



Coola Post Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

<p>Coola Post Primary School, Riverstown, via Boyle, Co.Sligo. F52 XE71</p>	<p>Roll Number: 72310U Phone Number: 071 916 5365 Email: coolapps@msletb.ie Website: www.coola.ie</p>
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Anti-Bullying Policy

(as incorporated into the Code of Behaviour)

The Board of Management of Coola Post Primary School is publishing this document as the official Anti-Bullying Policy. The Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB as patron of Coola Post Primary School has approved this publication. Copies of the policy are available at the School and are furnished to each person who applies to be admitted to the School.

Scope of policy:

This policy applies to the whole School community in their relationships with students - students, teachers, Board of Management, parents and all ancillary staff.

Aims of policy

- To create 'a telling School', where students who are not themselves being bullied have enough of a social conscience to report the case of someone who is.
- To promote an understanding of bullying as a health and safety issue for students and staff.
- To have a system of structures set up in the School to deal with bullying incidents; to have this system well established, discreet and known to those who may need to use it.
- To make it clear that bullying will be tackled on two fronts: as a discipline issue and a pastoral care issue.
- To have an appropriate list of responses, including punishments, drawn up and ready for use.

Rationale:

1. Department of Education and Science require schools to have a written policy on bullying.
2. The Board of Management have a statutory obligation to ensure that a policy is in place that reflects the principles and educational philosophy of the School.
3. Involving and encouraging all members of the School community in developing, formulating and reviewing this policy on bullying promotes partnership, ownership, and implementation of a living policy.
4. Coola Post Primary School considers bullying as a health and safety issue and a discipline issue and will address issues of bullying under each of these headings.

Links to Mission Statement:

Coola Post Primary School provides a safe, healthy environment in which all students are nurtured and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Links to Ethos:

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB is a community of learners with an historic and unique tradition as a provider of education and training. In responding to the needs of the community it delivers the highest standards of teaching and learning. Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB Schools and Centres of Education are democratic, co-educational and multi-denominational in character where policies, practices and attitudes are underpinned by the core values of Respect, Equity and Fairness.

Objective:

“We aspire to fulfil this commitment by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the School, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.”

Content:

Definition: “Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological, or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However when the behaviour is systemic and on-going it is bullying”

(DES, Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

Types of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability, etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse.
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Offensive jokes whether spoken, by email/text messaging, etc.
- Silent telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls/text messages/e-mails/website messages.
- Victimisation; including very personal remarks.
- Exclusion and isolation.
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or lockers.
- Repeated unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable.
- Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
- Threats, including demands for money.
- Harassment based on any of the 9 grounds in the Equality Legislation.
- An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individual's reputation.
- Coercion of sexual favours.
- Emotional and/or physical abuse is intolerable and therefore a report may have to be sent to the Health Board and/or Gardaí.
- Any substantiated incident of bullying, in whatever form, in School, on a School related activity or on the way to or from School, will be treated as a breach of the School code of behaviour, and is dealt with as such; the precise sanction will depend on the seriousness of the breach.

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive and the School will respond to bullying in any form whenever it arises.

Indications of Bullying/Behaviour - Signs and Symptoms

- Anxiety about travelling to and from School - requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing their route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from School.
- Unwillingness to go to School, refusal to attend, mitching.
- Avoiding certain days or lessons.
- Uncharacteristic nervousness in class

- Punctuality problems.
- A reluctance to take part in previously enjoyed activities.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in School work and activities.
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to School after weekends or more specifically after longer School holidays.
- Visible signs of anxiety - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bed wetting.
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either students or teachers.
- Possessions missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained bruising or damaged clothing.
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Statement on Bullying:

- Every person in the School is entitled to respect and to be free from any type of bullying.
- The School will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- The matter will be dealt with seriously.
- The School has a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied.
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

Anti-Bullying Policy - Students:

Consultation with education partners through:

- Discussion and agreement with students through Staff/Student Council.
- Contribution from parents.
- Input from staff as agreed at Staff Meetings.

It is School policy to provide education on bullying in the following manner:

- All year groups are facilitated through the S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal, and Health Education) programme which incorporates bullying information and learning.
- An Anti-Bullying Charter will be displayed in each classroom.

- The School promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance, and understanding among all its members, both in School and out of School.
- New students, who join the School at other times, are allocated a buddy - ideally, this is another student from within the same year group.
- Positive reinforcement of behaviour for the better good of the community is encouraged through the merit system.

The School has a pastoral care system in place, and reports of all incidents (wherever they may have been reported) will be filtered through the Year Head, who is the primary person for pastoral care of the student in his/her year group.

