Respect - Justice - Integrity - Honesty - Saothar

Coláiste na Mí

Anti-Bullying Policy

2024

Kindness - Honour - Teamwork - Responsibility

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Start of Review	August 2024
Student Focus Group	
Parent/Guardian Review	
Staff Review	
Ratified by CNM Board of Management	
Ratified by LMETB Board of Management	

Updated	
Date for next review	2025/2026

1. INTRODUCTION

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

The educational vision for Coláiste na Mí is surmised in the school's 9 values which underpin all we do; Respect, Justice, Integrity, Honesty, Saothar, Kindness, Honour, Teamwork, Responsibility. Our school is a child centred, supportive learning environment where each student is encouraged and facilitated in realising their full potential in a positive climate which is caring, respectful, fair and inclusive. The school community of Coláiste na Mí is a partnership of students, staff, parents and other agencies within the community. The promotion of personal development and learning through hard work, creativity and commitment is a priority in our school.

Coláiste na Mí 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.

1.1 Scope

The anti-bullying policy concerns all aspects of school life and as such it is a whole school activity.

The anti-bullying policy applies to all school staff, the board of management, parents/guardians, students and others (including prospective or potential students and their parents/guardians and applicants for staff positions within the school) insofar as the measures under the plan relate to them.

While the Board of Management and the school principal has the overall responsibility for the oversight and implementation of the policy, all members of staff have a contribution to make.

The various members of the school educational team aspire to provide students with the best possible service. Members of this team include, among others:

- School Management
- Year Heads
- Class Tutors
- Subject Teachers and Departments
- Additional Needs Co-ordinator
- Additional Needs Assistants
- Programmes Co-ordinator
- Parents/Guardians
- School administration
- School maintenance

1.2. Policy and Legislative Context

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 CNM adopts 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.

Other requirements and guidelines include:

- **Circular 0045/2013** - Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-andForms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2019.pdf
- **Anti-Bullying Support Materials**, PDST, 2013   - https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/AntiBullying%20Support%20Materials.pdf
- **Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023**, DES, 2018. https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy- statement-and-frameworkfor-practice-2018%E2%80%932023.pdf
- **Wellbeing Guidelines for Junior Cycle**, NCCA, 2017. https://www.ncca.ie/media/2487/wellbeingguidelines_forjunior_cycle.pdf
- **Looking At Our School 2016 -** A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools, Inspectorate of Department of Education and Skills, 2016. https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports- Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/Looking-at-Our-School-2016-A-Quality- Frameworkfor-Post-Primary-schools.pdf
- **School Self-Evaluation Guidelines** 2016 – 2020, Inspectorate of Department of Education and Skills, 2015. http://schoolself-evaluation.ie/post-primary/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/01/School-SelfEvaluation-Guidelines-2016-2020- Post-Primary_web.pdf
- **Framework for Junior   Cycle**,   NCCA,   2015. https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/PolicyReports/Framework-for-Junior- Cycle-2015.pdf
- **Well-being in Post-Primary Schools. Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention**, NEPS, 2013. https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-

Colleges/Information/Resources-Guidance/Well-Being-in-PostPrimary-Schools-Guidelines-for-Mental-Health-Promotion-and-Suicide-Prevention-2013.pdf
- **Education (Welfare) Act 2000**
http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/enacted/en/html
- **Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools**, Túsla/NEWB, 2008   -
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

Policy documents which impact on the formation and delivery of the anti-bullying policy:

LMETB Policies

- Acceptable Use ICT Policy
- Admissions Policy & Procedures
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Educational Tours and Field Trips Policy
- GDPR Policy and Privacy Notices
- Invited/External speakers' policy
- Records Management Policy
- Suspension and Expulsion Policy & Procedures

CNM Policies

- Acceptable Use Policy for Network and Internet
- Admissions policy
- Child Protection Risk Assessment and Statement
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Critical Incident Management Policy
- Additional Educational Needs Policy
- Strategy re Attendance and Participation

1.3 Rationale for an Anti-Bullying Policy

The DES (2005) Guidelines state that schools should "*...develop a comprehensive guidance plan as part of their overall school development plan, taking into account the needs of students, available resources and contextual factors*" (DES, 2005; pg. 4).

