

ST KILLIAN'S SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2024 - 2025



Policy Statement

This document sets out the Anti-Bullying Policy for St Killian's School.

Scope

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and Staff of St Killian's School and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to all staff/parents/pupils within the school.

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 Killian's 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.

Relationship to the School's Mission Statement

“If this child doesn't learn the way we teach, can we teach him/her the way he/she learns, and can we extend his learning options?”

Dr. Harry Chasty

School Philosophy

Each child's uniqueness is valued within the school, which fosters a secure, caring and positive environment, to enable each child to develop to their full potential.

Introduction

St. Killian's provides a co-educational, inter-disciplinary educational service to children who are diagnosed with a Specific Learning Difficulty, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Speech and Language Difficulties, ASD and children who have educational difficulties in one or more school based areas. St. Killian's provides a co-educational, inter-disciplinary educational service to children who experience moderate to severe educational disability.

The school depends on grants provided by the Department of Education and Skills and the school operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department.

Within the context and parameters of the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life.

The psychological services are provided by National Educational Psychological Services.



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:

The development and maintenance of a

- 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 builds empathy, respect and resilience in pupil, 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).
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Definition of Bullying

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 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 will 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.

Other behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with accordingly through the school's code of behaviour policy.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools**.



Objectives of this Policy

- All BOM, staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All BOM, staff, and parents should know/understand what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what actions they should take if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Responsibility

All staff, parents and BOM have a responsibility to report bullying in line with school procedures if they suspect bullying is taking place.

Investigation, Follow Up and Recording Of Bullying Behaviour

Procedure

If bullying is suspected, staff, parents, pupils and BOM must report any concerns to the class teacher in the first instance. The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the class teacher.

The school's procedures are based on the six step approach available from the "Dealing with Incidents" section of the Anti-Bullying Campaign website are as follows:

- The Class Teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, within the school with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end.
- The School, through the Class Teacher reserves the right to ask any pupil to write or discuss an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.
- The Class Teacher does not apportion blame but rather treats bullying behaviour as a behaviour that can and must be remedied. They emphasise that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Pupils who report bullying therefore are not getting others "in trouble" so much as enabling them to get out of trouble into which they may ultimately get if the bullying continued.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the Class teacher will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.
- If a pupil has made a promise but then breaks that promise and continues the bullying behaviour, then in this event parent(s) / guardian(s) will be informed and requested to countersign their daughter/son's promise. Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a very grave matter and sanctions may be imposed by the school authorities.
- All documentation regarding bullying incidents and their resolution is retained securely in the school.



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- In relation to allegations of cyber-bullying, parents will be informed of the situation promptly. St Killian's advises parents to monitor their child's internet usage especially social networking sites and to be fully informed of any age restrictions/terms and conditions associated with such sites, e.g. Facebook-Age 13 and over.

OVERVIEW

A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by Class Teacher and given to the Principal (See Appendix A-Template for recording Bullying Behaviour.)

Class teachers will monitor the situation and if it persists the Class teacher will advise the Principal. The Principal will investigate situations which persist and apply additional sanctions as required.

Principal will inform Parents.

Disciplinary measures will be used as appropriate, in accordance with the Schools' Behaviour Policy and in consultation with all parties concerned.

These may include:-

- ❖ Reasoning with the pupil
- ❖ Reprimand and methods identified for improvement
- ❖ Temporary separation from peers
- ❖ Detention during break times
- ❖ Communication with Parents
- ❖ Referral to Principal

Supporting Pupils who have been bullied or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child



Positive Steps to reduce the incidence of Bullying Behaviour

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying.

As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing and implementing a set of school/class rules
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Using SPHE, Circle Time, Art, Drama or Music to reinforce awareness of different types of bullying
- Reading stories about bullying
- Having regular discussions about bullying and why it matters

Self-Esteem is an important factor in reducing bullying behaviour, through the school's vision and ethos, pupils will be nurtured and supported in order that they reach their full potential, through the provision of positive role models, SPHE and staff/pupil and pupil/pupil interactions.

The school raises awareness of Cyber-bullying through SPHE planning. Termly plans will identify when/how Cyber-bullying will be directly addressed as appropriate for the pupil cohort. ICT use is closely monitored by staff at all times, pupils are taught how to use ICT safely and when appropriate the issue of Cyber-bullying will be raised through SPHE and associated curricular areas.

Responsibilities of BOM

The BOM must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. (Appendix- BOM Review Checklist)

Further Information

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Some Potential Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating

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- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated in accordance with school procedures outlined in the policy.

Related Documents/Policies

Child Safeguarding Statement

School Code of Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools September 2013 Action Plan on Bullying-Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills January 2013

Additional Resources/Information

Definitions / Acronyms

NEPS	National Educational Psychological Services
BOM	Board Of Management
DES	Department of Education and Skills

Policy Approval

This policy has been reviewed and accepted by the school Board of Management Chairperson of BOM –Margaret O Keeffe
Date – June 2024

Policy Review

It is acknowledged and accepted by all parties that this policy may be revised/modified annually or more frequently as required in light of on-going evaluation of statutory requirements or situations that arise during the school year.

Next Policy Review Date – Summer Term 2025



Appendix A -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 as appropriate

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression		Isolation/Exclusion	
Cyber-bullying		Malicious Gossip	
Damage to Property		Name Calling	
Intimidation		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

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

* Note: The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.



APPENDIX B

Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation.

The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list.

In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required. **Yes /No**

Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? **Yes**

Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association? **Yes**

Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)? **Yes**

Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work? **Yes**

Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils? **Yes**

Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies? **Yes**

Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented? **Yes**

Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined? **Yes**

Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? **Yes**

Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal? **Yes**

Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board? **Yes**

Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents? **No**

Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation? **No**

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Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? **No**

Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour? **Yes**

Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? **Yes**

Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement? **Yes - School Improvement Plan - Focus on Well-being for all in St Killian's.**

Signed Margaret O Keefe
Chairperson, Board of Management 27/05/24

Signed Sue Lenihan Date 27/05/24
Principal

Review Summer Term 2025