

1 ANTI BULLYING

Ref. also Health and Safety Statement, Code of Behaviour, Complaints Procedure

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 Kilcolgan Educate Together 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.

1.1 KEY PRINCIPLES

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.

1.2 WHAT IS BULLYING?

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 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.

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](#).

1.3 PRO-ACTIVE MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING

- Prior to starting school parents/ guardians of all new entrants are asked to sign up to the Code of Behaviour and the Anti-Bullying policy, which is available on the school's website or in hardcopy at request from the school.
- Each class will highlight the children's awareness of bullying as unacceptable behaviour, in an age-appropriate way. This will be explored through The Learn Together Programme, S.P.H.E (Social, Personal and Health Education) and Our Annual Bullying Awareness Week in November and Friendship February.
- Whilst S.P.H.E provides the main focus for dealing with issues around bullying, all teachers and S.N.A's can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through teaching conflict resolution strategies. Children are taught to challenge inappropriate behaviour in an assertive manner.
- Resources from Webwise are used to highlight issues around cyber bullying and the Gender Equality Matters resources assist with highlighting Gender Based Bullying.
- Buddy Bench or table for children who do not like playing physical games to sit and chat.
- Playworks is also a yard initiative that we use to help include all children and involve them in play.

1.4 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN BULLYING DOES OCCUR - CHILD TO CHILD BULLYING

Children at Kilcolgan Educate Together are taught how to resolve minor disputes themselves using the following steps:

1. Tell the person you don't like the behaviour and clearly ask them to stop
2. If the behaviour does not stop, tell an adult
3. If this adult cannot help you, tell your class teacher
4. If the problem persists inform the principal

The teacher will then speak to the child/ children involved and assist the children in resolving the dispute.

The aim of the teacher is to encourage the children to resolve the issue by speaking to each other in a supportive environment.

Personality clashes do occur and age, maturity, level of understanding and whether or not a child has special needs are all factors that are considered when teaching children strategies to respect each other.

1.4.1 STEP 1 – IDENTIFICATION

Bullying can be identified in different ways

- by the child being bullied,
- teachers, staff,
- peers and other children,
- parents.

See Appendix 1 – Guidelines for parents – if you are concerned that your child may be being bullied. Remember to talk to a teacher *immediately* when you feel there are behaviours that are against the school's Code of Conduct that have not been dealt with.

In the event of a parent reporting a bullying incident to the school, the school must be given a reasonable amount of time to objectively investigate the allegation. The earlier a parent comes with concerns and the more specific they are in the details provided, the easier it is for the teacher to support the children and monitor the situation. KETNS will respond to all reports of physical or psychological intimidation proactively.

Before labelling behaviours as bullying we are careful to ascertain that the behaviour is repeated and intentional.

If the school identifies a concern we will move immediately to step 2.

1.4.2 STEP 2 – SUPPORT AND MONITORING

- a. The parties involved are taken aside by the teacher and or principal and the alleged inappropriate behaviours are clearly outlined to both parties.
- b. The child being allegedly bullied will be assigned a designated member of staff as contact person to whom they will report immediately if inappropriate behaviour occurs. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows: Principal, Vice Principal or other staff member nominated by the Principal (e.g. in the case that the alleged victim would prefer to liaise with the class teacher).
- c. All children involved will be given some strategies to help them manage the purportedly offensive behaviour. These will be tailored to each individual. The emphasis is on providing a supportive environment for both parties to resolve their differences with a focus on building self-esteem and assertiveness.
- d. The parties involved are informed that all staff are aware of the situation and are there to support them. Teachers are asked to monitor the situation more closely and report any conflict to the class teacher and or principal.
- e. The class teacher will inform the parents of the alleged bully and the alleged victim separately to outline concerns and strategies that have been implemented.
- f. The class teacher will record facts at this point on the template for recording bullying behaviour as required by the Department of Education (See Appendix 3 Circular 045/ 2013) and to continue to monitor the situation for 20 days as recommended by the department. This record will be stored on Aladdin on the alleged victim's file. If deemed necessary it will also be added to the alleged bully's file (this requires consultation with the principal).
- g. The class teacher may decide to zone in on bullying, conflict and friendships as themes with the class to heighten awareness and may also work with the class on the role of the onlooker/ witness to bullying.
- h. Parents will be encouraged to continue to liaise closely with the teacher and continue to report incidents that have been reported at home.
- i. Staff will be supported by the principal and other staff members in dealing with alleged bullying.

