

Corpus Christi National School
Anti-Bullying Policy



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Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Corpus Christi National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. The policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti- Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools that were published in September 2013. It applies to the whole school community, in relationships between all the stakeholders, pupils, staff, Board of Management and parents.

Mission Statement

At Corpus Christi N.S we are committed to providing a caring, safe and friendly environment for all the pupils. Our mission statement explains that:

“Corpus Christi is a Catholic primary school where we strive to learn together in a happy and safe environment and where everyone is valued, respected and encouraged to do their best.”

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and the school actively promotes an anti-bullying environment. We encourage pupils to talk to us if they experience or witness bullying.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. It is therefore committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

a) A positive school culture and climate which-

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

At Corpus Christi National School, we consider the following to be key elements of a Positive School Culture:

- We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and their worth as a human being
- We promote positive habits of self- respect, self -discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- We actively prohibit vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members
- We have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning
- We have the capacity to change in response to pupils needs
- We identify aspects of the curriculum through which positive and sustainable influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values

- We take particular care of 'at risk' pupils and use systems to identify needs and facilitate early intervention where necessary –thus responding to the needs, fears & anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner
- Corpus Christi National School recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community
- We recognise the right of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.
- We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying
- We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities
- We promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among its members both in school and outside of school
- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community.

b) Effective leadership

- The Board of Management has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The Board of Management must ensure accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy.
- The Principal, as a key leader, strongly influences attitudes and set standards in relation to dealing with bullying
- The ISM team (In-school management team) have a clear role to act in a leadership capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying and modelling best practice.
- Teachers must act as good role models and must be fair, clear and consistent.

c) A school wide approach

- A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and the Corpus Christi School community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians
- Bullying is a behaviour problem which can emerge in the school community. Where this negatively impacts on a school - parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.
- The assistance of Gardaí, TUSLA and Community Workers may be required in some cases
- Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school/community sector to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner.

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

- Corpus Christi National School endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that all relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy (*Section 2&3 of Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools*)

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies see section 5 of this policy, (including awareness raising measures) that-

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying e.g. homophobic and transphobic bullying;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

- Staff members have a responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent
- Supervision in playground areas must be managed and conducted effectively, with particular attention given to arrival & dismissal times

(g) Supports for staff

- Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis
- All staff must have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context
- Staff must be aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and newly qualified and less experienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and learn best practice
- CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies will be supported and encouraged for all members of staff.

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying policy.

3. 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:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- Cyber-bullying and

- 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.

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in accordance with the Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools – section 6:7.6, 6:7.7 - are as follows:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Assistant Principals
- All class teachers

5. The following education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) will be used by Corpus Christi Girls' National School. (Ref: Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

Education and prevention strategies
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School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community
- 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
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention
- An annual audit of professional development needs, with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community
- 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
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school

- The school's Anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given access to a copy on enrolment
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year) whole school awareness measures e.g. dedicated notice boards in the school/classrooms on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention; annual Anti-bullying Week, Friendship week, Internet Safety Week and parents/guardian' talks organised by the P/A.; regular school assemblies organised by principal or deputy principal.
- Encourage a culture of talking about bullying behaviour, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence from talking. This confidence factor is of vital importance. 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.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Ask parent/guardian to phone the school
 - Anti-bullying or Worry box
 - Ask a friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- The implementation of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.
- The implementation of a Mobile Phone policy with clear guidelines on the use of mobile phones in the school

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Pupils and teachers are trained every two years in Anti-bullying Procedures delivered by the FUSE Anti-bullying and Online Safety Programme. This programme was developed by the National Anti-Bullying Centre (ABC) at Dublin City University.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on Cyber-Bullying (Web wise Primary lessons- My Selfie and the Wider World lessons and HTML lessons). The school celebrates Internet Safety Week each year and Safer Internet Day. Guest speakers are invited from time to time to do a presentation on Cyber Safety for staff, pupils and parents.
- Annual talk from the Community Garda covering issues around personal safety and cyberbullying
- The school will specifically consider pupils with special educational needs with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Links to other policies

Hereunder is a list of school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Safe Guarding Statement
- Acceptable Use policy/Remote Learning/Social Media Policy
- Attendance Policy
- School Tours Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

- Dignity at Work Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- RSE Policy

6. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying (6.8.9 Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2013)

The primary aim 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);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parents/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff (SNAs, secretaries, caretakers) must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- 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;
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member will 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;
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the 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. The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to her how she is in breach of the school's Anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

Follow up and recording

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of 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
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- 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) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and 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.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant 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
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s has developed a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 1 Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

The relevant teacher must use the recording template attached to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

- a) in cases where she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

- b) All confirmed instances of bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The recording template must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal.

Teachers records are retained in a secure space in the teacher's classroom. All report templates given to the Principal will be retained in the filing cabinet in the Principals Office.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Working with parent/guardian to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing questionnaires

Corpus Christi National Schoolis committed to exploring these interventions further:

- The traditional disciplinary approach
- Strengthening the victim
- Support for the pupil who has engaged in bullying behaviour
- Mediation
- Restorative Practice
- The Support Group Method
- The Method of Shared Concern

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (Ref 6:8:16 of Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools):

- 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. - SPHE Lessons
 - Stay Safe Programme
 - Walk Tall Programme
 - RSE Programme
 - NEPS programmes on www.neps.ie
 - Anti-bullying Week
 - Internet Safety Week
 - Friendship week
 - Well- being Week
 - Social Skills Group
 - Group work such as circle time
- If further support is required, NEPS may also be contacted for advice.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. 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.

- There are agreed supervision and monitoring practices in the school
- Mobile phones must be switched off during the school day 8.50 am to 2.30p.m
- Mobile phones are not permitted on school tours/outings.
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school, the following issues are addressed:
 - All Internet sessions are supervised by a teacher
 - The school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage within school time.
 - Pupils are instructed to access only those discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school.

(Note that the Schools Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites and is provided for educational purposes only). Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for more information.

9. 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.

10. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management at a meeting held on February 12th 2023.
11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: *Níamh Greene*

(Principal)

Signed: *Felix McKenna*

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Appendix 1: Corpus Christi National School 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

Name	Class	Name	Class

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	

Playground		
Classroom		
Corridor		
Toilets		
School Bus		
Other		

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

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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

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9. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____

Appendix 2: Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate in Corpus Christi National School



- 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.
- Support the establishment and work of Student Councils.

Examples of bullying behaviours: The list of examples below is non-exhaustive.

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<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 • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</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 • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

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).

Homophobic and Transgender

- 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
- 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

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community

Relational

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- 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
- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

Sexual

Special Educational Needs, Disability

- 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