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Anti-Bullying Policy Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS Johnstown

Last Revision:
September 2024

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1. Introduction:

In accordance with the requirements of Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines for schools issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) (now subsumed into The Child and Family Agency - Túsla), the Board of Management of OLG C GNS 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 by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in September 2013.

2. Key Principles of Best Practice:

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 non-inclusivity.
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
(See Appendix 1 for practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate)
- 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.

3. Definition of Bullying:

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (2013) bullying is defined as follows:

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

Cyber bullying includes (but is not limited to) communicating via electronic means with the objective of causing hurt, fear, embarrassment, humiliation, alarm and/or distress to one or more persons.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying (*See 3.1 for details*)
- Cyber-bullying (*See 3.2 for details*)
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs (*See 3.3 for details*)

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.

This policy applies to activities and events that take place:

- During school time (including break times)
- Going to and from school
- School tours/trips
- School Run Extra-curricular activities

3.1: General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying:

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression.
- Damage to property.
- Name calling.
- Slagging.
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person.
- Offensive graffiti.
- Extortion.
- Intimidation.
- Insulting or offensive gestures.
- The “look”
- Invasion of personal space.
- A combination of any of the types listed

3.2: Cyber Bullying:

Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.

While this policy addresses issues related to cyber bullying of students (i.e. situations in which one or more students are the victim[s] of bullying), the policy also applies to teaching and other school staff.

Key Measures Regarding Cyber Bullying:

- Advice will be communicated to help students protect themselves from being involved in bullying (as perpetrator or as victim) and to advise them on reporting any incidents.
- Students will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at the school.
- Teachers will dedicate a standalone lesson to deal with the issue of cyber bullying.
- Students and staff are expected to comply with the school's policy on the use of technology in the School. (*See Acceptable Use Policy*)
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying; e.g.: Zeeko Talk
- Parents and students are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks, including Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat etc.
- Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS endeavours to block access to inappropriate websites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the Internet on the school tablets, or any other device within the school which may from time to time be used for such school work, without a member of staff present

Types of Cyber Bullying

- **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation.
- **Harassment:** Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual.
- **Impersonation:** Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name.
- **Flaming:** Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight.
- **Trickery:** Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online.
- **Outing:** Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images.
- **Exclusion:** Purposefully excluding someone from an online group.
- **Cyber stalking:** Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety.
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call.
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive text messages.
- Abusive email.
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ X (formally Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles).
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures.
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.

The school reserves the right to apply its Anti-Bullying Policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, if in the opinion of the Principal/Deputy Principal and/or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

3.3: Identity Based Behaviours

Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

<p><u>Homophobic and Transgender:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation. • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation. • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner. • Physical intimidation or attacks. • Threats
<p><u>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller Community</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background. • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above.

Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying.</p> <p>Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip. • Isolation & exclusion. • Ignoring. • Excluding from the group. • Taking someone’s friends away. • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours. • Breaking confidence. • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear. • The “look” • Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way.
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching. • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling. • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs. • Taking advantage of pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying. • Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person’s disability. • Setting others up for ridicule.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in **Section 2** of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. (2013)

4. Relevant School Personnel:

While all staff members (both ancillary and teaching) have a duty of care towards pupils, the key personnel involved include; **the relevant teacher i.e. the class teacher/s** of all pupils involved, and the **principal/deputy principal**. Support teachers may be involved if deemed appropriate and/or necessary.

5. Education 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) that will be used by the school are as follows:

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

5.1: Creating a culture of "telling":

- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying and if anyone witnesses bullying behaviour it should be reported. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. Remember – Your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Teachers should repeatedly reinforce the message that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour, they should not retaliate in any way, but they should tell an adult. Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with.
- Teachers will ensure that class lessons will be provided to enable pupils "how to tell" (**telling protocol**) and also that they can inform the school by the following means:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework/copies.
 - Have another pupil tell on their behalf.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Leave a note in the "worry box" (or similar strategy) that will be placed in a designated area.
 - Ask a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

5.2: Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by:

- Displaying school's anti-bullying statement (***Bullying is wrong. It is not tolerated in our school. We are a telling school***) in school foyer and other prominent places around the school environment.
- Aspects of bullying are discussed in class and at school assemblies. (What is bullying? What is not bullying? What to do if you feel you are being bullied? What to do if you see somebody else being bullied? Where are the hot spots for bullying? What are the hot topics for bullying?)
- Engaging in formal teaching within the class setting through **SPHE and RE programmes**.
- Have a **Friendship/Wellbeing Week** each September to revise the key messages (an annual awareness week for school community about bullying and being kind to each other.
- To focus on the topic of bullying during school assemblies.
- Teaching the children about our school Anti-Bullying Policy.
- The Stay Safe programme will be used to raise awareness of cyber-bullying and safety strategies for pupils when using IT.
- Cyber-bullying awareness workshops and information evenings will be arranged in conjunction with our Parents' Association for all members of the school community.

