



Anti- Bullying Policy St. Kevin's G.N.S.

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. Kevin's Girls' 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.

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*.

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

All teachers

The Principal, Ms. Dignam

The Deputy Principal, Ms. Kenny

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*):

- A school wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The fostering and enhancing of self- esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge and external resources.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents and the wider school community.
- Supervision of classrooms, corridors, school grounds and school tours.
- Student support activities to contribute to a safe school environment. And encourage peer respect.
- Development and promotion of our Anti Bullying School Code to be displayed publicly in classrooms and common areas of the school.
- The schools Anti- Bullying policy to be discussed with pupils and all parents are requested to read it on the school website once a year as part of our school's code of behaviour.
- The implementation of whole school awareness measures through assemblies, student surveys and classroom activities on the promotion of friendship and unacceptable behaviour i.e. bullying.
- Encouraging a culture of telling with emphasis on the importance of bystanders. Emphasis to be placed on behaving responsibly when they report bullying. Ensuring that pupils know who and how to tell i.e. direct approach, hand up note, questionnaire.
- Develop acceptable use policy ensuring that access to technology within the school is strictly monitored i.e. Internet and mobile phones and their use at all times.
- Teachers influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.
- SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Stay Safe programme is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to

recognise and cope with bullying. Each teacher signs off on a sheet when they have taught all thirteen Stay Safe lessons. This content is also shown in Cuntas Míosúil.

- RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.
- Other resources and programmes include: PDST Anti-Bullying Support Material, Prim-Ed Cyber Bullying Packs, Webwise Cyber Bullying Pack, Webwise My Selfie Lessons, Show Racism the Red Card, Walk Tall.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- The school will consider the needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and development of skills and strategies to respond appropriately.

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):

- The primary aim is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. The schools procedures will involve all parties knowing the approach from the outset (pupils, parents/guardians)
- Any pupil or parent may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports will be investigated by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non- teaching staff i.e. secretaries, SNAs, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour mentioned/witnessed to them to the relevant teacher.
- In investigating and dealing with bullying the relevant teacher will exercise her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation may be resolved.

- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- Teachers should take a calm, problem solving approach.
- Incidents should be resolved outside the classroom to ensure privacy.
- When analysing incidents of bullying, the relevant should seek answers to questions of who, what, when, and why in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved all members should be met as individuals at first. They should write their account of the incident. Thereafter they can be met as a group. At the group meeting everyone has to be asked for their account to ensure that everyone is clear about each other's statement.
- Each member is supported after the interview.
- If a case of bullying behaviour has taken place the parties should be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school to give opportunities to the parent to support the actions taken by the school.
- If a child has been engaged in bullying, it should be made clear that she is in breach of the school's Anti Bullying policy and efforts made to get her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- Clarity is given for those involved that it is a matter between the pupil being disciplined, her parents and the school.

Follow up and recording: The relevant teacher must determine:

- ✓ Whether the bullying has stopped?
- ✓ Whether the issues have been resolved as far as practicable?
- ✓ Whether the relationships have been restored as far as practicable?
- ✓ Any feedback from the parties or the school Principal or Deputy Principal?

When a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the stated procedures the parents must be referred to the school complaints procedure **i.e. relevant Teacher /Individual/Principal/Parent/BOM.**

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaint procedure and is still not satisfied the school must advise them of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of Bullying behaviour

Record all incidents in a factual manner.

St. Kevin's Girls' procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them.
- They will be put in the incident book. All incidents must be recorded to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports must be dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal stage 1

Determine that bullying has occurred

If it is determined by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist her efforts to resolve the issues and restore as far as practicable the relationships of the parties involved.

The school will store all records retained by the relevant teacher.

Formal Stage 2

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances.

In cases where she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after she determined that bullying behaviour occurred.

As 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.

St. Kevin's GNS list the following behaviour as warranting recording and they should be reported immediately in line with St. Kevin's code of behaviour.

When a recording template is used it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Records to be kept under lock and key.

Intervention Strategies to be used:

- ❖ Teacher interviews with all pupils

- ❖ Survey
- ❖ Negotiating promise/agreement
- ❖ Working with parents
- ❖ No blame approach
- ❖ Restorative interviews
- ❖ Restorative conferencing

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):

All-in school supports 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. Buddy system, group work such as circle time.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that incidents of bullying must be reported to a teacher.

3. 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 monitoring and supervision of practices in schools.
- Danger spots have been identified.
- Parents and pupils have been consulted.
- All student support and care structures will support (SPHE, guidance will assist in counteracting bullying.
- All internet sessions are supervised by a teacher.
- The school reminds parents of the need to monitor pupils' internet usage.
- The schools' broadband system has blocked all social networking sites as they take up too much of the bandwidth which is provided for educational purposes only.

4. 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.

5. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 8-04-2014 and ratified by the BOM on 15/02/17
6. 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.
7. 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 (where one exists). 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: 20/11/2021

