

## Lecarrow Community National School

### 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 Lecarrow CNS 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) 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
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

**(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.**

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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*.

Please note the list of examples below is non exhaustive.

### 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> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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> Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>	
<p><b>Homophobic and Transgender</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Race, nationality,</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or</li> </ul>

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<b>ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	traveller background •Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
<b>Relational</b>	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: •Malicious gossip •Isolation & exclusion •Ignoring •Excluding from the group •Taking someone’s friends away •“Bitching” •Spreading rumours •Breaking confidence •Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear •The “look” •Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
<b>Sexual</b>	•Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching •Harassment
<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 teachers and The Principal / Deputy Principal.

Where appropriate other teachers will deal with bullying. In general, all staff members must be vigilant at all times, and have a duty to report suspected or potentially bullying behaviour.

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

**Education and prevention strategies**

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### 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 highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- 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.
- The school's anti-bullying policy will be made available to all parent(s)/guardian(s) together with the Code of Behaviour of the school through the school website. A hard copy is also available in the Principal's Office and the Parent's Association Folder.
- A culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders will be encouraged. This will help pupils to gain confidence in 'telling'. It will 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
  - Direct approach to teacher. .
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
  - Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. This protocol will be developed in consultation with parents.
- The Acceptable Use Policy in the school will include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.

The list of supports currently available in the school include Barnardos, [www.bully4u.ie](http://www.bully4u.ie), [www.antibullyingireland.com](http://www.antibullyingireland.com), [www.sticksandstones.ie](http://www.sticksandstones.ie), [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

### Prevention Strategies

- Supervision is sufficient at all times.
- New pupils are monitored as to how they are settling in.
- School personnel, parents and all pupils, are watchful.
- The school's SPHE policy and Stay Safe Programme .
- The staff address the issue of inappropriate sexual language, and its use as a bullying tool. Homophobic and transphobic bullying are unacceptable.

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- Complaints are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly, involving parents in the process where appropriate.
- The school has a firm and fair discipline structure.

**Programmes** that help prevent bullying by fostering empathy, respect, resilience, self worth:

Stay Safe

Walk Tall

Relations and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Roots of Empathy

Up and Away

Circle Time

Making Links

**Procedures** that help prevent bullying:

Yard Rule reminders

Yard Supervision

Yard Book recording system

Wet Supervision

Positive classroom rules

Positive Behaviour Follow Up.

‘Child Protection’ on agenda at staff meetings

Individual Behaviour Plans

Parent/Teacher Communication Notebooks

**Partnership/Communication with Parents/Guardians**

Newsletters

Information Meetings

Invitations to classrooms

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Parental involvement in class activities during the school day

Parent/Teacher meetings

Individual Education/Behaviour Planning meetings

Relevant homework

Triple P ; Positive Parenting Partnership

HSCL Meetings/Courses

### **School Policies that help prevent bullying:**

Child Protection

Code of Behaviour

Religion

Social Personal and Health Education Plan (SPHE)

Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Continuous Professional Development

### **Training for staff funded by Board of Management:**

### **Community Links**

- Glanduff NS and Rahara N.S
- HSE Roscommon
- Athlone Education Centre.
- St Vincent De Paul Athlone

**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:

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### **REPORTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- Teachers, Teaching staff employed under SCP, and non-teaching staff such as secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts/drivers, caretakers, cleaners and ancillary staff must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher/Principal/Deputy Principal.

### **INVESTIGATION**

- (i) The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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);
- (ii) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- (iii) All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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.
- (iv) Non-teaching staff such as secretary are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher, Principal/Deputy Principal.
- (v) Parents 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.
- (vi) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.
- (vii) Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported to them.
- (viii) Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- (ix) All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the age and rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.



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(x) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of

- What happened?
- What needs to be done to make things right?

This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

(xi) If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be encouraged to meet as a group if appropriate. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened.

(xii) Each member of a group will be supported, through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview, by the teacher;

(xiii) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their children.

(xiv) 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;

(xv) It will 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.

### **FOLLOW UP**

(i) 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;
- and

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- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal
- (ii) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will be arranged where appropriate
- (iii) 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;
- (iv) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

Recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.

Informal notes will be recorded by the relevant teachers and stored in Child Protection file in classroom. At the end of the school year they will be placed in pupil's personal file in Principal's Office. Formal records (Appendix 3) will be placed immediately in pupil's personal file in Principal's office

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

#### **INFORMAL: PRE-DETERMINATION THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED**

- (i) All teaching staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. These incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- (ii) While all reports, including anonymous reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- (iii) The relevant teacher will inform Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal

#### **FORMAL STAGE 1: DETERMINATION THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED**

- (i) If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher 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.

#### **FORMAL STAGE 2: APPENDIX 3 FROM DES PROCEDURES**

- (i) The relevant teacher will use the recording template Appendix 3 to record the bullying

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behaviour 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.

The recording template Appendix 3 will be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case. The occurrence of serious and gross misbehaviours as outlined in St Paul's N.S. Code of Conduct will be recorded in Appendix 3

### **7. THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR WORKING WITH PUPILS AFFECTED BY BULLYING IS AS FOLLOWS:**

**Victim(s):** Those who have been subjected to bullying will be supported through the pastoral care structures in the school. Support will be provided for anyone who has been /is being bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their teacher or another teacher. A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them. Children have the opportunity to participate in social skills lessons designed to raise their self-esteem and to develop their friendship and social skills. The victims may have counselling provided by outside agencies.

**Perpetrator(s):** Those who have been found to have engaged in bullying will be encouraged to recognise the inappropriateness of such behaviour and the seriousness of its effects on others. Help and support will also be sought for the perpetrator(s). This will include speaking to them to discover why they became involved. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth through the SPHE programme.

Our programmes of support include the following:

**Programmes** that help prevent bullying by fostering empathy, respect, resilience, self worth:

Stay Safe

Walk Tall

Relations and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Roots of Empathy

Up and Away

Circle Time

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Making Links

**Procedures** that help prevent bullying:

Yard Rule reminders

Yard Supervision

Yard Book recording system

Wet Supervision

Positive classroom rules

Positive Behaviour Follow Up and 'Children Protection on agenda at staff meetings

Individual Behaviour Plans

Parent/Teacher Communication Notebooks

**Partnership/Communication with Parents/Guardians**

Newsletters

Information Meetings

Invitations to classrooms

Parental involvement in class activities during the school day

Parent/Teacher meetings

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Relevant homework

Triple P ; Positive Parenting Partnership

HSCCL Meetings/Courses

**School Policies that help prevent bullying:**

Child Protection

Code of Behaviour

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Social Personal and Health Education Plan (SPHE)

Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Continuous Professional Development

**Training for staff funded by Board of Management:**

**Community Links:**

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- HSE Roscommon
- Athlone Education Centre.
- St Vincent De Paul Athlone

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

**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 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:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

**Date of next review:** \_\_\_\_\_