Coláiste na Mí 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.

1.4 Principles of Whole-School Anti-Bullying plan

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
  - ✓ 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 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

1.5 Aims and Objectives

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

The objectives of this Anti-Bullying Policy are to achieve the following outcomes:

- To create a positive school culture and climate that is inclusive and welcoming of difference
- To create a school climate that is open, supportive and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss bullying behaviour
- To raise awareness amongst the entire school community that bullying is unacceptable behaviour
- To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour
- To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour
- To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour (considering the new school context)
- To work with and through external agencies in countering all forms of bullying
- To facilitate ongoing reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy

2. DEFINITIONS, EXAMPLES & EXCLUSIONS

2.1 Definition of bullying

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."**

2.2. Examples

Examples may include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

Type	Explanation & Specific Examples of Behaviour
Verbal	Name-calling, jeering, teasing, taunting, slagging, threatening.
Physical aggression	Hitting, spitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, stealing, vandalising, intimidating.
Psychological	Excluding, isolating, ridiculing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, passing notes, using peer pressure to intimidate, threatening gestures or looks.
Reciprocal	Aggression with ongoing hurtful banter.
Sexual	Unwelcome sexual comments, touching body parts, spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation, taunting a person of different sexual orientation.
Racist	Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, or cultural ethnicity.
Relational	Victimisation, manipulating relationships e.g. 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	Homophobic, transphobic or transgender bullying; 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	A form of social bullying that uses technological communications to humiliate, harass, embarrass tease, intimidate, threaten or slander an individual or group of people. Cyberbullying or cyber harassment is a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means. Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are also known as online bullying.
Damage to property	Damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks, learning materials, pupil's locker, bicycle…etc.

2.3. 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.

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.

3. INDICATORS & IMPACT OF BULLYING

3.1. Indicators of Bullying

While the indicators of bullying can vary for each individual, the following signs and symptoms *may* suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, argumentative regarding attending school, truancy
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting, self-harm
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do NOT necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

3.2. Impact of Bullying

Individuals involved	Potential impacts
Pupils who are being bullied	May develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable Lowering of self-esteem Changes in mood and behaviour Extreme cases may result in self-harm

Pupils who witness bullying	Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. Pupils may also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.
Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour	Can be at higher risk of depression Increased risk of developing an anti-social personality Anxiety disorders Likelihood of substance abuse, law-breaking behaviour in adulthood Decreased educational attainment, decreased occupational attainment

4. 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 teacher	Caomhnóir/Form teacher
Year head	Principal
Deputy Principal	Guidance Counsellor
Special Needs Assistant (SNA)	Auxiliary Staff
Student friend/Cinnire	Parent/Guardian

Reports of bullying incidents can be made via:

- Verbal report
- Note to staff member
- E-mail colaistenami@lmetb.ie

5. PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING, FOLLOW-UP AND RECORDING 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
Year head	Principal/Deputy Principal

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 Yearhead for intervention or referral to Deputy 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 Yearhead 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.)

6. EDUCATION & PREVENTION STRATEGIES

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

6.1. 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 CNM anti-bullying approach:

- Anti-bullying policy to be included in the Information pack issued to all parents/guardians.
- 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 of incoming first years at the Information meeting.
- SPHE programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying)
- RSE programme (includes material on cyber, homophobic and transphobic bullying)
- Theme weeks such as Anti-Bullying week, Stand up week, Friendship week, Culture and Diversity week.
- Acceptable use of the internet policy (includes material on cyber bullying).
- Specific action plan to prevent bullying in the classroom.
- Subject dept. plans to explore of issues such as inclusion, diversity and interdependence when relevant.
- Programmes such as FUSE and Jigsaw: One Good School.
- Guest speakers for parents, students and professional development for staff.
- School clubs, teams etc highlight interdependence.
- Support programmes for those affected by bullying eg. Guidance, AEN, Counselling service for individuals affected.
- Collation and dissemination of background information from primary schools to teaching staff.

