacla.ie**

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Section 1 – 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 Coláiste Pobail Acla 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.

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

- Year Head
- Deputy Principal
- 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 (see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school 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. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the senior student mentors in contributing to a safe school environment that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- To implement the Box and Interview technique with Junior Students. This approach provides students the opportunity to 'tell' by completing a questionnaire about bullying.
- Implementation of whole school measures including: Poster Campaigns, Surveys etc.
- To create a 'telling school' environment where students feel free to speak to those in authority without fear of the stigma of 'telling tales'.
- Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- The 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 following supports are being used in the school: CAHMS (Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services), NEWB, NBSS and NEPS.
- Other supports available: The Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Support Service - www.sphe.ie & The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) - www.pdst.ie

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*):

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant Year Head, who may refer the issue to the Deputy Principal or Principal for further assistance.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners **must** report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them.

Investigating and dealing with incidents:

1. 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.
2. Any bullying incident will be recorded on VSware by the reporting staff member and dealt with by the Year Head.
3. The Year Head will meet both parties separately. It may be appropriate to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s); If necessary, students who are on the fringes of the incident will also be heard.
4. The Year Head keeps records of meetings and records events.
5. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the Year Head will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.
6. The Year Head in conjunction with management will determine if bullying behaviour has occurred.
7. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter.
8. Where it has been determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to that student how they are in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
9. It will 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

1. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Year Head will, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - a. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
 - b. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
 - c. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.
 - d. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
2. All parties will be offered support from a member of the Pastoral Care Team and follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will take place separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
3. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents/ guardians can make a written complaint to the Board of Management.
4. In the event that parents/ guardians have exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, parents/ guardians can make a written complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

Informal Stage - pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff will report any bullying incidents on VShare witnessed by them or notified to them. These reports will be passed on to the relevant Year Head
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the Year Head. The Year Head will keep a written record of the reports.
- The Year Head will inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1 - determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established that bullying has occurred, the Year Head will keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved in conjunction with the Pastoral Care team.
- The school facilitates the secure storage of all records retained by the Year Head.

Formal Stage 2

The Year Head will use the record of bullying behaviour sheet (Section 3) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.
- 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.

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*):

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g. - Pastoral care system, Big Brother/Big Sister Programme, Year Head system, Learning Support Team.
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise this. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

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 10/09/2024.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed Sabine Munnelly

Date 10/09/2024

Mrs. Bina Munnelly, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Jason Ó Mongáin

Date 10/09/2024

Mr. Jason Ó Mongáin, Principal

Date of next review: Sept 2024.

Section 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.

- Always model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community.
- 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.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Section 3 - Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression	Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property	Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion	Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling	Other (specify)	

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Anti-Bullying Policy

Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	No
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	No

Signed Sabine Munnelly

Date 10/09/2024

Mrs. Bina Munnelly, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Jason Ó Mongáin

Date 10/09/2024

Mr. Jason Ó Mongáin, Principal

Section 4 - Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Yes /No

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes

Section 5 - Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: Chief Executive, MSLETB

The Board of Management of Coláiste Pobail Acla wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting on 10/09/2024.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed Sabine Munnelly
Mrs. Bina Munnelly, Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 10/09/2024

Signed Jason Ó Mongáin
Mr. Jason Ó Mongáin, Principal

Date 10/09/2024

