St Kevin's National School, Greystones
Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

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 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.

Commitment of the Board of Management

The Board of Management of St. Kevin's N.S. 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 (See Appendix 1) 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; involves collaboration among and between staff & pupils and promotes respectful relationships across the school community; encourages the work of the student council in this area · 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
· 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 ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

What is bullying?

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows: *'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
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, transphobic 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 one-off incidents do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of 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 and appears as Appendix 1 of this document.

Dealing with bullying

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:
· The class teacher(s) initially
· The principal thereafter if necessary

The following education and prevention strategies, at the appropriate and relevant level for each class, will be used by the school:

· Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
· Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth · Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online incorporated in the school's SPHE programme
· Teachers will influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner
· Our school's SPHE programme also promotes respect for diversity and inclusiveness. It makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
· We utilise the Stay Safe & RSE programmes to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

Procedures

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). With this in mind St. Kevin's procedures are as follows:

(i) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved

(ii) All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). 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

(iii) Non-teaching staff such as our secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs) our caretaker will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant class teacher

(iv) 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

(v) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset

(vi) Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents

(vii) Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy and dignity of all involved. Where appropriate or helpful, individuals involved will be asked to write down their account of the incident(s)

(viii) 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

(ix) When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why.

(x) If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements

(xi) Where the relevant teacher(s) has/have 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

(xiv) In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken so that they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their child(ren)

(xvii) Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved will 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

(xviii) Where necessary, an additional follow-up meeting with parents of the children involved will take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily

(xx) Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents should engage our school's complaints procedures

(xxi) In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, parents have a right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording

Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour will be documented using the *Template for recording bullying behaviour* (Appendix 1). All records will be maintained in accordance with relevant data

protection legislation. St. Kevin's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

(i) While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s), the relevant teacher(s) will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
(ii) If it is established by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher(s) will 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(s) will use the recording template (Appendix) to record the bullying behaviour

Intervention Strategies

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. Therefore various approaches and intervention strategies may be used including suggesting that parents seek referrals so that appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families if needed.
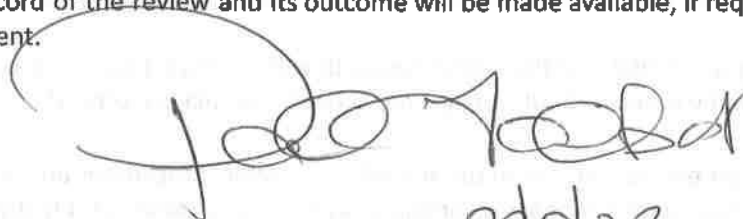
Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management of St. Kevin's National School 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.

Adopting This Policy

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 27th September 2022.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils in hard copy on request. It has been provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills 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 (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) 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.

28/9/22

Correia Bailey   28/9/22.

Appendix 1: Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: _____   Class: _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

_____   _____

_____   _____

3. Source of bullying concern/report -tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

4. Location of incidents -tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
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. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____   Date _____ (Relevant Teacher 1)

Signed _____   Date _____ (Relevant Teacher 2)

Signed _____   Date _____ (Principal)

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

- Model our STKEV values and respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Pupils are taught what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school (ie "I didn't like it when....)
- Key respect and anti-bullying messages developed by the staff and pupils are displayed throughout the school.
- The Stay Safe and RSE programes are taught throughout the school.
- We engage with cyber safety workshops for pupils, parents and teachers.
- Each November we acknowledge and celebrate Anti-Bullying month at our school.
- Pupils are acknowledged and rewarded for showing our STKEV values by all staff.
- Any use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school, including homophobic and racist language or language that is belittling of pupils with additional needs will not be tolerated.
- Teachers will give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- The appropriate use of social media and the responsibility involved is discussed and taught when using digital devices in school.
- Pupils are expected to comply with the school rules on internet use under our AUP. Alongside our Parents' Association, we promote and encourage parental involvement in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Our STKEV values are displayed and taught in pupil friendly language throughout the school.
- All staff actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Our playground rosters ensure there is adequate playground supervision.
- Our Student Council meet regularly to discuss any concerns or questions from pupils.