Where these actions do not resolve the alleged bullying, then staff will proceed to step 3 and the principal/deputy principal shall be informed.

1.4.3 STEP 3 – FORMAL INTERVENTION

The Principal and class teacher will arrange to meet with the parents of the child who is seen to be bullying and separately with the parents of the victim of bullying. The children themselves may be required to attend part or all of these meetings.

The child who is bullying will be placed 'on report'. This means that the child's behaviour in all areas is monitored during the day. The teacher will set targets together with the child and a specific behaviour plan will be put in place. The school acknowledges that bullying can be symptomatic of other issues and the child who is bullying will be supported in a non-humiliating or stigmatising way.

The teacher will record progress three times a day in consultation with the child. All positive behaviour, progress on work etc. will be noted. At the end of the day, the teacher writes his/her own comment.

The purpose of this report is to focus as much as possible on the positive qualities and efforts of the child, and to motivate the child to move away from negative behaviour. The child should be able to see that parents and school are working together in his/her interest, so the co-operation of the parents is essential.

Initially a review of the reports will be carried out on a weekly basis, in a meeting with the Principal, teacher, parents and child. If progress is being made, longer intervals between meetings may be decided upon.

At this point parents may be advised to seek further professional intervention to assist their child in overcoming any behavioural, emotional and social challenges they may be experiencing. In the event that a child is subsequently diagnosed with special needs at this point, a tailored behaviour plan will be put in place in consultation with relevant external professionals to enable the child to manage their behaviour in the school environment.

The child who is the victim of bullying will also meet with the Principal and his/her parents. The aim of such a meeting(s) will be to address emotional needs and devise further strategies for the child to deal with the bullying.

If the parties involved, the teacher and the Principal agree that the issue remains unresolved after a reasonable period of time despite above interventions, it will be necessary to proceed to step 4.

1.4.4 STEP 4 – FORMAL SANCTIONS

Should the above interventions fail and the bullying continue a programme of appropriate sanctions may be implemented by the Principal in consultation with the parents and the Board of Management. It is the duty of the school to provide a safe environment for all the children. Sanctions implemented aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the esteem of the child. These sanctions may include a period of suspension during which there will be on-going consultation with the parents to decide on appropriate action(s) to be taken in the best interests of the child. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

1.5 BULLYING BY ADULTS

Ref. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, Complaints Procedure

‘Resolutions’ in this Section refer to any intervention deemed appropriate by the Principal or his/her nominee, or where relevant the Chair of the BoM or his/her nominee, and may include reporting of the alleged bullying to the Statutory Services.

In the case of **intra-staff bullying**, Kilcolgan Educate Together National School will adopt the procedures outlined in the INTO booklet: ‘Working Together: Ag Obair le Chéile 2024’. A copy of this document is available for download on the INTO website (free of charge) or [here](#).

In the case of **Teacher – Child bullying**, a complaint should in the first instance be raised with the teacher in question by the parent/guardian of the child - unless they think that this would result in the child being at greater risk. Where a parent approaches a teacher with an allegation that he/she (the teacher) has been involved in bullying a child, the teacher is required to bring this to the attention of the Principal immediately. Where a parent(s) believes that approaching the teacher may expose the child to increased risk, then the parent(s) should approach the Principal directly. An allegation of teacher-child bullying will be investigated by the school Principal who will determine facts to the best of his/her abilities, make recommendations for resolutions, and brief the BoM. This process provides protection for the child, teacher and KETNS.

