

**Antibullying Policy, Kildimo National School**

* 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 Kildimo National 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.
* 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 on Aladdin, 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.
* 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.

**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 * The “look” * 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 |
|  | This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Relational** | 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” * 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 |

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

**Principal:** Mrs. Ciara McNamara

**Deputy Principal:** Ms. Trish Griffin

**Teachers:**

Ms. Paula Fitzgibbon

Ms. Nuala Heaney

Ms. Jean Meskell

Mr. Shane O’Neill

Mrs. Claire O’Driscoll

Mr. Killian Shortt

Mr. Ross Walsh

Ms. Linda Morrisroe

**School-wide approach:**

* A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
* The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
* The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
* 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 is discussed with pupils each year. A copy of the policy is given to parents of Junior Infants upon enrolment. A copy of the policy is also given to the Parents’ Association and new staff members. The policy is also available to view on the school website [www.kildimons.ie](http://www.kildimons.ie/)
* The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. Friendship Week, Wellbeing Week, monthly assemblies by Principal/Deputy Principal etc.
* Encouraging a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of being an “upstander” as opposed to a “bystander”. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. 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.
* Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
* Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
* Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
* Ensure bystanders understand the importance of being an upstander if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

**Implementation of the Curriculum:**

* The full implementation of the SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
* Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
* School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons using Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Alive O, Circle Time.
* School wide delivery of lessons on Cyber BullyingusingWeb wise Primary teachers’ resources and Online Workshops.
* Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes for primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
* The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

**Links to other policies:**

* Code of Behaviour
* Child Protection Policy
* Supervision Policy
* Acceptable Use Policy
* Attendance Policy

**Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:**

**The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships between the parties, rather than to apportion blame.**

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:

**Reporting bullying behaviour:**

* Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may report a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
* All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
* Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners will report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

**Investigating and dealing with incidents**

* In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant)teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
* Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
* Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
* Where possible, incidents would be investigated outside the classroom situation 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;
* When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This will be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non- aggressive manner.
* 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 will be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
* 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 (with reference to the school policy). The school will give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss 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 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 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.

**Follow up and recording:**

* In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will, 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)s or the school Principal or Deputy Principal

* Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved are 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.

**Recording of bullying behaviour:**

* 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:

**Informal stage - Pre-determination that bullying has occurred:**

* All staff will keep a record on Aladdin of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents will be reported to the relevant teacher.
* While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will keep a written record of the reports on Aladdin, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
* The relevant teacher will inform the Principal of all incidents being investigated.

**Formal Stage 1-Determination that bullying has occurred:**

* If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will keep appropriate written records and file these in the Incident Book which is stored in the Principal’s office. This will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
* All records pertaining to a particular pupil are stored in the child’s individual file which is to be locked safely into the classroom filing cabinet. These records in relation to any allegation/investigation of bullying are retained on file until the pupil reaches the age of 21 years.

**Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (DES Procedures):**

The relevant teacher will use the recording template at **Appendix 3** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

* 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
* Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour will be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school will list behaviours that are recorded and reported immediately to the principal. These will be in line with the school’s code of behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it will be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal in the office filing cabinet.

**Established intervention strategies:**

* Teacher interviews with all pupils, individually first.
* 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
* Restorative interviews
* Restorative conferencing

**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.
* There are agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school.
* A mentoring/buddy system is implemented involving Junior Infants and 4th class pupils.
* All internet sessions supervised by a teacher.
* The school regularly monitors pupils’ internet usage.
* Pupils are instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision
* Pupils are instructed to access only those discussion fora and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school.

(Note that the School’s Broadband Programme has blocked all social networking sites on the basis that they waste time and take up too much of the bandwidth which has been provided for educational purposes only).

**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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 20/02/2023

This policy is 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.

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: (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: (Principal)

Date:

Date of next review: February, 2023.