Coláiste Chú Chulainn

Cúram. Forbairt. Feabhas.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Coláiste Chú Chulainn, Dundalk, Co. Louth

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

Coláiste Chú Chulainn is a multi-denominational and co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board. As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills and follows the curricular programmes prescribed.

This Anti-Bullying Policy was developed in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB/TUSLA. The Board of Management of Coláiste Chú Chulainn has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour and within the context of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) child protection guidelines. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

This policy has also been informed by the Health Service Executive guide to *Investigating and Resolving Bullying in School* and the ISPCC's *Anti-Bullying Toolkit*.

2. Vision

The educational vision for Coláiste Chú Chulainn is surmised in the school's motto of *Curam. Fobairt. Feabhas.* and outlined below in the form of a 10 point plan. Our school is a co-educational, multi-denominational, student centred, accountable to its community and, further, will strive to provide the following:

- Excellence in teaching and learning, including e-learning.
- Opportunities for students to be the best they can be, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Inclusion for all students of all abilities.
- Respectful, safe and happy positive learning environment.
- Broad and balanced curriculum
- High level of parental involvement and participation.
- Democratic and inclusive management structure.
- Targeted student support.
- State of the art building and teaching resources.
- Community focal point.

Coláiste Chú Chulainn (CCC) believes that all members of the school community are entitled to a school environment, which is free from bullying and the fear of bullying. All members of the school community will be encouraged to support such an environment and will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying.

3. Aims

The primary aim of the policy is **to resolve any issues** and **restore relationships** as far as is practicable.

In addition, the mains aims of the policy are:

i. To create a positive school culture and climate that is inclusive and welcoming of difference;
ii. To create a school climate which is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss bullying behaviour;
iii. To raise awareness amongst the entire school community (including school management, teachers, pupils, parents, volunteers etc.) that bullying is unacceptable behaviour;
iv. To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring through which all aspects of school activity are kept under observation;
v. To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour;
vi. To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour;
vii. To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour;
viii. To work with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour; and
ix. To facilitate ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy.

4. Key Principles

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-
  o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  o 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-
  o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  o 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); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

5. Definitions

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

> **…unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person(s) and which is repeated over time.**

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

Verbal bullying such as name-calling, jeering, teasing, taunting, slagging, threatening.

Physical bullying such as hitting, spitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, stealing, vandalising, damaging property, intimidating.

Psychological bullying such as excluding, isolating, ridiculing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, passing notes, using peer pressure to intimidate, threatening gestures or looks.

Sexual bullying such as unwelcome sexual comments touching body parts, spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation, taunting a person of different sexual orientation.

Racist bullying such as discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, or cultural ethnicity.

Relational victimisation, manipulating relationships eg. ignoring or excluding from the group, ostracism, breaking confidence, spreading rumours, huddling together as a way of excluding others, talking loudly so that the excluded person can hear, looking "daggers", abusive letters, drawings, texts, e-mail, social media messages, phone calls.

Extortionate bullying to extort items such as money and other property or to force students to carry out actions against their will.

Identity-based bullying such homophobic, transphobic or transgender; or bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs. It also includes bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community.

Cyber bullying is a form of social bullying that uses technological communications to humiliate, harass, embarrass tease, intimidate, threaten or slander an individual or group of people. Cyber bullies use instant messages, texts, e-mails, chat rooms, mobile phones, social networking or blogs and interactive games. Cyber bullying is the act of being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or compromising photographs online or through a mobile phone.

6. Clarification of exclusions

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.

7. Effects of Bullying on Young People

While the effects may not necessarily present at school, some of the effects which may become obvious or apparent when a student is being bullied include:

Fear	Reluctance to go to school
Anxiety	Negative attitude/Difficult/Argumentative
Depression	Bruises, Cuts, Sprains, scratches or torn clothes
Reduced self-esteem	Damage to or loss of property
Lack of concentration on school work	Suicidal thoughts and self-harm
Feeling of isolation	Lack of communication/"Shut down"
Break up of friendships/relationships	

8. Reporting a bullying incident

> **A student, parent/guardian or other person may report an incident of bullying or suspected bullying.**

Reports of bullying incidents can be made to:

Any staff member	Caomhnóir/Form teacher
Meantóir/Year head	Príomhoide/Principal
Príomhoide Tánaisteach/Deputy principal	Caretaker
Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)	Office staff
Student friend	School volunteer

Reports of bullying incidents can be made via:

- ☐ Verbal report
- ☐ Note to staff member
- ☐ Ban The Bully Box

9. Procedures for Investigation, Recording and Follow up of bullying behaviour

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 outlined in detail in Appendix 1.

