

# Coláiste Éamonn Rís – Anti-bullying Policy

**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 Coláiste Éamonn Rís 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 in September 2013.**

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

- (a) A positive school culture and climate which-
  - (i) is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - (ii) encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - (iii) promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- (b) Effective leadership;
  - (i) A school-wide approach;
  - (ii) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
  - (iii) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that
    - build empathy, respect and resilience in students; and
    - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- (c) Effective supervision and monitoring of students;
- (d) Supports for staff;
- (e) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- (f) The effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

**2. In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* 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:

- (a) deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, name calling and other forms of relational bullying,
- (b) cyber-bullying\* and

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(c) 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,

(d) physical aggression, intimidation, extortion and damage to property.

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.

*\*Cyber bullying is defined as an aggressive, wilful act carried out by an individual or a group using electronic communication. Cyber bullying also known as electronic bullying or online social cruelty, is defined as bullying:*

- *through social media and networking websites*
- *through text messaging and picture messaging on mobile phones/hand held devices*
- *through email*
- *through instant messaging*
- *in a chat room*
- *on gaming sites and other websites*

*Cyber bullying is equally as harmful as other forms of bullying. It just takes place in a different setting, including for example: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Flickr, Snapchat, Instagram, askfm and texting.*

*Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Those that endorse and spread cyber bullying content are equally as guilty of bullying.*

### **3. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:**

**Junior Cycle:** *Year Head*

**T.Y.:** *Year Head*

**Senior Cycle:** *Year Head*

### **4. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:**

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- As part of Induction Day for first year students, a module on anti-bullying will be held. A wrist band with a USB pin will be distributed to all first year students as part of the induction process. The pin will contain the following information: the school's anti-bullying policy, the school's acceptable use policy, information on how to take a screen shot. The school's anti-bullying policy will be explained to the students as part of this module.
- All year groups partake in the S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme which incorporates anti-bullying information and learning.
- Every student is encouraged to talk to a member of staff if he is experiencing any problems in school. It will be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but behaving responsibly.
- All school staff including teachers, secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker, canteen staff, cleaners and supervisors are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them.
- A 'Meitheal' leadership system is in place, where sixth year students are paired with first year students at the start of the new academic year; training is provided for the sixth year students on how to be a good mentor. Their availability and mentoring continues for the academic year.
- New students, who join the school at times other than the start of the academic year, are allocated a buddy – ideally, this is another student from within the same year group.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviour for the better good of the community is encouraged through the Positive Affirmation Committee.
- The school has a pastoral care system in place, and reports of all bullying incidents (wherever they may have been reported) will be passed on to the Class Tutor, who has an important role to play in the pastoral care of the student in her/his form class.
- The school's Guidance Counsellor and Chaplain are available to students as are members of the Pastoral Care Team.
- An 'Anti-bullying Week' will be held each academic year.
- A survey of students will be held annually to identify strengths and weaknesses of the school's strategies with regard to the management of bullying.
- School management will review supervision and monitoring measures on an ongoing basis
- Anti-bullying Policy will be reviewed on annual basis at a staff meeting.

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- Briefing on the school's Anti-bullying policy and procedures will form part of the induction education of all new staff members by the staff mentor.
- Briefing on the school's Anti-bullying policy and procedures will form part of the induction education of parents of incoming students. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of new students and the student must sign declaration that they have read and accept the school's Anti-bullying policy as part of the enrolment process. Failure to or refusal to accept same will render an application for enrolment invalid.
- Anti-bullying policy will appear on the school website.

**5. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:**

**Investigation**

- (i) The primary aim 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); It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;
- (ii) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- (iii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. Teachers will take a calm, objective problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents;
- (iv) Parents and students 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;
- (v) Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- (vi) All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- (vii) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be

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done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;

(viii) 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 will be asked for his account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

(ix) Those centrally involved will be required to write down their account of the incident(s);

(x) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school will give parents an opportunity for discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;

(xi) Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts will be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied;

(xii) It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his parents and the school;

### **Follow-up**

(xiii) Follow-up meetings with those involved will be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a beneficial effect;

(xiv) In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been 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, Appendix 3;

(xv) 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

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far as is practicable; and

\*Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

(xvi) Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;

(xvii) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **Recording**

(xviii) All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

(xix) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same;

(xx) If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

(xxi) The relevant teacher must use the recording template (Appendix 3) to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

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

b) in certain circumstances where the bullying is of a serious nature the bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template (Appendix 3) must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

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## **Bullying as part of a pattern of behaviour**

Coláiste Éamonn Rís recognises that bullying behaviour can be part of a pattern of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. Such actions will constitute a clear breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and will be dealt with in that context. In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a student, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

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 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 therefore, 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.

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.

### **6. The school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows;**

(i) A programme of support for students who have been bullied is in place.

The school's programme for working with students who have been victims of bullying is as follows:

(a) An appointment will be made with the school Guidance Counsellor. If for any reason the student would rather speak to an alternative staff member (i.e. School Chaplain, Year Head, Class Person, Principal, Deputy Principal), every effort will be made to facilitate this arrangement. Students who have been victims of bullying will be provided with counselling to help them raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

(b) Where deemed appropriate, the student(s) will be referred to an outside agent or agencies.

(ii) A programme of support for those students involved in bullying is in place and is an important part of the school's intervention process. The school recognises the fact that students involved in bullying behaviour also need assistance on an ongoing basis.

The school's programme for working with students who have engaged in bullying behaviour is as follows:

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(a) An appointment will be made with the school Guidance Counsellor. Students who engage in bullying behaviour will be provided with counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the student's self-worth.

(b) Where deemed appropriate, the student(s) will be referred to an outside agent or agencies.

(iii) Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

## **7. Supervision and Monitoring of Students**

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.

## **8. 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 students or staff or the harassment of students 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.

## **9. Policy Availability**

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Council. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## **10. Review**

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

## **11. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy**

(i) The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. The school will make provision for periodic examination of the prevention and intervention strategies in place. Surveys of students, staff and parents may be used as part of the evaluation process, as if properly conducted, they may provide important information about the

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effectiveness of the anti-bullying measures in place and identify any significant behavioural trends that may benefit from early intervention.

Completed Appendix 3 report forms for recording and reporting bullying to the school Principal or Deputy Principal will also be valuable, and will form a readily accessible source of data in relation to bullying behaviour in the school. Data gathered from these reports will be reviewed at least once in every school year, collated and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and be made available to the Board of Management. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

## **12. Adoption of Policy**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015.  
This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Next Review : January 2017

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 Anti-bullying Survey**

### **Appendix 2 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy**

### **Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour**

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## APPENDIX 1

### ANTI-BULLYING SURVEY COLÁISTE ÉAMONN RÍS

1. What is bullying?

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2. Do you believe bullying is a problem in this school?

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3. Have you been bullied during this school year?

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a) How were you bullied?

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b) Did you report it?

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c) Were you happy with how it was dealt with?

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4. Have you witnessed any bullying in this school?

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a) If so, what type of bullying?

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b) What did you do?

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c) If you did not do anything what would you like to have done?

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5. If you were bullied in this school to whom would you go to for help to stop the bullying?

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6. Write down suggestions you might have of how the school can counteract bullying.

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## Appendix 2 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## 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*.

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## Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

### 1. Name of student being bullied and class group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

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


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

Student concerned	
Other Student	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

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	Racist	Membership of Traveller	Other (specify)

### 8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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### 9. Details of actions taken

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal:-----

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