

CENTRAL MODEL SENIOR SCHOOL Anti-Bullying Policy (2019)

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008) issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of the Central Model Senior 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.

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 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.
- 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 -
 - Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- Explicitly address the issue of cyber-bullying and identity based bullying including 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

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

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, non-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 gender-based bullying.
- Identity-based bullying such as racist bullying, gender-based 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.

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:	
Principal	Deirdre Gartland
Deputy Principal	Gillian Gerrard
Home School Liaison Teacher Links with parents, information supports, SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE programmes	Anne-Marie Connolly
All teaching staff have responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying	
SNA - Assisting with monitoring of pupils	

Education and Prevention Strategies

1. Circle Time
2. Restorative Practice
3. Support Teacher will work with small groups/individual to enhance self-esteem
4. After Schools Clubs - participation and acceptance of difference.
5. Assemblies/rewards pupils of the week, Green School award, attendance, noticeable achievements.
6. Football, athletics, training
7. Discipline for learning (DFL)
8. Respect, teachers call pupils by their first names, pupils refer to teachers by their names - Mr. Miss.
9. SPHE/Stay Safe/Weaving Well-Being/Walk Tall/R.S.E./Accord
10. Friendship Week - with emphasis on saying "**No to bullying**"
11. All members of the school community (Students, parents, teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff) are expected to speak respectfully to each other.
12. We aim to provide a school-wide approach (school management, staff, parents and pupils) to dealing with bullying behaviour. There is space within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote diversity.
13. The staff in our school are expected to behave as role models, through their own interactions and their interaction with students and parents.
14. The wider school community will be made aware of our stance on bullying.
15. The Anti-Bullying Policy is published on our school website.

Our Procedures re: Bullying Behaviour

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy. In these procedures the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the relevant teacher. In this school the relevant teacher will be the class teacher. 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:

- Since the failure to report bullying can lead to a continuation or a deterioration of bullying, the school and parents encourage children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. This can be with the class teacher, the teacher on yard duty at the time, Special Needs Assistants and the Principal or with parents. This is a "telling school" as defined by the Stay Safe Programme. Children will therefore be constantly assured that their reports of bullying either for themselves or peers will be treated with sensitivity.
- Any reports of bullying will be investigated promptly and fairly. Pupils should feel confident in "telling".
- The incident will be investigated - what, who, when, where, why?
- The relevant teacher will keep informal notes on the issues/incidents.
- An effort will be made to resolve any issues and to restore as far as practicable, the relationships.
- The teacher will exercise professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and as to how it can be resolved.
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation.
- Serious incidents, or a recurring incident of bullying behaviour which has in the opinion of a teacher not been adequately or appropriately addressed within 20 school days will be recorded on the DES template and shall be reported to the principal/deputy principal. The teacher will also use the DES recording template where he/she considers the bullying behaviour to be serious misconduct.
- Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information, and will be expected to assist the investigation. Children should understand there are no innocent bystanders if they remain passive where bullying is concerned – a bystander must report bullying. Parents will be made aware of this behaviour and requested to come and discuss it with the teacher/principal with a view to solving the problem. No parent should ever confront a child in the school directly in relation to bullying.
- Restorative Practice: Restorative Practice is used to manage conflict and disagreement. This is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those through bullying. RP focuses on relationships and community, rather than on punishment.
- The situation will continue to be monitored to ensure that the problem has been resolved. Actions taken will be recorded using the template for recording bullying behaviour.
- The code of behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal. Records will be reviewed and analysed.

- If a case remains unresolved the matter will be referred to the school's Board of Management. The Board will also be briefed in relation to the number, if any, of templates which have been completed.
- Additionally, 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 Board of Management.
- 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.