All interventions will be noted by the *relevant teacher** on the bullying report form.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and/or dealing with bullying can be a:

Teacher	Caomhnóir/Form teacher
Meantóir/Year head	Stiúrthóir

When a student reports an incident of bullying they will be reassured that they have made an important step towards the resolution of the situation.

The student will be interviewed privately and consulted as to how they would like the situation to be resolved. A written statement will be taken to record the facts of the incident(s).

The student against whom the allegations have been made will be interviewed separately and their side of the story listened to. A written statement will be taken to record the facts of the incident(s).

Anyone else who may have witnessed the incident will also be interviewed in order to get a fuller understanding of the incident and written statements taken.

Once it has been established that a case of bullying has occurred under the DES definition, parents or guardians will be contacted, informed and their support sought, except in a case where it is felt doing so could impact on student welfare.

Any student affected by the bullying will be supported and referred, if appropriate, to counselling or other support services available.

Those found to be bullying will be supported in order to raise their awareness of the effects of their actions and to prevent such behaviour continuing

If the bullied student is agreeable, restorative practice "Circle" meetings with those involved will be arranged.

If the bullying behaviour continues and/or the situation is not resolved this form will be passed to the Meantóir for intervention or referral to D. Principal or Principal for further action. This may include seeking the assistance of outside agencies where appropriate and available.

When the intervention is complete the files will be passed on to the appropriate Meantóir for retention.

N.B. THE STAFF MEMBER TO WHOM THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS INITIALLY BEEN REPORTED IS REQUIRED TO CHECK THAT THE INCIDENT HAS BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS OF THE REPORT BEING MADE.

SHOULD (S)HE NOT BE SATISFIED THAT THAT IS THE CASE, THE FORM IN APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL.

(*The relevant teacher is the teacher actively involved in the intervention.)

10. Education and Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) in place in the school include:

10.1 Education Strategies

To create the positive school environment in which an anti-bullying ethos and culture is maintained, it is important to ensure that all members of the school community are made aware and are prepared to meet the challenges and issues presented by bullying incidents. In this light, the following educational strategies form part of the CCC anti-bullying approach.

- All students to be informed of the anti-bullying policy and procedures. 1st years to be informed of these during the induction days.
- Policy and strategies to be outlined to parents/guardians.
- SPHE programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying).
- Cross-curricular topics include material on tolerance, understanding and identity.
- An anti-bullying programme.
- Friendship week.
- Acceptable use of the internet policy.
- Subject dept. exploration of issues such as inclusion, diversity and interdependence, where appropriate.
- Guest speakers for parents, students and staff CPD.
- School clubs, teams etc highlight interdependence.
- Collation and dissemination of background information from primary schools to teaching staff.

10.2   Prevention Strategies

To perpetuate CCC's anti-bullying ethos it is important that the anti-bullying message is kept to the forefront of everyone's mind.

10.2.1   Students

The following measures are undertaken to raise awareness of the need of positive school climate among the student body.
- Reinforcing positive student efforts/Notaí maithe.
- Building student self-confidence.
- Assemblies
- Liaising with primary schools.
- Friendship week.
- Student induction programme for 1st years.
- School tours
- Inclusive & Anti-bullying posters/leaflets.
- Ban The Bully Box
- Student surveys.
- Visible teacher presence.
- Support programmes (e.g. SEN / RSE)
- Clear instructions re. "who to tell" & "how to tell" & "what to expect"

10.2.2   Staff

This process of raising awareness among all staff members in the school community is achieved in the following ways.

- Staff meetings
- Training for new members in an anti-bullying programme.
- C.P.D.
- All staff have a copy of the policy and procedures.
- Whole staff participation in awareness raising events eg. Friendship week etc.

10.2.3   Curriculum

The curriculum actively supports the creation of a positive school culture with a focus on preventing and minimising the impact of bullying on students.

