Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board

St. Conleth's Community College

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 St. Conleth's Community College 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. 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 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 or physical appearance or academic ability

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.

3. The Board of Management, Staff, Parent's Association and Student Council recognise 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-
  - o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - o 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-
  - o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - o 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.

4. The relevant teachers and staff members for investigating and dealing with bullying are one or more of the following:

- Class Teacher
- Class Tutor
- Year Head
- School Completion Programme Co-ordinator
- Home School Community Liaison
- Guidance Counsellor
- Deputy Principal
- Principal

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:

- Delivery of SPHE, CSPE, and RSE curricula

- Policies such as School Code of Good Behaviour, Acceptable Internet Use Policy, Mobile Phone Policy
- Enhancing self esteem through curricular and extracurricular activities
- Fostering respect in the school community
- Raising school awareness of bullying by encouraging a culture of telling
- Student Council to encourage peer support where possible
- Internet Safety Programme
- Workshops on Breathe, Humourfit, Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer, Real Deal
- Use signs/ posters throughout school

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:

Students are advised as follows and this is included in the Student Journal:

Coming to school, at school, going home from school, must be a safe time for all.

If something wrong is going on:

- You must tell.
- You must keep telling.

You can tell: Your parents, guardians, family, friends, classmate, tutor, any teacher, school authorities.

FIVE STEPS
1.   If you are involved you will be asked to stop.
2. (a)   If you are involved a second time you will be warned to stop.
   (b)   A record will be opened.
   (c)   Your parents/guardians will be informed.
3.   We will check to see that you have stopped.
4.   Next step-your parents/guardians will be brought in.
5.   Sanctions will be imposed including suspension and possibly expulsion.

Recording Bullying:

- A Bullying Allegation Form is available to staff to facilitate easy recording (Appendix One)
- A Standard Letter is available to send to parents for repeat incidents. (Appendix Two)
- When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher. A copy will be placed in the student file and a copy will be provided to the Principal which will be kept in the Principal's office. The records will be kept in the student files

and in the Principal's Office and retained until the student has completed the relevant cycle e.g. Junior Cycle or Senior Cycle.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows :

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 to build resilience e.g.

- School Code of Good Behaviour
- SPHE Programme
- Pastoral Care System
- Peer mentoring system
- Tutor/ Year Head system
- Care Team
- Internet Security Programme in September
- Parent Association Support
- Student Council Support

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.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher. Steps for students to follow are outlined in the school journal and in this document (Section 6)

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. We also wish to include grounds such as physical appearance and academic ability.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (www.stconlethscc.ie) and provided to the Parents' Association and the Student Council. 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 will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website www.stconlethscc.ie and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 14th Nov 2019 and Reviewed on 5th Nov 2020