



Anti-Bullying Policy (April 2014)

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 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; and
 - 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.

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

1. deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
2. cyber-bullying
3. 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.

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
- Extra-curricular activities

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed
<p>Cyber Bullying</p>	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Unlike other forms of bullying a once-off posting can constitute bullying.</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Key Measures Regarding Cyber Bullying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 computers in the School. <i>(See Acceptable Use Policy)</i> • Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying. • 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 <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Types of Cyber Bullying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, 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/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abusive posts on any form of communication technology Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation <p>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.</p>
<p>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>	
Homophobic and Transgender	<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
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<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. 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 some 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

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*)

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 to 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.
- 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" that will be placed at the secretary's office.
- A parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Administer a bullying questionnaire once a year to all pupils. (This will be done mid-year)

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 Week** each September to revise the key messages (an annual awareness week for school community about bullying.
- To focus on the topic of bullying during at least one school assembly per term.
- Teaching the children about our school Anti-Bullying Charter which is currently under review through the Student Council. This charter is displayed throughout the school.

- ICT: The Webwise Programme (1st – 6th Classes) will be used to raise awareness of cyber-bullying and safety strategies for pupils when using IT as well as the 12 ways to keep safe online.(Bookmarks)
- Cyber-bullying awareness workshops and information evenings will be arranged in conjunction with our Parents' Association for all members of the school community.

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:
 - (1) Definition
 - (2) Prevention
 - (3) Reporting
- The **Walk Tall, Stay Safe, R.S.E. 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.
- **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.
- A **notice board** in the school will be dedicated to bullying prevention
- Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising children's self-esteem and equipping children to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Walk Tall, RSE, Alive-O, Web-wise 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.

Investigation

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

Stage 1

Informal Stage - pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- In determining if a bullying incident has taken place, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement and how best to resolve the situation
- **All staff must keep a written record of any significant incidents** witnessed by them or notified to them.
- All incidents must be reported to the **relevant class teacher**.
- 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 will be notified in a timely manner and their assistance 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). Templates 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, 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. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her 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**.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to sign "**Pupil Behaviour Promise 1**" which is filed in the principal's office.
- The code of behaviour will be invoked in circumstances where it is deemed prudent by the relevant teacher and school principal/ deputy principal.
- If parents are still concerned that the bullying has not stopped, they may request that the principal becomes more involved.

Stage 2

If this child breaks their '**Pupil Behaviour Promise**' and re-offends then the principal and/ or the class teacher 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). This 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 time this promise will also need to be signed by their parents.
- 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 prudent 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 three. **Parents are informed that their child may be suspended for up to 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.

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.

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.

Follow up

- If the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable, follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should 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 his/her 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 or 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, his 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 he/she has 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 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 still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. 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, Walk Tall and Stay safe as appropriate
 - Pastoral care system
 - Group work such as circle time
- Possible social use of language programme training if deemed appropriate and available.
- Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate Strategies for restoring self-esteem are 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

- Where deemed necessary, the child in consultation with parents may be referred for counselling
- Empathy awareness needs to be developed.
- 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, Walk Tall 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**

8. 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 3) 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.

9. 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.

10. Links to Other Policies – List school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Record Keeping Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, and Attendance

11. 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.

12. Prevention of Harassment- The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

13. Ratification and Review by Board of Management

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in April 2014

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.

Brendan Flanagan
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Caroline J. Quinn
(Principal)

