

## Anti-bullying policy Carrig N.S

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 Carrig N.S 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) 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) 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
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

**(f) Effective supervision 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.**

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 will 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*.

### 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. 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 (gender</b></p>	

including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
<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. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

- The class teacher is responsible for investigating and dealing with bullying in his/her own class.
- The class teacher may consult the principal for advice and support on individual cases of bullying.
- Where a child with special education needs is involved in a bullying incident the class teacher will liaise with the child's resource teacher and other professionals who may be involved in the child's care.
- Each teacher engages in yard duty supervision so during breaks the responsibility lies with the teacher on yard duty to monitor the children's behaviour paying particular attention to children who have been identified as a victim or perpetrator of bullying. The teacher on yard duty will liaise with the class teacher and principal if any incident is brought to her attention.

## **5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows**

- We promote the mission statement of Carrig N.S.
- We strive to foster a strong sense of community and cooperation between Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents.
- The school provides an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.
- The SPHE curriculum is taught in all classes. This provides opportunities for the children to learn about belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Walk Tall and Stay Safe and RSE programmes are specifically taught in each class throughout the school and they help to raise awareness and understanding among children of what bullying is and its impact.
- 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.
- Team activities and sports are encouraged.
- Pair work and group work is encouraged as a teaching method.
- We 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 is made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- We 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.
  - Worry box (placed in an inconspicuous area in the classroom).
  - 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.
- Staff is particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- There is a rota for yard duty supervision and this is strictly adhered to.
- Any incident which occurs on the yard and is deemed serious by the teacher on duty is recorded in the yard book and this helps staff establish if there is a pattern of negative behaviour which may warrant investigation.
- Bullying and discipline matters are discussed at staff meetings.
- Members of the BOM are familiar with the school’s policy on bullying and actively promote it.
- The anti-bullying policy is published on the school website and hard copies are available from the office. Parents of Junior Infants are specifically informed about the policy at Parents Coffee morning and information meeting held in June prior to their child starting school. Before each annual review parents are informed by text to read the policy online and contact the school if they have any queries or suggestions re. changes to be made.
- 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 and by communicating concerns to the school. Parents are encouraged to inform the class teacher as soon as they suspect that there may be a bullying issue.
- Webwise Internet safety programme has been introduced in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4th, 5th and 6<sup>th</sup> class. The aim of the programme is to teach children how to use the internet safely and how to communicate safely and effectively on-line

- The internet usage in the school is strictly monitored. The NCTE's recommended level of filtering is in place so children cannot access social media, Facebook, Twitter, Snap-chat, Viber etc during school hours. Children are encouraged to use the search engine KidRex when going on the internet.
- The annual Safer Internet day is actively engaged in by the pupils.
- Children are not allowed use mobile phones during school hours.
- Parents and children sign an acceptance use of ICT (information and communication technology) contract. In doing so parents and children are giving an undertaking to act responsibly when using the internet
- Carrig N.S. Parents group circulate information relating to seminars/training in issues related to bullying, internet safety etc. They also may invite guest speakers to the school to address these issues from time to time.
- As part of the RSE programme in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class children will be made aware of the different sexual relationships within society. They will be encouraged to respect the LGBT members of the school and wider community. They will be made aware of the issues surrounding identity- based, homophobic and transphobic bullying. Teachers are provided with a copy of "Sexual orientation- advice for schools" leaflet **Appendix 1**

**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**

(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 secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

**Investigating and dealing with incidents:**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)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 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 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 non-aggressive 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 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 should 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 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 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. [www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Complaints-Bullying-Child-Protection-Discrimination/Complaints-Procedures.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Complaints-Bullying-Child-Protection-Discrimination/Complaints-Procedures.pdf)
- 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**

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

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. This will be recorded in an incident report form **Appendix 2** which will be kept by the relevant teacher. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- He/she 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.
- All records of incidents are kept in a file in the filing cabinet in the relevant teacher's classroom and that file is passed on to the next class teacher at the end of the academic year. The file stays with the class files and is stored with those files in line with our data protection policy

### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) 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; and
- b) 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.

**Examples of bullying behaviours which must be recorded in Appendix 3 and reported immediately to the principal.**

- physical assault
- intimidation
- behaviour of a sexual nature
- behaviour which puts a student or member of staff in imminent danger.
- where there is a history of similar behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal.

### **Six major methods of intervention in cases of school bullying.**

1. The Traditional Disciplinary Approach
2. Strengthening the Victim
3. Mediation
4. Restorative Practice
5. The Support Group Method
6. The Method of Shared Concern

A detailed description of these methods is included in **Appendix 4** -Anti-Bullying Support Material

In deciding on which method to use, the following factors should be taken into account:

- the nature of the cases (some are dealt with more effectively with one method than another)
- the level of training and skill that the teachers have in applying the method.

Each teacher will familiarise him/herself with each method and use his/her professional judgement as to the method is most suitable in the circumstances

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

- In-class and whole class support through circle time
- Social skills programme on 1-1 or small group setting with the resource teacher.
- Providing opportunities for the children to discuss situations which arise and explaining clearly to the pupils that the adults in the school are always ready to listen to them.
- Providing children with the vocabulary and language necessary to express their feelings.
- Providing situations where children can achieve success.
- Liaising with parents on an on-going basis.
- Liaising with NEPS and HSE where extra advice and support is necessary.

## **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. (See Code of Behaviour and supervision policy)

## **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 \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

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: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal )

Date \_\_\_\_\_