Cloverfield N.S.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Contents

Section 1. 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 Cloverfield 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.

Section2. Best practise in preventing bullying behaviour

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:

2.1 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

At Cloverfield NS we consider the following to be key elements of a positive school culture

Key elements of a positive school culture and climate
- We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.
- We promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.

- ☐ We actively prohibit vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour or language by any of its members.

- ☐ We have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.

- ☐ The school has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs.

- ☐ We identify aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values.

- ☐ We take particular care of "at risk" pupils and use its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary and it responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

- ☐ Cloverfield NS recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.

- ☐ We recognise the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of lifeskills.

- ☐ We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

- ☐ We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.

- ☐ We promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.

- ☐ **Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing**

   bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

2.2 Effective leadership

- • The BOM has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The BOM must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraises the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy

- • The Principal as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to dealing with bullying and stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying and modelling best practice

- • All teachers must act as good role models and not misuse authority, but be fair, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

2.3 A school-wide approach

- A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and Cloverfield NS community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians

- Beyond the school community, bullying behaviour may extend to outside of school. Where this negatively impacts on a school parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address this issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.

- The assistance of Gardaí, Túsla and Community workers may be required in some cases

- Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school community to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner

2.4 A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

Cloverfield NS endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that ALL relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy.

(Section 2 & 3 of Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools)

2.5 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   **See Section 5 of this policy**

2.6 Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

- Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent

- Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively, with particular attention given to potential "hot spots" and at potential "hot times" e.g. arrival and dismissal

2.7 Supports for staff

- Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis

- All staff must have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with bullying within the classroom context

- Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and new/inexperienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and model best practice

☐ CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all members of staff

2.8 Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour

(including use of established intervention strategies and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.)

Section 3: Definition of bullying.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

'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 do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of 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 AntiBullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and appears as **Appendix 2** of this document.

Section 4: The relevant teachers

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

- □ • The class teacher(s) initially
- • The principal thereafter if necessary

- • All class teachers
  Care Team members/SNAs

Section 5 : Education and Prevention Strategies

The following education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by Cloverfield NS

5.1 School-wide approach

- • A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community
- • The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlighting the unacceptability of bullying behaviour
- • The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- • Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff members develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention
- • Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise, in particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- • Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online
- • School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community
- • Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner
- • Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school outings and extra-curricular activities. All staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues of concern.
- • Supervision will also apply to monitoring pupils' use of communication technology within the school

- □ • Involvement of the pupils in contributing to a safe school environment through Buddy systems and other pupil support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for te school to be displayed in classrooms and in common areas of the school
The school's Anti-Bullying policy is discussed with pupils as appropriate and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the school's Code of Behaviour on enrolment
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention, e.g. annual Anti-Bullying Week
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. It should be made clear to pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly □ Ensuring that all pupils know who to tell and how to tell e.g.
    - o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time o Hand note
    up with homework o Anti-Bully/Worry box o Get a
    parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf

5.2 Implementation of curriculum

- The full implementation of the SPHE and RSE and Stay Safe programmes
- CPD for staff members in delivering these programmes
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from age/class appropriate programmes
- School wide delivery of relevant programmes with lessons on friendship, internet safety, diversity, growing up, etc.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE primary level programme
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of strategies and skills to enable all pupils to respond appropriately
- There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes

- which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour.

5.3 Links to other policies

The following policies, practices and activities are particularly relevant:

Code of Behaviour Child Protection Policy   Supervision   Policy   Attendance
Acceptable Usage Policy   SEN Policy   Health & Safety Statement

Section 6. Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying

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).

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parents/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.

6.1 Reporting Bullying Behaviour

- Any pupil or parent/guardian 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 **must** report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher

6.2 Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved

- Parents/guardians 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 should 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(s) should 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 nonaggressive manner

- 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

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher o 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(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parents 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(s) has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should 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 parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school*

6.3 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:

    o Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
    o Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable
    o Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable
    o Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may 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 is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's Complaints Procedures**

- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the **Ombudsman for Children**.

6.4 Recording:

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the *template for recording bullying behaviour* (Appendix 3). All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

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. Records will be kept in Incident Book in filing cabinet in school office. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher(s) 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 which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved
- The relevant teacher must follow the school's protocol for the storage of all such records

FORMAL STAGE 2: Appendix 3

- The relevant teacher must use **the recording template** at **Appendix 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 days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
  - All confirmed instances of bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable

The recording template must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

Teacher records are retained securely and all report templates given to the Principal will be retained in the filing cabinet in the school office.

6.5 Established Intervention Stategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreement 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 parents/guardians to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing questionnaires

The Procedures mention the following intervention strategies and reference Ken Rigby;

www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

Section 7. Support for pupils affected by bullying

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

(see Section 6.8.16 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 selfesteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience

o   Mindful Matters Programme

o SPHE lessons o Stay Safe

Programme o Walk Tall o Buddy / Peer

mentoring system o Group work such as

circle time o Anti Bullying Week

o NEPS programmes

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. NEPS will also be contacted for advice. Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

Section 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.

- Agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices are in place in the school
- Mobile phones are not permitted at school
- Mobile phones are generally not permitted on school outings except in special circumstances
- Bullying danger spots have been identified and pupils have been consulted in the identification of these danger spots. Teachers and SNAs are vigilant about monitoring these areas. See Supervision Policy.
- All internet sessions are supervised by teachers as outlined in Acceptable Use Policy

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites)

Section 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.
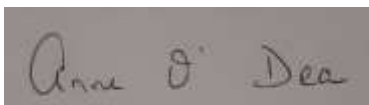
Section 10. Review

10.1
This review of the Anti-Bullying policy was carried out by staff and management in May, 2021 and circulated to BOM members and subsequently adopted and ratified by the Board of Management on 31/05/2021

10.2. This policy has been made available to school personnel, emailed to all parents and provided to the Parents' Association who were consulted in its review. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

10.3 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, communicated to parents 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.
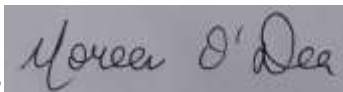
Signed*:*   *Anne O' Dea*
              (Chairperson of BOM)   Date: 31/05/2021

Signed: *Noreen O'Dea*
              (Principal)   Date: 31/05/2021

Date of next review: May, 2022