Pastoral Care Team:

Chain of support: Student /Year Head / Guidance Counsellor/ Deputy Principal / Principal / Board of Management.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting Incidents of Bullying:

- Students should discuss any incident of bullying with a teacher/Year Head or another trusted adult within the School system. This is responsible behaviour rather than “telling tales.”
- Parents/guardians should contact the Year Head regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents.
- Incidents of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, which are drawn to the attention of a teacher, will be dealt with in the following manner:
 - Appropriate personnel will interview all of the students involved in a bullying incident.
 - The alleged victim and alleged perpetrators of the incident will be spoken to and encouraged to solve the problem.
 - The alleged victim and perpetrators will be invited to write down any relevant details and a “Bullying Report Form” will be completed. Written statements from all involved in the incident will be attached to the Report Form.
 - All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students involved.
 - Records will be kept of all incidents and of the procedures that were followed.
 - The Year Head(s) will be kept informed of all incidents and have access to relevant written records.

- Year Heads will monitor progress of students involved in a bullying incident by liaising with teachers and students involved (separately) at follow-up meetings.
 - Where the incident is deemed to be minor, a verbal warning will be given to the bully to stop the inappropriate behaviour, pointing out how she/he is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and trying to get her/him to see the situation from the victim's point of view. If deemed appropriate, parents may be contacted. The incident will no longer be considered if there is no recurrence within that academic term.
 - If the behaviour persists, the Year Head and the parents/guardians of the victims and bullies will be informed. Thus, they will be given the opportunity of discussing the matter and are in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs. Appropriate sanctions will be imposed. The incident will no longer be considered if there is no recurrence within that academic year.
 - If there is a serious incident, perhaps repeated verbal assault, or coercion, the matter should be reported to the Deputy Principal or Principal. Parents will be involved and appropriate sanctions applied.
 - Where the incident is deemed to be more serious (e.g. gross misbehaviour or physical assault), the Principal should be informed immediately and she/he will if necessary inform the Board of Management.
 - Offenders and victims of bullying may be referred for counselling.
 - Sanctions may include:
 - A contract of good behaviour
 - School community service
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - Other sanctions as may be deemed appropriate
 - Suspension
 - Expulsion.
- In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should be referred immediately to the Principal.
 - Where cases, relating to either student or teacher, remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management.
 - In order to appeal a decision, a parent/student may request a review by writing to the Principal.

Serial Bullying

If a student persists in bullying despite correction, the following steps will be taken:

1. Arrangements will be made to advise and counsel the bully
2. Parents will be required to call to the school to discuss the matter.
3. Suspension may be imposed.

If bullying continues we must consider the rights of other students to a safe learning environment free from harassment. Therefore it may not be possible to retain the perpetrator in the School.

Parents will be informed of this, and may be asked for permission to refer the student to a psychologist from the HSE. However they must understand the school's primary obligation is to protect the victims of the bullies and this must mean permanent exclusion for persistent bullies.

Bullying of Teachers

The school will support teachers where they are subject to bullying by a student or colleague. Coola Post Primary School will work to ensure that a climate of respect is maintained at all times.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The School management team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

Success Criteria:

Well-being and happiness of the whole School community in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered.

Monitoring implementation:

Parents/guardians and all members of staff; include on agenda for teaching staff meetings at least once a year.

Review and evaluation:

The School will monitor, review, and evaluate this Policy and all related work and procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure legal compliance and maintenance of best practices

Legislation/equality proofing:

- Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993.
- Circular M33/91: Guidelines towards a positive policy for school behaviour and discipline
- The Education Act, 1998
- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- The Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004
- Equality Legislation In The Republic Of Ireland - The Employment Equality Act 1998

Note: Staff should note that there are two important codes agreed at national and local level covering ETB employees. The two codes are

1. Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Bullying and Harassment in ETB Workplaces.
2. Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Sexual Harassment in ETB Workplaces.

Both codes can be downloaded from the following websites:

- www.tui.ie
- www.ivea.ie

This policy was adopted and reviewed by the Board of Management on _____(date)	
Signed: _____	Signed: _____
Chairperson of the B.O.M.	Principal/Secretary of the B.O.M.
Date: _____	Date: _____

Appendix A – Bullying Report Form

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____

Class _____

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

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

Pupil concerned (being bullied)

Other Pupil

Parent

Teacher

Other School

Other, please explain: _____

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

School Yard

Astro-turf Pitch

Classroom(s)

Toilets

Corridor

Bus

Other, please explain: _____

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, please specify: _____
-

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

- Homophobic
 - Disability/SEN related
 - Racist
 - Membership of traveller community
 - Other, please 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 B - 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> ?	
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

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:

- 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].
- 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