

Code of Behaviour & Anti Bullying Policy 2024/2025 Cullen NS [Mandatory]

In compliance with *Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, the Board of Management of Cullen NS has prepared and made available a **Code of Behaviour** for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

This **Code of Behaviour** details:

- Standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
- Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
- Measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- Procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- Grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil;
- Cullen NS's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- The Procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Cullen NS has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', *National Educational Welfare Board, 2008*.

Policy Formulation

In formulating this policy, the Board of Management completed the following steps:

1. Parents and staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
2. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils' suggestions to the Principal.
3. The initial draft of the code of behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
4. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's approval.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this code are:

- to allow the school to function in an orderly way where pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- to create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- to promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- to assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- to ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

Whole School Approach

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect, the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the Principal, In School Management team, teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of this Code.

Standards of Behaviour

Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings

attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual

- do his/her best, both in school and for homework.

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Listen- to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- Work- to the best of his/her ability
- Value- school property and the belongings of fellow pupils
- Follow- the direction of his/her teacher
- Obtain- his/her teachers' permission to leave the classroom
- Respect- the teacher, other pupils, visitors to the classroom and all members of the school community
- Walk in the classroom
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow school and class rules
- Notify all accidents/injuries in the school grounds immediately to the adults on duty

Playground (Yard, Basketball Court & Pitch) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- Play safely, avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- Follow the directions of the playground adults: teachers, SNAs, staff.
- Remain on school grounds at all times
- Obtain permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- Respect the staff on yard duty and fellow pupils
- Avoid swearing, fighting or name calling

- Respect the teacher, other pupils, visiting teachers/external coaches and all members of the school community
- Avoid wet/muddy areas (except when in correct gear e.g. football boots, shorts etc.)

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- Walk in the school corridors
- Gather in an orderly manner at school entrance awaiting teacher for morning supervision
- Respect the teacher, other pupils, visitors to the school and all members of the school community
- Exit the school grounds at home time, in an orderly manner.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- Follow his/her teacher's directions at all times
- Remain with the teacher/SNAs/external supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- Behave politely towards those, they meet on such trips
- Observe the rules of general good behaviour

Pupils with Additional Needs

While all pupils are expected to follow the Code of Behaviour, pupils with additional needs may be given some concessions depending on the nature of their special needs, and their understanding of the Code of Behaviour.

Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However, each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school. Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme, in a fair and consistent manner
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the pupil on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour, on their part, are being recorded
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour, they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour, parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

As a general rule, the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour, so that not only good behaviour, but also, improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive behaviour will be used.

Such rewards may/will include:

- Recognition of achievements and efforts at whole school assemblies
- Communication with parents acknowledging good/ improved behaviour
- Special privileges e.g. Homework/ Assignment off
- Certificates/ Trophies
- Class Dojo points
- Other class reward systems e.g. fill the jar of marbles/pasta to receive treats such as extra playtime, disco, pizza etc.
- Line of the Week - Fridays - 10 minutes extra playtime

Inappropriate Behaviour

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response, the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Pupils learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive.

Classroom based interventions, such as class meetings/discussions or Circle Time, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members), pupils will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the corridor
- Disturbing the work of others
- Disrespectful language, tone or manner
- Ignoring staff requests

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline pupils at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses may include:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.
- Team conferences to include classroom teacher, other relevant involved staff, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, SNAs, Special Education teacher or Principal.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing of the pupils and staff.

Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2.

Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult

- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sports equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of pupils for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal, and include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses may include:

- In school supervised detention
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Implementation of extensive Behaviour Management Plan
- Report submitted to the Board of Management

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conferences to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, SNAs, Special Education teacher or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the *National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)*, *Health Service Executive Community Services*, the *National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS)*, *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)*, *National Council for Special Education (NCSE)*.
- Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with An Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend on the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour.

Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

Suspension from school for one to five days

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

Suspension from school for five to ten days

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

Expulsion

Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

Procedures for Suspensions & Expulsions

Suspension

Definition of Suspension

"Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days" - *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board.*

Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management of Cullen NS has formally and in writing, delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing, delegated to the Principal Teacher, the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a pupil in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An '**Immediate Suspension**' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation, the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at this time, would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school.

An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event, will not exceed 5 school days.

