St Kilian's Community School

Anti-Bullying Policy   December 2022

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 Kilian's Community 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; 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.

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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 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.

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*.

4. **The Relevant Teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:**

- Year Heads

- 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:**

Curricular:
- CSPE and SPHE programmes (1 class period a week, all Junior Cycle classes)
- Behaviour For Learning programme (1 class period a week for all 1st Year classes, 2 class periods a week for all 1st Year JCSP classes and 1 class period a week for 2nd and 3rd Year JCSP classes)
- Religious Education classes (3 class periods a week, all students)

- Personal Development programme (1 class period a week, Transition Year classes)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (5 hours a year, 5th and 6th Year classes)
- Social Education programme (4-6 class periods a week, 5LCA and 6LCA)
- ICT programmes for 1st and 4th Years, with a focus on safe and appropriate internet use

Structural/Personnel:
- St Kilian's CS has an inclusive and welcoming ethos which informs its enrolment and school organisational principles and policies.
- St Kilian's is part of Jigsaw's *'One Good School'* initiative, which provides training and opportunities for discussion around supporting good mental health for all students and staff members.
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Pastoral Care system (Year Head and Class Tutors)
- Care Team
- Support for staff to pursue appropriate continuous professional development
- Wellness Retreats (1st, 4th and 6th Year students)
- Senior Prefects including those assigned to work with 1st Year students.
- Mentoring training for Prefects
- Teacher Mentors for 6th Year students
- Chaplains
- Guidance Counsellors
- Special/Additional Educational Needs Coordinator and Team
- JCSP Library
- Home School Community Liaison Teacher
- Behaviour For Learning Teacher

Additional:
- 'Mind Your Mind Week' – an annual week promoting positive mental health
- Anti-Bullying Workshops (e.g. with Bully4U)
- Cyber-Bullying Workshops (e.g. with Zeeko and the Community Policing Unit of An Garda)
- Mental Health Workshops (e.g. with Jigsaw)
- Transfer Programme (1st Year classes)
- Workshops with Parents (e.g. with An Garda, Headstrong)
- Visiting Speakers (e.g. The Samaritans, BeLonG To, Be Well Bray)

Links:
- School Completion Programme (based at the school)
- National Behaviour Support Service as part of NCSE.
- ISPCC
- Teen Focus
- Local youth programmes (e.g. Ballywaltrim Youth Project, Hi Rez and Seomra Youth Centres)
- Local Resource Centres
- Living Life Bray (Counselling Service)
- Bray Partnership
- Lucena Clinic
- Festina Lente
- An Garda
- Other local schools

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**:

- All reports of bullying, including anonymous ones, are investigated by the Relevant Teacher.
- The aim of the Relevant Teacher in investigating reports of bullying is to resolve issues and to restore relationships. It is not his/her role to apportion blame.
- The Relevant Teacher uses his/her professional judgement to decide if bullying has occurred or if the matter might be dealt with better by the school's Code of Behaviour.
- The Relevant Teacher keeps records of reports, meetings and discussions and actions taken. All records are maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.
- The Relevant Teacher decides how best to proceed, and does so taking a calm and unemotional problem-solving approach to matters.
- Students involved are supported through measures outlined in 8 below.
- Parents are informed and interviews held with them, as decided by the Relevant Teacher.
- Parents and students are required to cooperate fully with the efforts that the school and, in particular, the Relevant Teacher are making to resolve matters and, as far as is practicable, restore the relationships of those involved.
- Interviews with those involved and with third parties take place with sensitivity and with due respect to best practice when interviewing young people.
- Where groups of students are involved, each member of the group is interviewed individually. A group meeting then takes place. In some situations, students may be asked to write down their version of events.
- Care is taken to provide support to the students involved, who may be under pressure from other members of the group.
- If the Relevant Teacher determines that a student has engaged in bullying behaviour, the student is made aware of how he/she has breached the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Efforts are made to get this student to see things from the perspective of the student being bullied.
- Where a disciplinary sanction is required, this is a private matter between the school, the student involved and his/her parents.
- Twenty school days after the Relevant Teacher's determination that bullying had taken place, if he/she is not satisfied that the bullying behaviour has been addressed, he/she will complete the recording template in Appendix 1. This template is then provided to the Principal and Deputy Principal, and retained by the Relevant Teacher.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that the parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school advises the parent of his/her right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- In relation to serious cases of bullying 'where the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult with the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response' (from Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

- Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with Children First and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or An Garda as appropriate.

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

- Through curricular provision, links and interventions (as outlined in Section 5 above), students are encouraged to reflect on, discuss and report bullying.

- The Chaplain and Guidance Counsellors provide one-to-one support for students who have been bullied. Supports are designed to promote students' self-esteem and to develop social skills and resilience, where required.

- Students who have been bullied may, if deemed necessary and after consultation with parents, be referred for counselling and/or other supports from external agencies.

- Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour are also supported by the Chaplain and Guidance Counsellors. Supports given will help them address their behaviour, and any self-esteem or social issues they may have. Their needs may also require the support of external agencies and this may be organised after consultation with their families.

- Students with Special Education Needs who have either been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour, are supported by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and team.

- The Home School Community Liaison teacher liaises with and supports the families of students who have either been involved in or have been affected by bullying.

- The Behaviour for Learning Teacher, through one-to-one interventions and whole-school initiatives, plays a key role in addressing the behaviour of those students who have engaged in bullying behaviour.

- The School Completion Team may support a programme of support for students who have been involved in bullying situations.

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 on December 14th 2022.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' 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 will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website 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.

Signed: _Nuala for_

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: _14/ 12/ 2022_

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _14/12/2022_

Date of next review: December 2023