Castleknock Educate Together National School

Anti-Bullying Policy

1.   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 Castleknock Educate Together N.S. school 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.

2.   The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact 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) 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;
   (b) Effective leadership
   (c) A school-wide approach
   (d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
   (e) 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;
   (f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
   (g) Supports for 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*, bullying is defined as follows:

<u>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.</u>

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.

<u>Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour</u>, 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, <u>placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement</u> 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 Appendix 1. This list is open to amendment and we would like the Student Council's input which will be included in October and ratified at the November Board of Management meeting.

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying in this school are as follows:
- All class teachers
- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- *Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.*

5. **The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows**

The school's approach to the education and prevention of bullying is School-based, Class-based and Individual.

School-Based
Primary prevention includes a school-wide anti-bullying policy that includes all students, all parents, and all staff including teachers, administrators, support staff, and the Board of Management.
As a school we will ensure the following:

The school will focus on building self-worth and promote a culture of empathy, respect and resilience in children. We will achieve this through activities such as:
- Friendship week,
- Student Council activities
- Sticks and Stones workshops (4th class)
- Buddy systems
- Assemblies based on the core principles of the Learn Together programme.
- 'Special Day' scheme in 1st and 2nd class.
- Secret friends
- 'Star of the Week' affirmation book

The school will create a safe environment for children, which will encourage sharing difficulties or worries they may have.

We will encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. Children will be educated about the difference between 'tattle-tales' and reporting. A poster will be displayed in every classroom to help children differentiate between the two. It will 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.

We will develop over time a Student Mentoring Programme in the school.

We adopt a school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. This is evident throughout the school and is reflected in the everyday communication within the school between the whole school community.

We promote the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

We foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

Whole staff professional development on bullying will be provided 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.

Professional development will be provided with a specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).

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.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour will be discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) at the class meeting at the start of the year and at the 'New Parents' meeting in June. Copies of each are available to all parents and guardians at the school office to view and on our school website.

Class-Based
We will trial Seán Fallon's *Anti-Bullying Campaign* in the first year of our revised policy and review its success at the end of year 1.

In line with the *Anti-Bullying Campaign* (see www.antibullyingcampaign.ie), teachers will explicitly teach one anti-bullying lesson a month which will incorporate activities such as slogan competitions, role play, surveys and games. This will ensure that the message of the campaign is reinforced regularly and is consistent throughout the school.

Regular assemblies will re-enforce the messages being taught in line with the *Anti-Bullying Campaign*.

The nature of bullying, bullying behaviours and its causes and effects will be explicitly taught through the SPHE and Learn Together curriculum. This will include cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying.

The whole-school Code of Behaviour will be re-enforced at class level to teach and encourage the children to behave in a respectful, safe and friendly manner. Class based systems such as the Traffic Light system at infant level will help to re-enforce this message.

We catch pupils being good – we notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.

Programmes used that promote anti-bullying in class are:
- Stay Safe
- Walk Tall
- RSE
- Learn Together

In addition to the above programmes, there are opportunities for exploring issues around bullying and self-esteem across the curriculum in subjects such as Literacy and Drama.

Resources are available to every class to support and promote an ethos of anti- bullying, friendship, respect and diversity

Pupils with SEN will be educated in identifying bullying behaviour and will learn skills to deal with incidents if they arise.

The children will be educated about cyber-bullying and will learn strategies to deal with it through the Garda Cyber-Bullying Programme and their class teacher. Computer time in the school will be monitored closely.

Lessons about the difference between "tattling" v "reporting" will be taught.

Pupils will be taught who to tell and how to tell if they witness any kind of bullying e.g.,
- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Hand note up with homework.
- Make a phone call to the school or email seeking to address the issue with a trusted teacher in the school.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

Circle time will be used in classrooms to allow pupils to talk about and discuss issues relating to bullying and its effects.

Individual-Based
Anti-bullying resources such as social stories, games, video clips and books are used to explore the topic of bullying with individual children.

We will develop over time a Student Mentoring Programme in the school. Pupils can then tell their Mentor if they have experienced or witnessed bullying behaviour.

We will implement targeted strategies to support children who have been identified as 'at-risk' for being a bully or victim. These strategies will be used with students who have severe needs, including students who are perpetual bullies and victims, and those who have threatened violence to peers and/or teachers and staff.

6. 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:

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);

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset. An outline of this approach will be highlighted to any parent/ guardian/ pupil or staff member who may become involved in a suspected incident of bullying.

Reporting bullying behaviour
A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher or adult working in the school. The relevant teacher will then take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with this policy.

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.

Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, bus escorts, cleaners and caretakers must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the relevant teacher.

Investigation

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.

Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will endeavour to seek answers to questions of what, where, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner.

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Campaign*, the school will regularly survey each class to uncover incidents of bullying. The relevant teacher will then investigate any incidents by interviewing those involved, as outlined below.

Where possible, incidents will be investigated outside the classroom setting/ away from whole class group to ensure the privacy of all involved.

All interviews will 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.

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 pupil(s) responsible for the bullying behaviour must enter into a signed contract with the relevant teacher. This contract is a promise to cease the bullying behaviour immediately. No sanctions are issued if the pupil abides by the contract.

If the first contract is broken, a second contract is drawn up and signed by the **pupil, relevant teacher, principal and parent/guardian.** This contract allows the pupils to renew the promise to cease the bullying behaviour.

In cases where the second contract is broken, the pupil will then be subject to disciplinary sanctions in accordance with our Code of Behaviour.

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 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 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.

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.

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.

Recording
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:

All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them which they deem as a bullying type incident. Ref. **Appendix 2**

Teachers and non-teaching staff are required to complete the incident form where necessary after each yard time. These incident sheets will be compiled and assessed regularly in order to identify possible incidences of bullying.

Class teachers will maintain a Pupil Record book which will be passed from Junior Infants to 6th class as the child progresses through the school. This book will record notable incidents of bullying behaviour and will make new class teachers aware of any patterns in behaviour or history of conflict with other pupils in the class.

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.

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.

The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.

The relevant teacher must use the recording template (Appendix 2) 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) 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 or Deputy Principal 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 stored in the child's file which is in the Principal's office.

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 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.

Established intervention strategies
- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- 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
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions
- **No Blame Approach**
- Circle Time

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
Support will be provided for pupils affected by bullying. They will be given the opportunity to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience.

Pastoral care system - class teacher, support teacher and other relevant personnel.

Buddy/Peer mentoring system- arranged by relevant teacher e.g. buddy system in the yard

If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with parents to organise support from outside agencies. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with their teacher. There are no innocent bystanders.

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.

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 adopted by the Board of Management at their meeting 02/10/2014.

11.   This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent-Teacher 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 in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed and will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent-Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department of Education & Skills.

Signed: _____   Signed: _____
    Billy Quane   Aedín Ní Thuathail
    Chairperson of Board of Management   Principal

Date: _____   Date: _____

Appendix 1:

Examples of Bullying Behaviours *

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	• 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 • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	•**Denigration**: Spreading rumours, 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

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	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 • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
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

*This list is not and cannot be exhaustive

Bullying Incident Form

1. Name of pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and class group

Name _____   Class_____

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

_____

_____

_____

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
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

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression	Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property	Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion	Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling	Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9.   Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

* **Note:** These forms will be given to the school Principal and stored in the Principal's office in a separate file.

Castleknock Educate Together National School