- SPHE - an anti-bullying programme is integrated into the school curriculum. It is taught to all incoming 1st classes. Strategies suggested in the programme will be used as appropriate.
- Dealing with cyber-bullying in ICT classes.
- Dealing with the issue of bullying across the curriculum, in all subject department areas.
- The 1st year induction programme includes an anti-bullying section.

10.2.4   Initiatives

Other examples of school initiatives which support the creation of a positive environment and the anti-bullying ethos include:

- Display anti-bullying and welcoming diversity posters.
- Liaise with primary schools.
- 1st year induction days.
- Group exercises eg school trips, extra-curricular clubs and societies, team sports.
- Student council to raise concerns.
- Student surveys.
- Raising awareness among non-teaching staff.
- Dissemination of background information to staff.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. Monitoring the implementation of the policy

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the principal and a sub-committee of the board of management.

An annual report should be issued to the board of management to confirm that the actions/measures set down under the policy are being implemented.

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.

14. Reviewing and evaluating the policy

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 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.

_____   _____

By and on behalf of Board of Management   Date

_____   _____

Principal   Date

Date of next review: **September 2020**

Appendix 1   CCC Anti-Bullying Procedures

ANTI – BULLYING PROCEDURES

CCC anti bullying policy and procedures are to be read and followed within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour and within the context of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) child protection guidelines. The policy and procedures also meet the requirements of the DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Teachers should always be vigilant to the possibility of bullying occurring and should take a calm, unemotional, problem solving approach when dealing with reported incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.

LEVEL ONE (Teacher)   Adopt an informal approach to resolving the issue

Log a bullying incident/report on the yellow "Bullying Incident Report Form" (Appendix 2)

Speak to all parties in private. Useful questions...who - what - where - when - why.

Consult the student as to how s/he would like the situation to be resolved.

Get a written account from all parties.

If a group is involved interview each member individually.

Thereafter, if appropriate, interview the group together when each member should be asked for his/her account.

Contact parents of all involved at an early stage to inform them and explain actions being taken and to give parents an opportunity to discuss how they can help. If deemed appropriate, this may take the form of suggesting restorative approaches that the parents could take to support their son/daughter.

If it has been determined that bullying has happened the offence should be made clear to the student and efforts should be made to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

Record all steps on the bullying report form and give the report to the year head for a) filing b) further action.

If the bullied student is agreeable, an RP Circle meetings with those involved should be arranged

LEVEL TWO (Meantóir) A formal approach if the matter is unresolved/part of a pattern

If the bullying forms part of a pattern or the initial efforts of the relevant teacher prove unsuccessful in restoring the relationship, the issue can be referred to the Meantóir who can:

- Consult with staff members and form teachers.

- Collate all evidence.

- Contact parents / guardians.

- Lead a restorative practice circle meeting.

- Maintain regular links with the bullied student.

- Monitor the student who has bullied.

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⯀　　Refer those affected to a relevant　　　　　　　agency as appropriate.

The Code of discipline remains available to be used as an intervention if it is deemed the best course of action.

LEVEL THREE (Deputy Principal/Principal)	In the event of the problem persisting

If the bullying persists despite the interventions of the relevant teacher and/or the Meantóir, the issue can be referred to the Principal or Deputy Principal who can:

⯀　　Inform/meet with parents and students involved.

⯀　　Liaise with bullied student.

⯀　　Monitor student who has bullied.

• 　Liaise with SEN staff/NEPS/HSE Child & Family services/Tulsa/Social services/An Garda Síochána/other agencies as appropriate.

N.B. IF THE RELEVANT TEACHER CONSIDERS THAT THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS AFTER IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY.

LEVEL FOUR (Principal)	To lodge a complaint with the Principal

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the bullying incident or the procedures that were followed, they can lodge a complaint in the first instance by writing to the Principal and outlining the incident and the grounds for the complaint.

The Principal will respond as soon as it is practicable.

LEVEL FIVE (The Board of Management)	To lodge a complaint with the Board

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the response received from the Principal, the option to write to the Chairperson of the Board of Management is available to them once all of the previous steps have been followed.

Correspondence can be delivered to the school office and marked for the attention of the "Chairperson of the Board of Management".

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will respond to the parents/guardians as soon as is practicable.

Appendix 2   Bullying Incident Report Form

Written By:		Date:
Signed:		Received By:

Appendix 3   Form for Recording Bullying Behaviour

[This form is to be forwarded to the Principal if the relevant teacher considers the bullying incident *HAS NOT* been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after it has been determined that bullying has occurred.]