5.3: Other Strategies:

- **Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum:** Within this curricular area the theme of bullying is explicitly taught under the following theme areas:
 - Definition
 - Prevention
 - Reporting
- The **Stay Safe, R.S.E. Weaving Wellbeing and R.E.** programmes emphasise the promotion of pupil self-esteem. A minimum of one lesson per term will be taught at each class level within this area with targeted classes engaging in more detailed coverage.
- **Hidden Curriculum/Incidental Learning:** Situations involving conflict amongst pupils, which may arise in the classroom/playground etc. can be used as a teaching tool where appropriate.
- A school-wide approach to the **fostering of respect** for all members of the school community.
- **Religious Education:** The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the **self-esteem** of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- **Professional development** for staff as required, for example Restorative Practice training.
- **Supervision and monitoring** of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues

to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

- Involvement of the **Student Council** in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. the use of student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- The school's **Anti-Bullying Policy** is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school, upon their child's entry to the school. Updated policies are available on the school website and hard copies are available on request.
- Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising children's self-esteem and equipping children to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Weaving Wellbeing, RSE, Grow in Love and Stay Safe.
- **Positive reinforcement** by teachers in classroom setting, of positive pupil behaviour.
- **Modelling** of respectful behaviour by teachers and staff.
- Promotion of **extra-curricular activities** which encourage co-operation among pupils.
- All **teachers and SNAs** are required to be vigilant on yard duty and report incidences to the specific class teacher, as the class teacher will be more aware if a similar incident has occurred previously.
- Circle-time sessions, role-play, Socially Speaking programs and puppetry are **methodologies** which are used to discuss and explore issues of bullying.
- The implementation of the **Acceptable Use Policy** in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored. A.U.P. to be reviewed annually.

6. School Procedures:

The primary focus for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher to ensure pupils gain confidence in 'telling'. It is made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales, but are behaving responsibly (*Stay Safe Programme*).

Reporting bullying behaviour:

- If parent(s)/guardian(s) suspect that their child is being bullied, **where possible**, they are asked to make an appointment with the **class teacher** to discuss their concerns. This will allow the teacher to give them their full attention while discussing the matter.
- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Non-teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.

7. Investigation:

Incidents of Bullying will be dealt with on a staged basis.

7.1: Stage 1:

Informal Stage - pre-determination that bullying has occurred:

- All incidents must be reported to the **relevant class teacher**.
- In determining if a bullying incident has taken place, the teacher will apply restorative practice approaches to see how best to resolve the situation. The teacher will also view the incidents with the Code of Behaviour in mind.
- **All staff must keep a written record of any significant incidents** witnessed by them or notified to them.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a **written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same**. Parents may be notified and their assistance may be sought in aiding the child to resolve the matter.
- Teachers endeavour to engage in interviews with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved may also be called upon to provide relevant information. Parents will be informed if a **serious investigation** is taking place.
- The relevant teacher must inform the Principal/Deputy Principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage - determination that bullying has occurred:

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, it is important to gather all of the facts from both sides (**what, where, when, who, why?**). This will involve an interview with the 'alleged bully' which will be recorded on the '**template for recording bullying behaviour**'(see *Appendix 2*). Reports will be stored in the Principal's office and teachers will note "**Report Filed**".
- All reports of bullying will be dealt with initially by the class teacher with the knowledge of the school principal/deputy principal.

Upon determination that bullying has occurred, the following process should be followed in**Stage 1:**

- Where other staff members are available to supervise the class/es concerned, incidents are, where possible, investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group, if the circumstances are deemed suitable by the teacher. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
- Where necessary pupils may be asked to provide a written account/diary of the alleged incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). If deemed appropriate, the school may invite parents/guardians for face-to-face meetings to provide them with an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school. It is explained to the alleged bully how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.
- The aim for the class teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- Teachers endeavour to support each member of a group through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher. This support may take the form of close monitoring by staff members involved (both in class and at play time). Other relevant staff members are made aware of potentially vulnerable children following the investigation.
- The teacher should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach.
- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.
- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional or judgemental language.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way **(see Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 6.8.9 page 30-31) for further suggestions.**
- Restorative Practice approaches and questions should be used.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to sign "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 1**" which is filed in the principal's office, in the presence of their parents.
- The Code of Behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed appropriate by the relevant teacher and school Principal/Deputy Principal.
- If parents are still concerned that the bullying has not stopped, they may request to speak further with the Principal/Deputy Principal.

7.2: Stage 2:

If this child breaks their '**Pupil Behaviour Promise**' and re-offends then the principal and/or the classteacher will interview the child/children again.