6.2. Preventative Strategies

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

6.2.1. Students

The following measures are undertaken to raise awareness of the need of positive school climate among the student body.

- Reinforcing positive student efforts
- Building student self-confidence

- SPHE programme
- Subject specific preventative measures
- Tionnals
- Liaising with primary schools
- Anti-bullying/Stand Up/Friendship/Culture and Diversity week
- Welcome ceremony for 1st years
- Graduation ceremony for 6th years
- School tours / bonding trips
- Inclusive & Anti-bullying posters / leaflets ✓ Plasmas screen messages.
- Mentor/Cinnire for 1st years
- Student surveys
- Visible teacher presence and supervision
- Support programmes from SPHE / Guidance / AEN / RSE / Jigsaw / FUSE
- Clear instructions about "who to tell" & "how to tell" & "what to expect"

6.2.2. Staff

The 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. and sharing of the policy and procedures with all staff
- Whole staff participation in awareness raising events e.g. Anti-bullying week, Subject dept. plans to include plan regarding preventative measures
- Support programmes in SPHE / Jigsaw / Guidance / RSE / FUSE / AEN.

6.2.3. 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.
- RSE programme
- Each subject dept. promotes an anti-bullying ethos and has agreed specific preventative measures.
- The 1st year induction program includes an anti-bullying section.
- The information pack relevant to those wishing to enrol includes CNM's anti-bullying strategy

6.3. Initiatives

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

- Display anti-bullying and welcoming diversity posters.
- Liaise with primary schools.
- Sports day, termly fun days for different year groups.
- 1st year induction days and "welcome ceremony".
- Anti-bullying programme (Classroom Guidance) completed with all 1st year students
- Supervision for all social areas before and after school and during morning and afternoon breaks.
- SNA supervision for AEN students before school and after breaks
- Group exercises e.g. school trips, extra-curricular clubs and societies, team sports.
- Student council/Cinnire system and student surveys to raise concerns.
- Raising awareness among non-teaching staff.
- Jigsaw: One Good School Programme, educating all members of school community on how to support young people's mental health.
- FUSE Anti-bullying lessons available to all teachers.
- Student mentor involvement with 1st years.

7. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Prevention of bullying behaviour and incidents is not the remit by any one individual or group, but rather of all members of the school community. A whole-school approach benefits from the synergy of many working together with a shared vision towards a common goal.

A Whole School Approach thus ensures that our school maximises its resources through the identification of roles and responsibilities for school management and staff in the provision of appropriate support to students. The main roles and responsibilities within our School are outlined below.

All members of the school community	Help the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere
	Report any incidents of bullying behaviour that you observe
	Model the school standards of behaviour and demonstrate the school values
	Recognise the potential of all students to behave in bullying ways Have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of fellow students and school staff

Parents/Guardians	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 Equip the student with a range of life skills

Since their example is a powerful source of learning for pupils, parents should model the standards that students are asked to respect

Monitor student use of technology at home. |
| Students | Report any concerns regarding bullying to any member of staff

Look after and out for each other

Have a responsibility not to engage in any bullying behaviour

Report any bullying behaviour that you observe or hear about to a member of staff |
| Board of Management | Formally adopt and implement an Anti-Bullying Policy that fully complies with the DES procedures (2013)

Ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed, and recommendations are communicated to the school community.