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		Teacher	
Other Pupil		Other	
Parent			

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

		Please give further details/notes
Outdoor area		
Classroom		
Corridor/Common area		
Toilets		
School Bus		
Other		

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

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

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

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

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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 _____

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Appendix 4   Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy by BOM

	Y/N
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
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?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
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?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
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?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed_____ Date_____(Chairperson, Board of Management)
Signed_____ Date_____(Principal)

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Appendix 5   Parental support

Advice for parents to help their children cope during a bullying incident

- It is not advisable to advocate hitting back
- Teach them some coping strategies
- Encourage them to tell
- Stay with friends - avoid bullies
- Avoid provoking a bully
- Encourage assertiveness and not aggression
- Save any abusive phone, online or multimedia message and report them to the service provider and/or Garda.

What should a parent do if they know that their son/daughter is being bullied?

- Remain calm. If you get upset your child may become distressed and not wish to tell you anymore for fear of upsetting you further
- Assure them that it is not their fault and that you will help them sort it out
- Contact the school – it is advisable that a parent contact the Meantóir for each year group. Parents may arrange an appointment with the Meantóir and/or relevant teacher.
- Prepare for that meeting - bring notes and details of the events from your child's point of view
- Ask that the incident be investigated and what supports the school can offer your child
- Work with the school to develop a strategy to deal with the problem

Advice for parents you think their child may be a bully

This situation presents a difficult situation for parents but one in which CCC will support parents. If it is discovered that your child is in fact the bully it can be quite a shock and very upsetting.

Consider the following in dealing with this situation:
- Don't ignore the situation. You have to deal with it and help your child to understand that this behaviour is not acceptable and help them to change
- Don't panic or get upset. This may make your child 'close down' because they feel that they have made you angry, upset, and disappointed or dislike them.
- Don't use words like bullying or being a 'bully'. This will label your child and may make them feel ashamed. This may cause them to withdraw or tell lies about what happened so that they don't have to feel ashamed. Your role is to support them in talking about what happened and solve the problem.
- Talk about specific details of the bullying. For example, "When you called her names, what did you mean to do?" Your child may say that they were only playing or having fun – this may be an excuse or your child may not have intended to hurt the other child. Either way, you have to explain to your child how that behaviour is hurtful to the other child and that it has to stop.
- Encourage your child to be empathic. When chatting about the behaviour, ask them to imagine how the victim may have felt. For example, "How do you think you would feel if someone hit you like that?"
- Think about your own home. Is there bullying going on there? Is your child copying behaviour that they see in their own lives?

- Try to find out if there are other children involved in the bullying. If you child is part of a 'group' where they are expected to bully, then this has to be addressed with the school.
- Contact the school. The school will be grateful for information and support from parents. Also, staff in the school may be able to give advice or add some details which can help you better understand the situation with the aim of restoring the relationships between the students.
- Give your child plenty of encouragement and praise. Spend plenty of one to one time with them, chat to them and use every opportunity to connect with them. This will help your child to be open with you and also give you plenty of opportunity to check in with how they are getting on with stopping the bullying. Encourage and praise them in their efforts to stop the bullying behaviour.

Useful Numbers and Contact Details

How to contact online service providers

- **To report content on Facebook**
  www.facebok.com/help

- **To report content on YouTube**
  http://help.youtube.com/support

- **To report content on Snapchat**
  Email support@snapchat.com or click on "Support" link on www.snapchat.com

- **To report content on AskFM**
  http://ask.fm/about/safety

- **To report content on Instagram**
  http://help.instagram.com
  Press 'Report Inappropriate' button

Useful advice

- **Webwise**
  www.webwise.ie
  Provides parents, teachers and students advice and information about potential dangers online

- **Child Line**
  www.childline.ie
  Advice on child protection issues

- **Tackle Bullying**
  www.tacklingbullying.ie
  Advice on child protection issues

- **ISPCC Blue Shield**
  http://www.ispcc.ie/ispcc-shield-/bullying-support
  Advice on preventing and managing bullying and cyberbullying.

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Policy ratification

Policy:	ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been communicated to our school community of School Management, Staff, Students, Parents and Guardians, both directly and/or through appointed representatives.

The policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Coláiste Chú Chulainn, properly convened, at its meeting of

_____

Day/Date

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____