Le Chéile Secondary 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 Le Chéile Secondary 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 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; and 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;
- 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

3. 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:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying
- 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.

Cyberbullying is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social networking sites, email, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. Cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact.

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.

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

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

False accusations of bullying made by one member of the school community against another will be regarded as a very serious example of misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all	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 • 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

	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
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

4. Dealing with Bullying

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads, Tutors, School Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Care Team. Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

All reports of bullying will be noted by any teacher in the school. Reports of bullying can be made to the class tutor, year head, deputy principal or principal. When a teacher receives a report of bullying, the bullying/cyberbullying behaviour record form (Appendix 1) will be completed.

The Year Head, who is the relevant teacher, must use the bullying/cyberbullying behaviour record form Appendix 1 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

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

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.

Serious cases of bullying will be referred immediately to the Principal, who is then the relevant teacher. A Serious Incident Protocol will apply in any case where there is cause for concern about the safety of an individual or group. This can trigger Child Protection Procedures.

5. Preventative Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- As a new school we are all striving to promote the school values of Welcome, Wisdom, Witness. Through a pro-active and preventative approach we actively develop a culture of awareness, inclusivity, tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

- A whole school approach was used in developing this policy.

- A focus group was formed from a cohort of student representatives from all year groups who met with members of staff to discuss issues relating to Bullying and these discussions helped inform this policy.

- Belonging Plus Transition and Transfer Programme for incoming first years fostering belonging, inclusion and respect. We teach the Code of Behaviour in order to communicate our expectations for respectful, safe behaviour.

- Culture Week promoting awareness of similarities and diversity between nationalities and cultures as demonstrated through food, customs, costumes, music, art and dance. Parental involvement throughout strengthening community ties between the school and the new Tyrrellstown community.

- There is an active Amber Flag project team in the school who also run events and initiatives every year around Mental health. The school was awarded the Amber Flag last year, showcasing our commitment to promoting positive mental health and promoting inclusion.

- There is a Peer Mentoring Programme in place. All students are mentors from second year onwards. Training in the Angel Programme begins in first year.

- SPHE programme delivered to all years covers issues relating to respectful behaviour, self-esteem such as transition to secondary school, belonging, integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. All SPHE teachers are also signed up to facilitate the FUSE Anti bullying workshops created by DCU. Feedback sessions are included in this delivery so that we can continue to develop and improve.

- The school celebrates UNESCO's International Day against violence and bullying at school, including cyber bullying. The anti-bullying commitee members organise and run activities and initiatives on this day every year. This year had a special focus on Cyber bullying and promoting positive mental health. All teachers highlighted the significance of this day to all students in tutor time. Positive quotes were also hung up on every door for students and staff to read and we also took part in DCU'S Anti Bullying in Action campaign and put forward a digital poster to be used in guide for schools, to be released soon. We continue to develop new initiatives to tackle bullying every year.

- SPHE teachers and Student Council work closely with students in producing Anti-Bullying material that are displayed throughout the school

- Student Council are provided with a peer mentoring programme that provides another avenue for students in junior classes to report bullying. The Student Council run a slogan competition that is open to all students to produce Le Cheile Secondary Schools student stance on bullying. This slogan will be included in Student Journals.

- Key respect messages and inspirational quotes are displayed around the school based on role model house leaders quotes as well as during weekly year group assemblies and end of term assemblies.

- We adhere to the principles set out in our Code of Behaviour in order to provide a safe environment for all students. The Code of Behaviour is printed in the student journal.

- Teachers enforce school rules on iPad, mobile phone and internet use. We have an Acceptable Use Policy, which aims to prevent cyberbullying occurring within school. It outlines appropriate online behaviour and appropriate uses of social media, gives advice on how to stay safe online, how to deal with upsetting comments or material and how to report concerns about cyberbullying.

- Teachers employ positive discipline strategies to reward good behaviour through the points reward system on VSware.

