

Le Chéile N.S.

Anti-Bullying Policy

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 **Le Chéile 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.

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 staff 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 it's impact;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based 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); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Definition of Bullying

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.

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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.

Procedure

Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to the attention of any teacher in the school.

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

The Class teacher initially, the Principal thereafter if necessary. Teacher(s) on supervision duty and SNA's will report and liaise with the class teacher if they observe a bullying incident or a report of bullying is made to them by a child.

Education and Prevention Strategies

The following education and prevention strategies, at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by the school are as follows:

In all areas of the curriculum, teachers will explore and promote the value of respect, diversity and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

The **SPHE** programme makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging, friendship, relationships, integrity, communication, conflict and personal safety.

The **Stay Safe** programme is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance pupils' self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

The **RSE** programme also provides opportunities to explore the area of relationships with others.

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The **Incredible Years Programme** is a Social Emotional and Behavioural Training Programme in which children are taught to identify and name feeling in themselves and others, to problem solve and find solutions which are safe and fair and have good consequences for all, to manage anger, and to practise positive play skills and friendship skills. Through this training, delivered in infants and 1st class, it is hoped to create a culture where bullying is avoided through the promotion of positive behaviours.

The '**Alive-O/Grow in Love**' R.E programmes also support the Anti-Bullying policy of the school, through its focus on relationships with others.

The '**Friends for Life**' Programme as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour and delivered in 3rd and 4th classes, aims to promote positive behaviour and respect for others. Other areas of the curriculum such as Art, Drama and P.E. also foster co-operation and group activity.

The school will foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. Teachers, SNAs, Breakfast club and Afterschool club staff will provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth. Staff will acknowledge and reward good behaviour as appropriate. Relationships with pupils will be based on mutual respect and trust so that pupils will have confidence in the school staff.

Cyber-Bullying.

The best way to address cyber-bullying is to prevent it happening in the first place.

Staff, pupils, parents and BoM will be made aware of issues surrounding cyber-bullying through the use of appropriate awareness raising exercises.

Pupils will learn about cyber-bullying through SPHE, assemblies, and the use of web wise resources in 3rd to 6th classes.

The school will engage a speaker to facilitate a workshop on Cyber-bullying for 5th and 6th classes.

Staff will be made aware of and have access to CPD to assist in learning about current technologies.

Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat cyber-bullying by the HSCL Co-ordinator.

Pupils will on occasions have access to the internet when researching projects. This will be done under supervision of a teacher. Parents of pupils sign a consent form each year giving permission for their child/ children to access the internet in this context.

In accordance with the Code of Behaviour the use of mobile phones in school and in the school grounds is prohibited.

We commit to being vigilant and to investigate any reports of cyber bullying should they arise within the school community.

Other school policies that support this Anti-Bullying policy are: the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Supervision, School Tours and Acceptable Use.

Responding to Bullying

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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