



Derryooper National School Policies

Roll Number: 17547R

Patron: Most Rev. Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert

Chairperson: Fr. Kieran O'Rourke P.P.

Phone: 0860483344

Principal: Padraig Lohan

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

Derryooper National School is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, and members of the school community. The school recognises that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This policy aligns with *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying*, Ireland's Whole Education Approach to preventing and addressing bullying in schools. *Cineáltas* highlights the importance of fostering a culture of kindness, inclusion, and respect in all aspects of school life.

This policy has been formulated in accordance with the following legislation and guidelines:

- **Education Act 1998**
- **Education (Welfare) Act 2000**
- **Equal Status Acts 2000-2018**
- **Children First Act 2015**
- **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES, 2013)**
- **Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022)**
- **Derryooper National School Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including students, staff, parents/guardians, and visitors.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated aggressive behaviour, whether verbal, physical, or psychological, that is **intentional** and aimed at causing distress or harm to another individual or group. *Cineáltas* emphasises the impact of bullying on student well-being and the importance of early intervention.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- **Physical:** Hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, damaging belongings.
 - **Verbal:** Name-calling, mocking, taunting, spreading rumours, threats.
 - **Social:** Exclusion, deliberate ignoring, manipulating friendships.
 - **Cyberbullying:** Online harassment via social media, messaging, emails, or gaming platforms (see **Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy** for further details).
 - **Identity-based Bullying:** Targeting individuals based on gender, race, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics.
 - **Sexual Bullying:** Unwanted physical contact, inappropriate comments, or gestures.
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3. Preventative Strategies

Derryoover National School adopts a **proactive approach** to preventing bullying by promoting a culture of kindness, inclusion, and respect in line with *Cineáltas*.

School-Based Initiatives

- **SPHE Curriculum:** Lessons on respect, empathy, conflict resolution, and personal safety.
- **Friendship Week/Anti-Bullying Week:** Activities that promote kindness and respect.
- **Student Council & Buddy System:** Encouraging peer support and positive interactions.
- **Digital Safety Education:** Internet safety workshops for students and parents (linked to the **Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**).
- **Supervision & Monitoring:** Teachers actively supervise students during break times and transitions to identify potential issues early.
- **Wellbeing Programmes:** Incorporating mental health awareness and mindfulness initiatives.

Role of Parents/Guardians

- Encourage children to discuss school experiences and friendships openly.
 - Teach children the importance of empathy and respect.
 - Monitor online activity and discuss safe digital behaviour.
 - Report concerns about bullying to the school as early as possible.
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4. Reporting Bullying

Cineáltas stresses the importance of open communication and early reporting. All students, staff, and parents are **encouraged** to report bullying incidents.

How to Report:

- Students can speak to a teacher, principal, or any trusted adult in the school.
- Parents can contact the school principal or class teacher.
- Anonymous reporting mechanisms may be made available where appropriate.
- Cyberbullying incidents should be reported in line with the **Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**.

All reports will be taken **seriously** and investigated promptly.

5. Investigation & Response Procedures

Step 1: Initial Investigation

- The teacher or staff member will gather details from all parties involved.
- Parents/guardians of all involved students will be informed.
- The school will determine whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying.

Step 2: Intervention & Support

- The behaviour will be addressed through discussion and conflict resolution where possible.
- Support plans may be implemented for both the target and the student engaged in bullying behaviour.
- If necessary, further disciplinary actions will be taken in line with the school's **Code of Behaviour**.

Step 3: Monitoring & Follow-up

- Continuous monitoring will take place to ensure the bullying does not continue.
 - Additional interventions such as peer mediation, counselling, or parental meetings may be organised.
 - Cases may be referred to outside agencies such as the **National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)** or **TUSLA** if deemed necessary.
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6. Consequences of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is a serious offence, and **graduated sanctions** will be applied depending on the severity of the behaviour:

- **Verbal Warning & Reflection:** For minor first-time incidents.
- **Parental Notification:** If the behaviour is repeated or severe.
- **Loss of Privileges:** Exclusion from school activities if necessary.
- **Behaviour Contract:** An agreement signed by the student, parents, and teacher.

- **Suspension/Expulsion:** In cases of severe or persistent bullying, as per the school's Code of Behaviour.
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7. Support for Students Affected by Bullying

Cineáltas recognises that both the victims and perpetrators of bullying require support.

- **Victims of Bullying:**
 - Support from teachers and peer groups.
 - Counselling referrals where appropriate.
 - Regular follow-ups to ensure well-being.
 - **Students Engaging in Bullying Behaviour:**
 - Encouraged to reflect on their actions and take responsibility.
 - Support provided through structured intervention programmes.
 - Behavioural expectations reinforced in a supportive environment.
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8. Implementation & Review

- This policy is **reviewed annually** by the **Board of Management, school staff, and Parent Association**.
 - Regular feedback from students, parents, and teachers will be incorporated to ensure its effectiveness.
 - Amendments will be made in response to new guidelines, legislation, or school needs, with *Cineáltas* serving as an ongoing framework for review.
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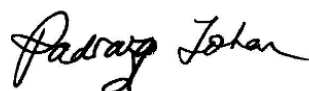
9. Policy Ratification

This **Anti-Bullying Policy** has been prepared by the **Principal** and approved by the **Board of Management**.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management: _____

Principal, Derryoover National School:



Date:

19 February 2025