An '**Automatic Suspension**' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Cullen NS, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by **Health & Safety Legislation**, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction:

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An 'Automatic Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected.

In no circumstance, will a pupil be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension.

Such a notification will detail:

- duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- Arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident, the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss:

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- Interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Cullen NS acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard, the following undertaking is given: No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension, the following procedures will apply where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Cullen NS will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s):

1. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.

2. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Cullen NS acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process.

In this regard, the following undertakings are given:

1. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
2. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision.

The letter will confirm:

- duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the **Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998** and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion

"A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of **Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.**"

Authority to Expel

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following procedures will apply:

1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)
2. As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

3. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
4. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
5. The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management
6. Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event, the Principal (or nominee) will:

1. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
2. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the pupil; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
3. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
4. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decide to consider expelling a pupil, a hearing will be scheduled.

1. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing:
 - as to the date, location and time of the hearing
 - of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
 - that they may, if they so choose, be accompanied at the hearing
2. The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.
3. In respect of the expulsion hearing, the Board gives an undertaking that:
 - the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
 - the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
 - each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
 - the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction, if they so choose

Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, the Board:

- will notify the *Educational Welfare Officer / EWO* in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

- will not expel the pupil before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the **Educational Welfare Officer / EWO** receives this written notification
- will in writing, notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the **Educational Welfare Officer / EWO** is being contacted
- will be represented at the consultation to be organised by the **Educational Welfare Officer /EWO**
- will suspend the pupil, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the pupil during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the **Educational Welfare Officer/ EWO** has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed.

They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the **Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998** and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Cullen NS acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process.

In this regard, the following undertakings are given:

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Notification of a Pupil's Absence from School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

1. The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
2. The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
3. The absence should be notified in writing by letter / using the school journal
4. Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
5. Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the **Education Welfare Officer / EWO** in writing, where a pupil is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the pupil has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register/Leabhar Rolla.

Records

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's behaviour.

Such records will contain;

1. Incidents of misbehaviour
2. Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
3. Evidence of improved behaviour
4. Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 1988* and the *Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003*.

Anti-Bullying Policy 2024/2025 Cullen NS [Mandatory]

In accordance with the requirements of the:

- *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* and the
- Code of Behaviour Guidelines issued by the *National Education Welfare Board (NEWB)*,

the Board of Management of Cullen NS 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 & Skills in September 2013*.

Best Practice in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour

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;
- 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); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Definition of Bullying

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:

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.
4. Humiliation: including name-calling, reference to academic ability, physical characteristics, accent or distinctive voice, sexual innuendo etc.
5. Intimidation: including aggressive use of body language / dirty looks / mimicking.
6. Verbal abuse, showing disrespect anonymous or otherwise.
7. Physical abuse or threatened abuse. (pushing, punching, kicking, tripping, assaulting)
8. Being mean
9. Aggressive or obscene language.
10. Offensive joke; whether spoken or by email, text messaging etc.
11. Victimisation; including very personal remarks about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene, school work, family circumstances, ability at games.
12. Interfering/breaking/hiding/defacing/stealing personal possessions. (property, damage to clothing, school books, learning materials)
13. Unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable.
14. Unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
15. Threats, including demands for money or other belongings.
16. Writing derogatory comments on books, copies, desks etc.

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.

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

School Contact Personnel

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

- *All Class teachers and where necessary, the Principal*
- *Any teacher may act as the relevant teacher, if circumstances warrant it.*

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) used in Cullen NS are as follows:

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

Whole School Approach

1. A Whole School Approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community
2. The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour
3. 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
4. Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it- prevention and intervention
5. Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
6. School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community
7. 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 pupil use of communication technology within the school
8. Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying Code for the school-to be included in pupils' journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school
9. 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 (every year)
10. The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention, annual Friendship Week

11. 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. 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
12. Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.
13. Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class
14. Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school
15. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf
16. Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling, if they witness or know that bullying is taking place
17. Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school, if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents
18. The development 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

Implementation of Curricula

1. The full implementation of the SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes
2. Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes
3. School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based Department of Education programmes, e.g., Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme
4. Delivery of the An Garda Síochána SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
5. 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

Links to other Policies

1. The following school policies are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Policy.
2. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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, parent(s)/guardian(s)) 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 of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