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

- **Circle Time** – In class/with particular groups involved
- Support teacher to work with children concerned
- Activities during Anti-Bullying week to include breakfast club, friendship collage art work, talent show, photo booth, bake sale and basketball/football matches.
- Developing children's awareness of bullying through teaching of the SPHE curriculum.
- Ensure that all staff including Secretaries, SNA's, School Traffic Wardens/Cleaners and Caretakers are aware of any particular incidences of bullying and encourage them to report any incidents of bullying that they may witness to the relevant teacher.
- Inform and work with parents where necessary to assist in a quick resolution to any bullying incidents.
- Where considered appropriate by the teacher, he/she to keep a written record of details of any bullying incidents they deal with or are involved in.
- In cases where bullying is considered serious in nature and may include emotional, physical or sexual abuse of a child, the school will adhere to the Child protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (2017)
- Cases of alleged bullying will be discussed at staff-meetings and solutions will be formulated in a collaborative manner
- Use 'template for recording bullying behaviour' provided by the Department to document serious incidents of bullying and/or those that have not been adequately dealt with within 20 school days.(Relevant teacher to fill this out).

Review programme of support by:

Conducting student questionnaire during the periods:

1. September / October
2. November / December
3. Before Easter
4. After Easter
5. One other time if necessary

Discussing particular incidents at staff meetings and how they are being dealt with.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying has been defined as:

“An aggressive, intentional act carried out by: a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.”

What is Cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying does not involve face to face or physical confrontation.

It does not require any close proximity to the cyber victim.

Cyber bullying can also be carried out anonymously

Disinhibition exists - young people say and do things online that they would never do face to face

Perceived as an environment free from adult supervision.

The fear of discovery is absent.

This fear which may control their behaviour in the real world does not control it in the cyber world.

Often the cyberbully does not know or understand the effects of their actions on the cyber victim

By not experiencing the harm it causes means that the cyber bully may have no empathetic response at all.

How Cyber Bullying is carried out:

Mobile Phone:

SMS: sending or receiving abusive text messages by mobile phone

MMS: taking, sending or receiving unpleasant photos and/or videos using mobile phones

Calls: sending or receiving upsetting phone calls (e.g. malicious prank calls)

Computers/Smart Phones:

E-mail: Malicious or threatening emails directly to a victim, or about a victim to others.

Chat rooms: Intimidation or abuse when participating in chat rooms.

Instant Message: Abusive messages on social media.

Websites: Where secret or personal details are revealed in an abusive way or where nasty or unpleasant comments are posted.

Behaviours

Flaming: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language

Harassment: Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages

Denigration: “Dissing” someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumours about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships.

Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else and posting material to get that person in trouble or danger or to damage that person’s reputation or friendships.

Outing: Sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing information or images online

Trickery: Talking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, then sharing it online.

Exclusion: Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group

Cyber stalking: Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

Preventing Cyber Bullying:

Don't reply
Keep the message
Block the sender
Tell someone you trust
Report problems

What Should a Parent do?

Speak openly to their children about cyber bullying.

Talk to them about internet safety.

Monitor their online activity.

Reported cyber bullying episodes will not result in loss of technology.

Discourage young people from responding to the bully as this only antagonizes the bully and the situation.

Evidence of the cyber bullying should always be kept as a record of what has happened.

Contacting the Internet Service Provider (ISPs) which may result in the cyber bully having their social networking service suspended.

Inform the school

Contacting the police may be necessary if the cyber bullying involves threats of violence, harassment, child pornography, extortion or obscene calls or texts.

There is no specific legislation governing Internet safety at school level.

Parents and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 years old to register with and use many social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc

Internet Safety Legislation

Data Protection Act 2018

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

This act legislates against anyone who knowingly produces, prints, publishes, distributes, exports, imports, shows, possesses or sells child pornography.

Interception Act 1993

(The Interception of Postal Packets and Telecommunications Messages Regulation Act 1993). This act stipulates that telecommunication messages can be intercepted for the purpose of an investigation of a serious offence.

Video Recordings Act 1989

This act prohibits the distribution of videos which contain obscene or indecent material which may lead to the depravation or corruption of the viewer. It would apply where someone in the State supplied this kind of video over the Internet.

“Anything you say or do to someone online, you are doing to them in the real world too”.

Appendix 2 Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents groups in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

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.

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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 6-2-19

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.

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

Date of next review: September 2021