In the case of **Teacher – Parent bullying**, the parent should if possible raise the issue with teacher in question, or refer the issue to the Principal. An allegation of teacher-parent bullying will be investigated by the school Principal who will determine facts to the best of his/her abilities, make recommendations for resolutions, and brief the BoM. This process provides protection for the teacher, parent and KETNS.

In the case of **Parent – Teacher bullying**, the matter should be raised by the teacher with the parent if possible and the Principal should be informed. An allegation of parent-teacher bullying will be investigated by the school Principal who will determine facts to the best of his/her abilities, make recommendations for resolutions, and brief the BoM. This process provides protection for the parent, teacher and KETNS.

In the case of **Parent/Visitor to the school – Child bullying**, the complaint should be referred in the first instance to the child's class teacher and subsequently to the Principal. An allegation of bullying of this nature will be investigated by the school Principal who will determine facts to the best of his/her abilities, make recommendations for resolutions, and brief the BoM. This process provides protection for the child, parent/visitor and KETNS.

In the case of **Principal – Parent/ Child bullying**, the matter should be raised with the Principal. An allegation of bullying of this nature will be investigated by the Chair of the BoM, or his/her nominee, who will determine facts to the best of his/her abilities, make recommendations for resolutions, and brief the BoM. This process provides protection for the parent, Principal and KETNS.

1.6 1.6 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 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.


1.7 REVIEW AND RATIFICATION

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21.10.2024. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is published on the school website and hard copies are available from the school on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. The BOM will review the school Anti Bullying Policy annually using the checklist (See Appendix 4 Circular 045/ 2013) as is required by the Department of Education. 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. 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)