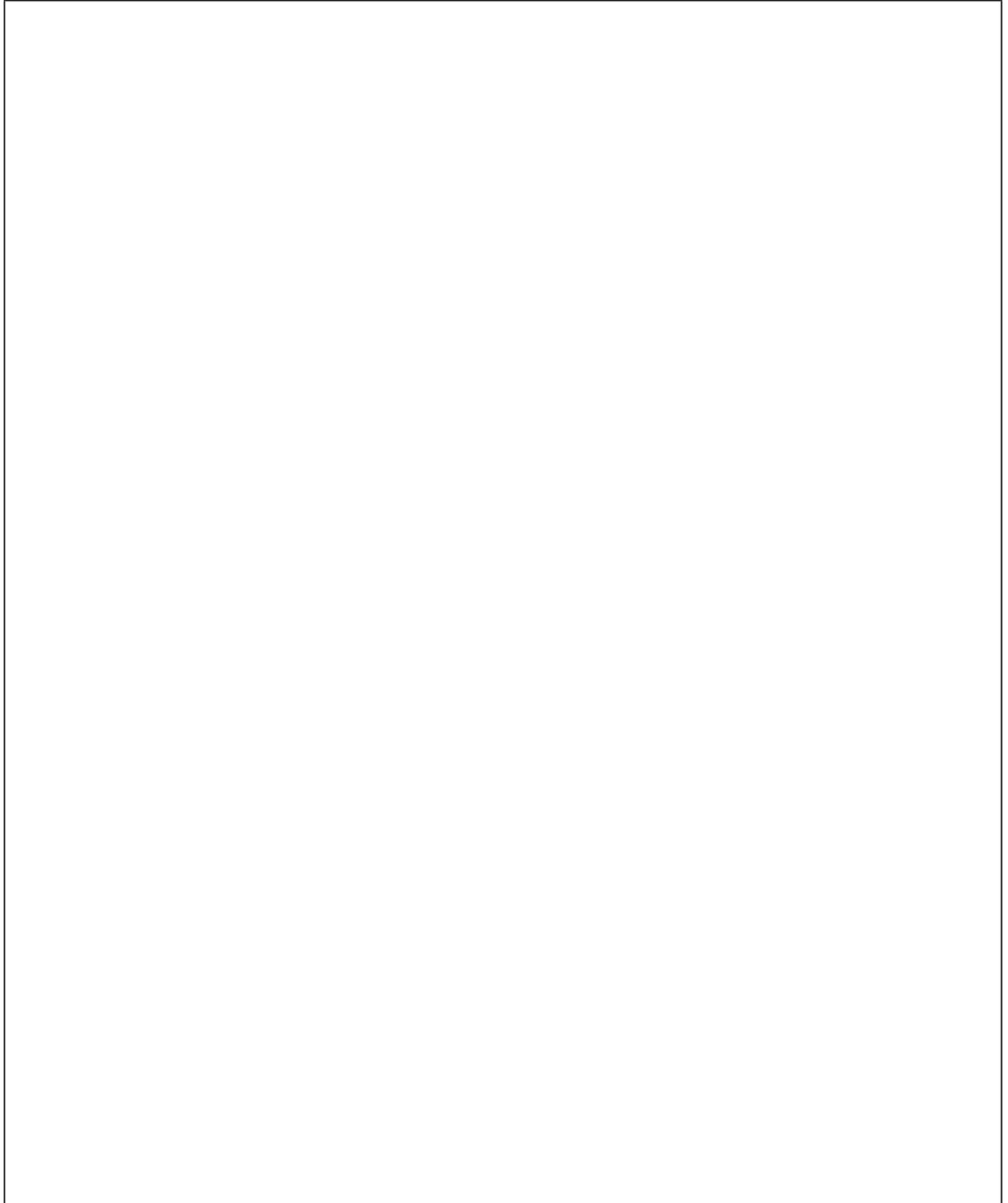
April 2014

Date of next review: September 2015

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, secretaries 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. 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**”.
 - o Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
 - o 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**.

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
(tick relevant box(es))*

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
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

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4 **Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation (copy in BOM minutes)**

The Board of Management undertakes an annual review of the school’s anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist is used for this purpose. 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. This will take place mid-year annually.

	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> ?	
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

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed _____

Date: _____
Principal

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

To:

The Board of Management of _____ wishes to inform you that:

- o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].
- o 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 _____ Date: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date: _____
Principal

Taking Action

What can you do if you are being bullied?

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset; it is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people (unless the bullying is happening in that group). There is normally safety in numbers.
- Be assertive and follow the Stay Safe rules: **Say No, get away and tell someone you trust.**
- Talk to a teacher/SNA for advice and help or if at home talk to your parents.
- Teachers will listen to you and in accordance with procedure, will endeavour to deal with the issue. Teachers will usually tell the Principal about the problem and together they will decide how to deal with it.

If you know someone is being bullied

- Take action. You might tell the bully to stop doing what they are doing; you might get some of your friends to help you with this. You could also make sure that the victim is not left alone until the problem is resolved. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. If you're at school tell a teacher so they can help, without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

As a parent

- Be aware of unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard. They may not want to invite certain children to play or go to activities they used to enjoy.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day went, who they spend their time with, how break time was spent etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. It is very helpful for the school if you can list the 'who, where, when and how' of the behaviours affecting your child.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child that there is nothing wrong with her/him; it is not her/his fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy regarding bullying and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.

As a school

- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying; make sure that supervision is sufficient at all times.
- Use opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other. In this respect the SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme is very important and especially the Stay Safe lessons addressing bullying.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Regularly review the school policy and procedures and assess its success or otherwise.
- When buying teaching materials (books, posters, software etc) ensure that nothing gives a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, gender etc.

- Continue to have a firm and fair discipline structure.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes work on friendship and what it really means.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with care and respect.
- Treat bullying as a serious matter and take every possible action to prevent it happening in our school.
- Use and continue to update a variety of materials and resources available to assist us in devising appropriate anti-bullying programmes. Include workshops on bullying issues from outside agencies.