**Killusty National School**

Killusty N.S. Killusty, Fethard, Co. Tipperary

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**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 Killusty N.S. 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.

**This policy has been reviewed and updated based on the Departmental Publication - Cineáltas – Action Plan on Bullying – published in December 2022.**

***Extract from Cineáltas***

Bullying is a children’s rights issue.

Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

* The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
* The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
* The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
* The right to privacy (Article 16)
* The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
* The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
* The right to education (Article 28)
* The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

1. 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 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.

1. 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.

1. **Targeted behaviour**

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the child or young person displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the child or young person experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the child or young person experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other child or young person, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school’s code of behaviour.

1. **Repeated behaviour**

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying, but must still be addressed under the school’s code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

1. **Imbalance of power**

In incidents of bullying, the child or young person experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted person to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

(Cineáltas 2022)

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*.**

1. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

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| Teaching Principal  Class Teacher  SET |

1. 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 **(see Section 6.5 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):**

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| **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. * School wide awareness by making the policy available for all to see. * 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. * The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given access to a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year). * Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should 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(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.   * Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place. * The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored. * Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher. Bystanders should understand that whenever possible, they should help protect their peers whom they see are being bullied. Children should understand that reports of bullying will be dealt with sympathetically.   **Implementation of curricula**   * The implementation of the SPHE curriculum * School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme and The Walk Tall Programme.   **Links to other policies**  Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy. |
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1. 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*) :**

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| The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);  Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.  **a. Investigating Bullying**  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;   1. 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; 2. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach. 3. All interviews should 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; 4. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner; 5. If a group is involved, each member should 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; 6. Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; 7. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s) 8. 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 should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils; 9. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school’s anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied; 10. 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;   **b. Follow Up of Bullying Behaviour**   * In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, 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 should be 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.   **c. Recording of bullying behaviour**  It is imperative that recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner. The relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to records to be kept of these reports.  The school’s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:  **Formal Stage 1- Determination that bullying has occurred**   * If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. * The school in consultation with the relevant teacher/s should develop a protocol for the storage of all records retained by the relevant teacher.   **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 1 (From DES Procedures)**  The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 1** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:   1. 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 2. 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 as applicable.   Behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the principal   * Deliberate and serious physical interaction   These are in line with the school’s code of behaviour.  When the recording template is used, these records and any other pertaining to bullying issues will be kept in a specific bullying complaints folder under lock and key in the Principal’s Office.  **d. Interventions**     * Teacher interviews with all pupils * Negotiating agreements between pupils and monitoring progress. * Working with parent(s)/guardian(s)s to support school interventions * Bringing attention to parents of the dangers of cyber-Bullying at Parent/Teacher meetings * At least 1 Anti-Bullying focus study per term – e.g., Slogan campaign * Delivery of SPHE Curriculum * Circle Time |

1. 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*) :**

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| * 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 build resilience e.g. * Pastoral care * Group work such as circle time * It must be recognised that, there will be times, when the social and emotional inadequacies of children are such, that professional treatments are required, that are beyond the scope of school based intervention methods. If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies such as the HSE to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. |

1. **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.

1. **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.

1. **Measuring Success**
   1. Increased voice and participation of children, young people and their parents in policy development and implementation at school and national level including in relation to developing and implementing measures to prevent and address bullying in schools
   2. Student councils and school staff that reflect the diversity of the school community
   3. All schools engaging in a school self-evaluation approach to wellbeing promotion in line with the Department’s Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice
   4. Embedding of positive cultures in school as evidenced from published inspection reports, national research and school culture and value declarations
   5. All school staff being provided with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism, sexual harassment and to promote equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing
   6. Adhering to An UpToDate curriculum which encompasses measures to prevent and address bullying, and to promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and intercultural education and wellbeing
   7. Anti­bullying approaches which are effective in preventing and addressing bullying as evidenced by Inspection reports, board of management reports and national data
   8. Implementation of effective anti­bullying programmes
2. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [date].
3. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
4. 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents’ Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 1**

**Template for recording bullying behaviour**

**1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- |
| **2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour** \_   |  | | --- | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
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**3. Source** of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))\* **4. Location** of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pupil concerned |  | Playground |  |
| Other Pupil |  | Classroom |  |
| Parent |  | Corridor |  |
| Teacher |  | Toilets |  |
| Other |  | 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**

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**9. Details of actions taken**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_