

*Kilcummin N.S.  
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Killarmey,  
Co. Kerry.*



*Scoil Náisiúnta,  
Cill Chuimín,  
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## **Anti-Bullying Policy** **Kilcummin National School**

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 Kilcummin National School has reviewed 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 and was reviewed most recently by the Staff of Kilcummin N.S. on 29/02/2019.
  
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.

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.

4.

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are:

Principal: Ms. Gillian Sheehan

Deputy Principal: Mrs. Brenda Moynihan

All teachers

5.

The prevention of bullying is an integral part of the written anti-bullying policy of our school. The specific education and prevention strategies that the school will implement are:

- The SPHE curriculum (including the Walk Tall, Stay Safe and Relationship & Sexuality programmes) is used throughout the school to support the anti bullying policy.
- In utilising these programmes, the education and prevention of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying, will be addressed by all teachers.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others. The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff members are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- Members of the BOM/ Management are familiar with the school's policy on bullying and actively promote it on a repeated basis among staff, parents and pupils.
- Parents contribute to and support the school's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the school.

Kilcummin NS will emphasise and reinforce the view that bullying behaviour is unacceptable by

- Using both the formal and informal curriculum to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable e.g. visual arts activities, posters, drama, role play, SPHE and cooperative games.
- Creating anti-bullying posters for display in classrooms and other prominent locations throughout the school.

6.

#### Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying

- The primary aim for the relevant teachers 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).
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teachers. 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.
- Non-teaching staff such as Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), caretakers and cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- Parents 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.
- It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Interviews will be conducted by two teachers.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teachers 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.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first and then as a whole

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents 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 parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.
- Staff members will be notified regarding allegations of bullying.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 3 of Circular attached.

## 7. Procedures for Recording Bullying Behaviour

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

- (i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. All incidents of bullying will be recorded in an incident book which will be retained in the school.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 of Circular, to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
  - a) 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
  - b) 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.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording

template does not in any way preclude a teacher from consulting the Principal, Deputy Principal or relevant teachers, at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

#### 8. Supports for Pupils affected by Bullying

A programme of support for pupils involved in bullying behaviour will be provided. Such pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.

Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

#### 9. Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti- bullying policy

The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy should be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. The school should make provision for periodic examination of the prevention and intervention strategies in place.

Data gathered from the Recording Template will be regularly analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and be made available to the Board of Management/ Management.

#### 10. Supervision and monitoring of pupils

The Board of Management/ 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.

#### 11. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management / 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.

12. This policy was reviewed by the Management of Kilcummin N.S. on \_\_\_\_\_ .

13. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

14. Periodic summary reports to the Board of Management / Management

At every Board of Management/ Management meeting, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- (i) the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 3) since the previous report to the Board and
- (ii) confirmation that all cases referred to at (i) above have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

The minutes of the Board of Management / Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

15. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management / Management once in every school year. (Use of Checklist Appendix 4 of Circular). Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, will be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and be 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: \_\_\_\_\_

(Single School Manager)

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

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

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

(Principal)

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