- There is a zero tolerance policy towards the use of homophobic and racist language.

- We promote group work and pair work as teaching methodologies within subject departments that build positive relationships in the classroom.

- Learning Support and Behaviour Support is provided where it is needed to develop social skills and promote inclusion.

- Our extensive extra-curricular programme is a means of developing self-worth and helps students learn how to self - regulate. Student involvement in charity work and in work experience fosters tolerance, respect and social awareness.

- Students are supervised and monitored both inside and outside the school building at break times.
- Our Third Year RSE programme on human sexuality and relationships addresses identity-based bullying.

- In the event that the school becomes aware of bullying that occurs outside of school time; the school will advise parents of it.

- This policy is accessible to all on the school website

- Students are encouraged to report 'hot spots' and 'hot times' where bullying occurs

6. Investigation Bullying Allegations

➢ 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 (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

➢ A student may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school and details will be recorded by the relevant teacher (Year Head) on a bullying/cyberbullying behaviour record form (Appendix 1).

➢ A parent may bring a bullying concern to the relevant Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.

➢ Students are encouraged to view the reporting of bullying as responsible behaviour.

➢ All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. The relevant teacher in this school is the Year Head. The aim is to resolve the issue and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

➢ Non-teaching staff will report any incidents of bullying to the Year Head.

➢ Parents and students are required to cooperate with the any investigation and to assist the school in resolving the issue and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

➢ The matter will be dealt with outside the classroom to ensure the privacy of any party involved.

➢ The relevant teacher(s) will speak separately to the pupils involved, directly or indirectly to get both sides of the story. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and due regard to the rights of all students concerned.

➢ The relevant teacher(s) will investigate the incident by seeking answers to questions of what, when, who and why. Factual notes will be kept at each stage of the investigation.

➢ Students may be asked to write down their account of the incident.

➢ If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter they may be met as a group (if appropriate). At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

➢ Restorative Practice approaches may be used where appropriate.

- ➢ If it is concluded that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken in line with this policy and the School's Code of Behaviour. Parents will be given an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions being taken by the school.

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

- ➢ It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is private matter between the student being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.

- ➢ Follow-up meetings may be arranged separately with the relevant parties involved with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

- ➢ The Year Head monitors and meets regularly with the pupil who is experiencing bullying. Should the Year Head consider that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days (or sooner) after he/she has determined that bullying occurred, it must be recorded by the Year Head in the bullying/cyberbullying record form (Appendix 1.) This depends upon:

- ➢ whether the bullying has ceased,

- ➢ whether issues between the parties has been resolved,

- ➢ whether relationships have been restored

- ➢ Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.

- ➢ Year Head updates at Care Team meetings.

- ➢ Where a serious incident of bullying has been established, the relevant teacher will present the Principal with a written record of the discussions with those involved.

- ➢ Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent will be referred to the school's complaints procedures.

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

7. Supporting Students affected by Bullying

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows
(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

Supporting the victim and counselling the perpetrator: Pupils involved in bullying need assistance on a regular basis. Perpetrators may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Victims may need counselling and opportunities to develop their friendship and social skills. The school chaplain and guidance counsellors may be involved. In some situations, it may be necessary to get in touch with Gardai, Health Board or other external agencies. Parents may request contact numbers of same.

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. Related Policies

Code of Behaviour

ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Health and Safety

School Trips & Outing Policy

11. Communicating the Policy

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council . A copy of this policy has also been made available to the trustees.

12. Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. (Appendix 2)
Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Council. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the trustees.

13. Appendices

1. Bullying behaviour record form

2. Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

Next Review: June 2026

Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

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

_____
_____
_____

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:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

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 school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Yes /No

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?	Y
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Y
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?	Y
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Y
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Y
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Y
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Y
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Y
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Y
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?	Y
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	N
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	N
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	N

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?	Y
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	Y
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	Y

Signed _____ Date: 12/06/25

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date: 12/06/25