Teaching and non-teaching staff such as Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), school secretary, cleaner must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

Investigating and Dealing with Incidents

1. 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;
2. 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;
3. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
4. Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
5. 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;
6. 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;
7. 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;
8. 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;
9. 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)

The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils;

10. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

11. 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, his or 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 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/Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal/Special Education teacher/SNAs
- 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

1. All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Consideration needs to be given to where the records will be made e.g. Incident/Accident Book. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
2. While all 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.
3. The relevant teacher must inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1 Determination That Bullying Has Occurred

1. 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.
2. The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the:
3. Storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

1. 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
2. Where the school has decided as part of its Anti-Bullying Policy, that in certain circumstances, bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal/Special Education teacher as applicable. The school should list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal. These should be in line with the school's Code of Behaviour. When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the Principal. Due consideration needs to be given to where these records are kept, who has access to them, and how long they will be retained. Decisions around record keeping will be noted in this policy. All records will be filed in a locked filing cabinet in Principal's Office.

Established Intervention Strategies

1. Teacher interviews with all pupils
2. Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
3. Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
4. No Blame Approach
5. Circle Time
6. Restorative Interviews
7. Restorative Conferencing
8. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
 9. 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.
 10. Pastoral Care System
 11. Buddy / Peer Mentoring System
 12. Group work such as Circle Time
 13. If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
 14. Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

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.

The following Prompt Questions will help to determine the level of supervision and monitoring of pupils:

1. Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school? Yes
2. Have bullying danger spots been identified? Yes
3. Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots? Yes
4. How will the pupil support/care structures (subjects taught: SPHE, Grow in Love) support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
5. How will pupils, in particular senior pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying? In this regard, has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
6. In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
7. Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher? Yes
8. Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage? Always
9. Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts (once & when set up for senior classes) for email purposes, discussion forums and electronic communication that have been approved by the school and to use these only under teacher supervision? Yes

(Note: that the Schools Broadband Programme controlled by PDST has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which is been provided for educational purposes only).

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.

1. This Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 5/9/24.

2. Once ratified, this policy has been made available to all Cullen NS personnel, it will be emailed to all the parent(s)/guardian(s) of our school & Cullen NS Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be also emailed to our Patron and will be made available to the Department Inspectorate. It will also be available on www.cullenns.ie

3. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once, at the beginning of each school year/when the need arises. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to all school personnel, be readily accessible to parents and pupils and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Patron and to the Department Inspectorate.

Records

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's behaviour.

Such records will contain:

1. Incidents of misbehaviour,
2. Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
3. Evidence of improved behaviour
4. Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the

- *Data Protection Act 1988* and the
- *Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003*.

This *Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy 2024 /2025* was ratified by the Board of Management of Cullen NS at Board Meeting 1 of 5 of the academic year 2024/2025 on 5/10/24 and this mandatory policy will be reviewed and updated, as the need arises/annually.

Signed: *Derry Morley* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Chairperson: for and on behalf of the Board of Management Cullen NS

Signed: *Eileen O'Mahony* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management Cullen NS

Date of next review: beginning of academic year 2025/2026 / should the need arise

(see Appendices 1-7 below)

Appendix 1: Indications of Bullying and Disclosure

Appendix 2: Types of Cyber-Bullying

Appendix 3: Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

Appendix 4: Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation

Appendix 5: Internet Acceptable Use Policy 2022/2023

Appendix 6: Anti Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools: Handbook 1 (in file in Principal's Office)

Appendix 7: Anti Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools: Handbook 2 (in file in Principal's Office)

Appendix 1

Indications of Bullying

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

1. anxiety about travelling to and from school -
2. requesting parents to drive or collect them,
3. changing route of travel,
4. avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
5. unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, 'mitching', 'ditching';
6. deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
7. pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
8. unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
9. visible signs of anxiety or distress - stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
10. spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
11. possessions missing or damaged;
12. increased requests for money or stealing money;
13. unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
14. Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation, in order to establish, what is affecting the pupil.

Disclosure

Pupils will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.

Pupils and parents will be helped to differentiate between incidents of a minor nature and those that constitute bullying.

They will also be taught the difference between 'telling tales' and asking for help.

Appendix 2

Types of Cyber-Bullying:

Flaming Online fights, usually through emails, instant messaging or chat-rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.