Ensure the policy is highlighted and promoted on a schoolwide basis within the school, with particular attention being given to incoming pupils and their parents

Ensure that all members of school staff (under the direction of the principal) have sufficient familiarity with the school's Anti- Bullying

Policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy (under the direction of the principal) |
| School Leadership | Development of Anti-Bullying Policy

Implementation of policy

Monitoring & review of policy

Apply Code of Conduct when necessary

Report to Board of Management regarding Anti-Bullying

Raise awareness of anti-bullying procedures and prevention strategies

Exploit opportunities provided by the school curriculum to raise awareness, foster an attitude of respect for all and influence

attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner Support and lead initiatives with other staff members |

	Consult with and seek assistance from external agencies (NEPS, HSE, social workers, community workers, bus drivers, Gardaí…etc.) where necessary
	Make referrals to Túsla (as Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection) in cases of severe bullying
All School staff	Share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by a member of the school community
	Model the school standards of behaviour and demonstrate the school values
	Strive to engender an ethos under which bullying is unacceptable
	Be fair, consistent and clear in disciplinary measures
	Organise events, themed weeks, performances, speakers, projects, displays and lessons to highlight the Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures to the whole school e.g. Anti-Bullying Week
Year head	Consult with relevant teacher, is requested, in relation to a bullying incident
	Apply the Anti-Bullying procedure at Level Two should initial intervention not have resolved the matter
	Retain the Bulling Report Form and ensure it is completed correctly
Relevant teachers	Listen to any concerns
	Investigate allegations of bullying
	Consult with any staff member or other persons during the course of their investigation in order to seek guidance or further relevant information
	Exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved
	Resolve any issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties
	Complete relevant forms and keep records
	Liaise with Principal and Anti-Bullying team
	Liaise with students and parents
	Decide post-investigation, whether allegations of negative behaviour fall under the definition of bullying
	Take whatever follow up actions are necessary in order to intervene in cases of bullying

	Report any concerns where a particular bullying episode is causing serious upset to a student, staff member or other person, to the Principal or Deputy Principal at the earliest possible opportunity

Other members of staff – Caomhnoir, Guidance counsellors, AEN staff, Auxiliary staff – may have specific role in dealing with individual bullying incidents when the circumstances require their intervention.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Referral of serious cases

CNM reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6.3.5 of the DES procedures to seek the assistance of agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS), the HSE, Túsla, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to dealing effectively with bullying.

In situations where an incident (bullying or misconduct) is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the matter will be referred to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The school may consult with Túsla or other relevant agencies to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the Túsla or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

8.2 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.

Please note that bullying and harassment is not tolerated in CNM. Under the Anti-Bullying Policy, breaches may be referred to be dealt with under the Code of Conduct. This will include the full range of sanctions of the Code of Conduct, up to and including Suspension and Exclusion.

8.3. Confidentiality

Students are assured of being treated in a just and fair manner when dealing with a bullying incident. Exceptions to confidentiality are where there is danger to the student or to someone else and/or where the law requires disclosure.

9. MONITORING, REVIEW & EVALUATION

This anti-bullying policy is made available to school personnel, the parent's association and members of the school community. A copy of the policy is published on the school website (cnm.ie)

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the principal and updates reported to the Board of Management. Reports shall include the overall number of bullying cases reported since the previous meeting and confirmation that all cases reported to the Board of Management, have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

The Board of Management will undertake an annual review of the Anti-Bullying policy and its implementation in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 7.2 of the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, using the checklist included as Appendix 4.

The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas of improvement identified by the annual review. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website. Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management meeting that adopted the review and a record and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to LMETB and the DES.

On-going review and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy and support plans will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Department of Education and Skills or the Department of Children and Youth Affairs), legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others.

The plan will be reviewed every year. The next date for a full review is during the academic year 2025/2026.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Anti-Bullying Procedures

CNM 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 "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 meeting with those involved should be arranged.

LEVEL TWO (Year head) 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 Year head who can:

Consult with staff members	Consult with form teachers
Collate all evidence	Lead a restorative circle
Maintain links with the bullied student	Monitor the student who has bullied
Contact parents/guardians	Refer to counsellor/counsellor/another 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 Year head, 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.

