ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

KILDARE PLACE SCHOOL

Kildare Place School by Heather McKay

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INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board, the Board of Management of Kildare Place 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 dealing with bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- Encouragement of pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment
- Promotion of respectful relationships across the school community
- Promotion of transparency and accountability across the school and parent body
- 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
- 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)
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

DEFINITION

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
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of any minority 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 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 (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the travelling community)
- 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 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 a minority 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 a minority 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

Relational
This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. 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 a person's vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying
- Taking advantage of a person's vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.
- Mimicking a person's disability
- Setting others up for ridicule

RELEVANT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:
- School Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Assistant Principals
- Class Teachers
- Support Teachers

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

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 may include as follows:

School-wide approach
- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community including explicitly teaching children respectful language and behaviour.
- Promoting the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- 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 e.g Circle Time, Stay Safe programme, Relationship and Sexuality Education and Social Personal and Health Education
- Conducting an annual audit of professional development needs to assess staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Providing whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it affects pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention. Also encouraging professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).
- Displaying key messages around the school.
- Rewarding desired and respectful behaviour (e.g. celebrating achievement and rewarding appropriate behaviour and kindness in assembly)
- Promoting the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school
- Promoting the school's Code of Behaviour and school rules so that children are clear about expected and acceptable behaviour.

- Promoting School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community i.e Ruggakids programme, talks to pupils and parents on internet safety and online respect.
- Supervising and monitoring 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.
- Including an Anti-Bullying code in student journals and displaying it publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- Discussing the Anti Bullying Code with pupils
- Ensuring that all parent(s)/guardian(s)s are given a copy of the Anti-Bullying Code as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- Implementing regular whole school awareness measures e.g. focused class lessons on bullying; parent(s)/guardian(s) seminar on Internet Safety; student surveys; regular school assemblies by principal, deputy principal, teachers/classes etc.
- Encouraging 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.:
- Approaching teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Handing a note up with homework.
- Making a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
- Posting a note in a classroom "Tell" box.
- Getting a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on child's behalf.
- Administering a confidential questionnaire to pupils.
- Ensuring bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identifying clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect their child is being bullied.
- Developing an <u>Acceptable User Policy</u> in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

Role of parents

Parents have a vital role to play in supporting the school in implementing its anti-bullying procedures. They are strongly encouraged to contact the school if they believe their child, or another child is being subjected to bullying behaviour and to keep a record of such incidents.

The following behaviour may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:
- loss of interest in or enthusiasm for school
- anxiety about travelling to or from school
- unexplained mood changes possibly before school restarts after holidays
- frequent minor illnesses
- disturbed sleep/bed wetting
- unexplained damage to property

- unexplained cuts and bruises

PROCEDURES

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore and improve as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame)

The school's procedures for investigating, 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 or member of staff in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher and/or the principal.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teachers.

Approach
- All reports of bullying should be made in the first instance to either the class teacher, principal or any member of staff whom a pupil or parent feels comfortable in approaching. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated so that pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. 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. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem solving approach.

Investigation
- The class teacher and/or principal will oversee the investigation. 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.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- The alleged perpetrator(s) and injured party will be interviewed in an appropriate environment. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then met as a group. 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.
- Other pupils and witnesses may also be interviewed to get a clear picture. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

- Pupils may be asked for a written account of the details of the incident under investigation. Each group member will be supported through the possible pressure that they may face from other members of the group.
- When analysing incidents of bullying, the relevant teacher will seek answers to questions of 'what', 'when', 'who', 'where', 'why'? This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example of dealing effectively with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- In cases where bullying has been determined, the perpetrator will be informed that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and in breach of the anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the child being bullied.
- When it is established that bullying has occurred, parents of the parties involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the actions that will be taken. Parents will be given the opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce the action taken by the school and support the pupils.
- In any situation where disciplinary measures are taken, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.
- The injured party and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be assured that all pupils are entitled to be happy in school and free from any type of bullying or intimidation. The injured party will be encouraged to report any further instances that may occur.

Follow-up and recording

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:
- Has the bullying behaviour ceased?
- Have any issues between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable?
- Has the relationship between the parties have been restored or improved as far as is practicable?
- Has there been any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the school Principal or Deputy Principal?

Appropriate follow up should be arranged as agreed between the parties involved to review the situation and reflect on whether the relationship has improved or been restored.

Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent/guardian must be referred as appropriate to the school's complaint procedures.

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

Recording of bullying behaviour

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal - pre-determination that bullying has occurred.
- All staff will keep a record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents will be reported to the relevant teacher.

- The relevant teacher will investigate all reports of bullying, including anonymous reports. The teacher will keep a record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved and store these notes on the Aladdin database. (This is the database system that the school uses. It is a secure web-based system that allows the school to store information on pupils, analyse statistics, record attendance, keep copies of report cards and test results etc. For more information please follow this link https://www.aladdin.ie/)
- Cases of bullying will be reported to the principal. Relevant information may be shared with staff.

Formal - determination that bullying has occurred

If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher will keep appropriate records on the Aladdin Database system which will assist in his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The class teacher or Principal will record all incidents of bullying behaviour on the school's Bullying Behaviour Record Form (Appendix 1). All records will be retained and stored on the child's profile on the Aladdin database system with protected status (which requires additional password login). The principal will also keep a record of all incidents of bullying behaviour.

SUPPORT

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

- a programme of support for pupils who have been bullied will be agreed. This might include counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience.
- a programme of support for pupils involved in bullying behaviour will be part of the school's intervention process. This may include counselling and activities to improve the pupil's self-worth.
- children involved in bullying who are deemed to need specific support will, with parental permission, be referred to the National Educational Psychological Services for support.
- serious instances of bullying behaviour will be referred to the HSE Child and Family Services and/or the Gardaí as appropriate in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools. Where school personnel have concerns about a child but are unsure how to proceed, the Designated Liaison Person will seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Services.
- pupils involved in bullying behaviour will be encouraged to see the situation from the perspective of the child being bullied
- efforts will be made where practicable to resolve issues with a view to improving and/or restoring the relationship between the pupils

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.

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 has been written with consultation between staff, pupils and parents in the school. It was adopted by the Board of Management at its meeting in _____.
This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parent Teacher 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, and provided to the Parents Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department. In addition, the principal will report to the Board of Management all incidents of bullying at each board meeting.

Kildare Place School

Ratified on:-_____

Signed:_____

Signed:_____