Denigration Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms or websites set up to make fun of someone.

Exclusion Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites or other online group activities.

Outing Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures and videos.

Trickery Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.

Impersonation/Masquerading Pretending to be someone else when posting mean or false messages online using fake email address or instant messaging name.

Harassment Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online, sometimes at odd times of the day and night.

Cyberstalking Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm. Messages are normally sent through personal communication such as email or text messages.

Appendix 3

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

(adapted from Seán Fallon, founder of www.antibullyingcampaign.ie & his anti-bullying tool based on "Break Through the Cloud of Bullying - Anti Bullying Campaign")

1. Name of pupil being bullied and Class

Name _____ Class _____

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

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

Name _____ Class _____

3. Source of Bullying Concern/Report: _____

4. Location of Incident: _____

Tick relevant Box (es)

Pupil concerned	Playground
Other Pupil	Classroom
Parent	Corridor
Teacher	Toilets
Other	School Bus

5. Name of person 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)
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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

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an Annual Review of the schools' Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation.

The following checklist must be and will 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.

This review will be conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 4 of the <i>Department of Education's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> .	
Yes /No Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board published the policy on the school website www.cullenns.ie and provided a copy to the Parents' Association? (once ratified)	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the <i>Prevention and Education Strategies</i> that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the <i>Prevention and Education Strategies</i> been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the <i>Prevention and Education Strategies</i> that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	N/A
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	No

Signed: Derry Morley *Derry Morley*

Chairperson, Board of Management 5/9/2024

Signed: Eileen O'Mahony *Eileen O'Mahony*

Principal, Secretary to the Board of Management 5/9/2024

**Notification re:
the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

To: the whole school community of Cullen NS,
The Board of Management of Cullen NS wishes to inform you that:
The Board of Management's **Annual Review of Cullen NS's Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation** was completed at Board Meeting 1 of 5 of the 2024/2025 academic year on 5/9/24.

Signed: *Derry Morley* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____
Chairperson: for and on behalf of the Board of Management Cullen NS

Signed: *Eileen O'Mahony* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management Cullen NS

Appendix 5

Internet Acceptable Use Policy 2024/2025

Introductory Statement

Cullen NS wishes to give its pupils limited access to the Internet, which has potential benefits as a learning tool.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by Cullen NS's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if this policy is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and the appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

Procedures

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
 - Filtering software - McAfee & Cyber Patrol will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
 - Pupils' Internet usage will be monitored.
 - Pupils and teacher will be made aware of Internet Safety Guidelines as outlined by *PDST Technology in Education*
- Uploading or downloading of non-approved material will not be permitted.
- Anti Virus protection McAfee software is be used.
 - The use of personal CD-ROM's in school is forbidden. Use of personal USBs are at the discretion of the class teacher for project work, research etc.
 - Only teachers have access to the Internet password.
 - Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
 - Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
 - No personal e-mail accounts to be used by the pupils. If the need occurs, pupils will use approved e-mail accounts under the supervision by the class teacher.
 - Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. telephone numbers.
 - No chat rooms will be accessed.
 - Cullen NS reserves the right to discipline pupils for actions taken out of school, if they are intended to have an effect on a pupil or they adversely affect the safety and well-being of a pupil while in school.

Sanctions Misuse of the Internet will result in disciplinary action as outlined in Cullen NS's Code of Behaviour.

Support Structures

Cullen NS will inform pupils and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet. Parents will be provided with the addresses of the relevant websites.

Conclusion

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Appendix 6 Anti Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools:Handbook 1

(in file in Principal's Office)

Appendix 7 Anti Bullying Campaign for Primary Schools:Handbook 2

(in file in Principal's Office)

Signed: *Derry Morley* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Chairperson: for and on behalf of the Board of Management Cullen NS

Signed: *Eileen O'Mahony* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management Cullen NS

Notification re: the Board of Management's Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy

To: the whole school community of Cullen NS,

The Board of Management of Cullen NS wishes to inform you that:

The Board of Management's **Annual Review of Cullen NS's Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation** was completed at Board Meeting 1 of 5 of the 2024/2025 academic year on 5/9/24.

Signed: *Derry Morley* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Chairperson: for and on behalf of the Board of Management Cullen NS

Signed: *Eileen O'Mahony* _____ Date: 5/9/24 _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management Cullen NS