Department of Education Definition of Bullying:

Repeated deliberate aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.

LEVEL ONE – STAFF MEMBER

☐ **For Filing**   **For Further Action**   ☐

<u>Bullying Report Form</u>

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))*		4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned		Playground	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		School Bus	
		Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	

Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

Details of actions taken by the relevant teacher

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

LEVEL TWO - ACTION TAKEN BY YEAR HEAD

Form received on: _____

☐ Consult with Caomhnoir   Date: _____

☐ Interviews with witnesses

☐ Written account(s) from: _____

                                   _____

                                   _____

                                   Date:_____

☐ Parents/Guardians Informed   Date: _____

☐ Reported back to bullied student(s)   Date: _____

☐ Monitoring of bully   Date: _____

☐ Supervised Meeting   Date: _____

Refer to: Guidance & Counselling ☐

Other Agencies   ☐ Specify _____

Account of Intervention

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Year Head Signature: _____

Referral to Anti-Bullying Team   ☐   Date: _____

Code of Discipline   ☐   Date: _____

Reason for using Code of Discipline

_____
_____
_____

LEVEL THREE - ANTI-BULLYING TEAM/D.P./PRINCIPAL

Date of referral: _____

Names of Team Members involved:

_____
_____

[ ] Inform Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

[ ] Supervised Meeting   [ ] Guidance & Counselling

[ ] Report back to bullied student(s)

[ ] Monitoring of bully   [ ] Other Agencies – Specify

_____

Give an account of intervention:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Referral to Deputy Principal or Principal re: Code of Behaviour   [ ]

Date: _____

Form returned to Year Head: _____

Filed on: _____ Filed by: _____

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.

Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____Class_____

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

_____

_____

_____

Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned		Teacher	
Other Pupil		Other	
Parent			

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

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

Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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

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

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

Homophobic	
Disability/SEN related	
Racist	
Membership of Traveller community	
Other (specify)	

Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4 – Checklist for Annual Review of Anti-Bullying Policy

	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)

Appendix 5 – Advice for Parents/Guardians

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 Year head for each year group. Parents may arrange an appointment with the Year head 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 if you think their child may be a bully

- This situation presents a difficult situation for parents but one in which CNM 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 your 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.

Appendix 6 - Useful Guidance, Resources and Contact Information

How to contact online service providers

Instagram
Staying safe on Instagram
https://about.instagram.com/blog/tips-and-tricks/privacy-and-safety-tips-for-instagram

Reporting bullying and harassment on Instagram
https://help.instagram.com/547601325292351

Whatsapp
How to stay safe on Whatsapp
https://faq.whatsapp.com/general/security-and-privacy/staying-safe-on-whatsapp/?lang=en

How to block and report contacts on Whatsapp
https://faq.whatsapp.com/iphone/security-and-privacy/how-to-block-and-unblock-contacts

SnapChat
Staying safe on SnapChat
https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/safety-tips-resources

Reporting bullying and harassment on Snapchat https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/report-abuse-in-app

Facebook
Staying safe on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/help/592679377575472

Reporting bullying and harassment on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/help/116326365118751

YouTube
Staying safe on YouTube
https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/9563682?hl=en

Reporting bullying and harassment on YouTube
https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802268?hl=en

TikTok
Bullying Prevention
https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-us/bullying-prevention/

Parent/Guardian Guide
https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-us/guardians-guide/

Reporting bullying and harassment on TikTok
https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/taking-action-against-bullying-and-harassment/
Useful advice and resources

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

ISPCC
Parent Support Hub
https://www.ispcc.ie/parenting-hub/ Abuse and Bullying
https://www.ispcc.ie/category/parenting-hub/abuse-and-bullying/

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

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 na Mí, properly convened, at its meeting of

_____

Day/Date

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____