The following are the steps that will be followed in Stage 2

- The same interviewing process as described in Stage 1 will be applied at this stage. The principal will conduct an interview with the 'alleged bully' which will be recorded on the 'Template for recording bullying behaviour' (see Appendix 2). These Templates will be stored in the Principal's office and the Principal will take note.
- It is explained to the child that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise.
- Again attempts will be made to resolve the situation. Once more students will sign the "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 2**". This promise will also need to be signed by their parents in the presence of the principal at school.
- Their parents will be called into the school to discuss the situation further. At the discretion of the principal, meetings with parents may take place with or without their child.
- As a consequence to their continued inappropriate behaviour, the student may be excluded from specific class activities, outings, yard time, or others at the discretion of the Principal.
- Parents will also be encouraged to implement some form of consequence at home.
- The Code of Behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed appropriate by the relevant teacher and school Principal.
- The student and their parents will be informed that if another similar incident occurs, the bullying will be considered to be at **Stage 3**. **Parents are informed that their child may be suspended for upto 3 days.**
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigations and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

7.3: Stage 3:

If the child re-offends and breaks their promise for a second time, the principal will discuss this matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Following this, school based sanctions, as set out in the school's Code of Behaviour, will be implemented. These sanctions may include **suspension and/or expulsion from the school**.

Incidents that are deemed by the principal to be of a very serious nature may skip the first two stages and go directly to Stage 3.

7.4: Child Protection:

- In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded

as potentially abusive, the school (DLP) must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a “**management plan**”.

- Serious instances of bullying behaviour will be handled in accordance with the Children First and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child, but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services regarding further procedures to be adopted by the school.

7.5: Follow up if bullying has occurred:

- If the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved could be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date.
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed, the relevant teacher must, as part of their professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
 - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal/Deputy Principal.
- It is made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, their parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school. It therefore should not be a topic for discussion outside the school led process.
- In cases where the reporting teacher feels that the reported incident wasn't adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days (after they have determined that bullying behaviour has occurred), ***it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 2 and presented to the Principal*** with an accompanying letter explaining the reason why they think it hasn't been adequately addressed.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is/are not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed that they write to the Board of Management, who will in turn investigate and respond to the parent(s).
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) is/are still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

8. The Schools Programme of Support for Working with Pupils Affected by Bullying:

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

Victims:

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - Lessons in SPHE, Weaving Wellbeing and Stay safe as appropriate.
 - Pastoral care system.
 - Group work such as circle time.
- Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate services and engage strategies for restoring self-esteem all of which will be explored between teacher and parents/guardians.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties*- NEPS).
- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling.

Students involved in bullying behaviour:

- Revising of Stay Safe messages.
- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parent or guardians may be referred for counselling.
- Clinical referral and assessment may be necessary.
- Staged approach - class support, school support (as per *Continuum-Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties*- NEPS).
- Incidents of bullying can extend beyond the school and the journey to and from school is one which can provide particular opportunities for bullying to occur. The school's policy will be given to those who are closely involved at this stage (e.g. School Warden) so that if bullying behaviour is witnessed by them, that they may report it to the school.
- Relevant sections of the Stay Safe, Weaving Wellbeing and the RSE Programme.

To the relevant class:

If deemed necessary, it should be reinforced to students that **there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher**

9. Principal Report to the Board of Management:

The Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- The overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template in *Appendix 2*) to the Principal since the previous report to the Board.

- Confirmation that all of these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

10. 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.

11. Links to Other Policies :

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

12.Children with Special Needs:

The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

13.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.

14.Ratification and Review by Board of Management

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in October 2022 and reviewed at the Board of Management meeting in September 2024.

This policy has been made available to school personnel/members of the school community and published on the school website with hard copies available to parents in the school office upon request. Copies of this policy will be made available to the DES and the school's Patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year or when necessary. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website or in school newsletters. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the DES.



Frank Keenaghan

(Chairperson of Board of Management)



Lisa Breen
(Principal)

Date: 9/9/2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Note: We in Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS pride ourselves in having a whole school community approach to the problem of bullying behaviour. The school community is made up of the Board of Management, School Staff including teachers, SNAs, secretary and caretaker, pupils, parents and guardians. A positive school community attitude can assist considerably in countering bullying behaviour in our school and outside of school.

Appendix 1: 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.

- 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 and/or the Parents' Association 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.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying “**hot spots**” and “**hot times**” for bullying in the school as well as “**hot topics**”.
 - Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the work of the **Student Council**.

The Student Council.

Appendix 2

Template for recording bullying behaviour

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

4. Location of incidents

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

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

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

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

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

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken



Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	Yes /No
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	yes
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?	yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	yes
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?	yes.
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
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?	yes
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No

Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?

N/A

Signed J. Keenaghan.
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 9/Sept/24

Signed Lisa Breen

Date 9/9/24



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Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Our Lady of Good Counsel wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 9/9/24 [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed Keenan
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 9th Sept '24

Signed Lisa Breen
Principal

Date 9/9/24