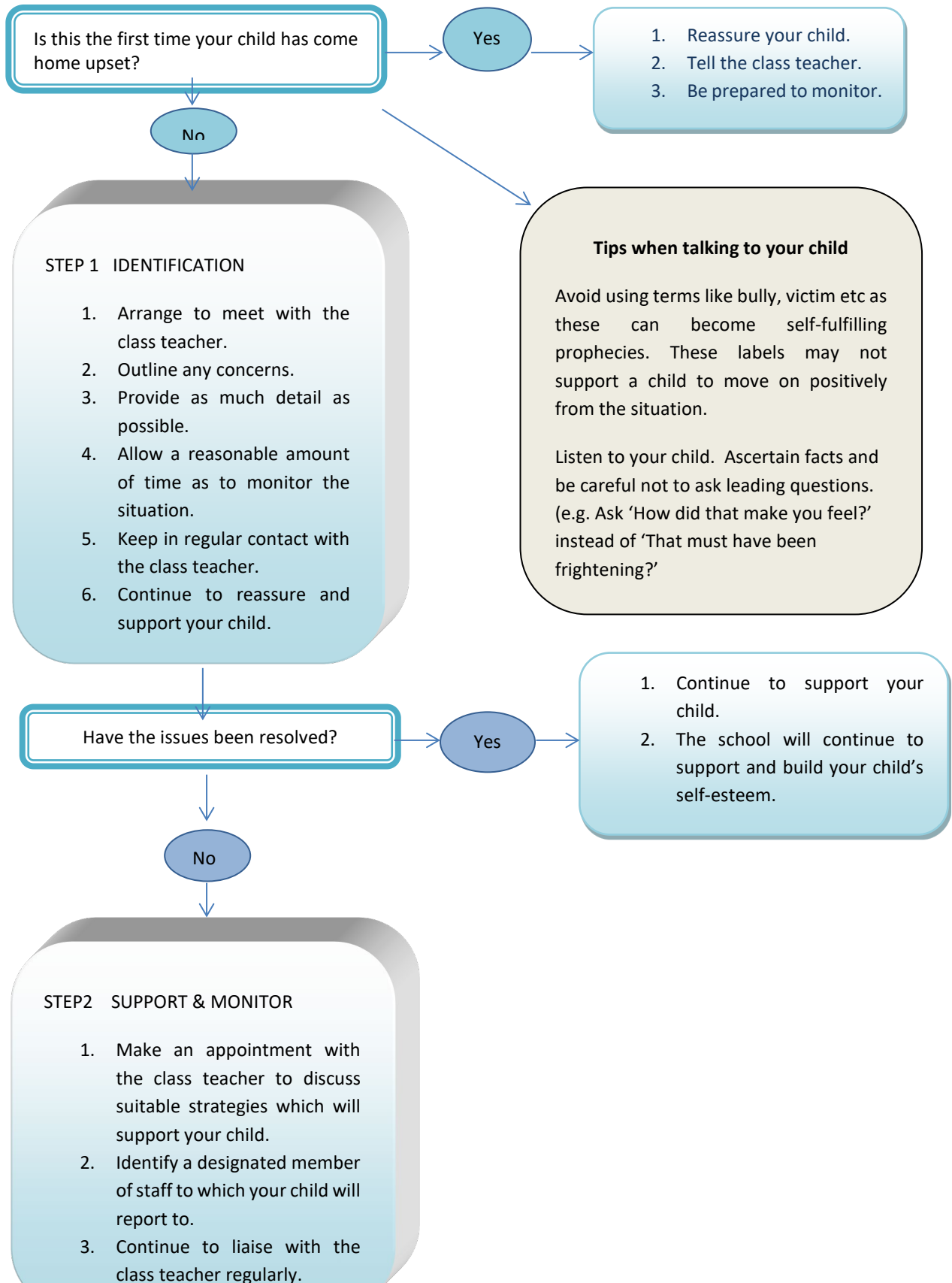
Date: 21.10.2024

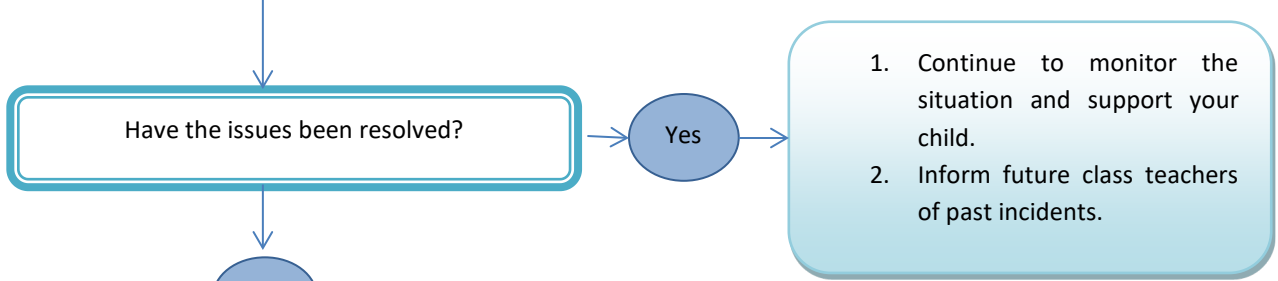
Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 21.10.2024

APPENDIX 1: BULLYING PREVENTION GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

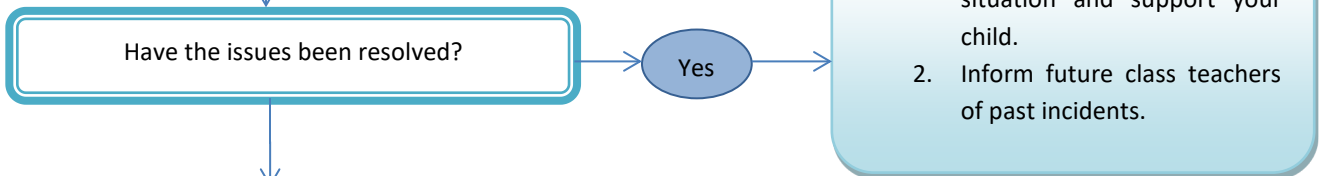
My child has come home upset from school, what steps should I take?





STEP 3 FORMAL INTERVENTION

1. Arrange a meeting with the class teacher and the principal.
2. Discuss the specific behaviour plan put in place.
3. Regular consultation will take place between your child, class teacher and designated person.
4. Further strategies will be discussed to enable your child to deal with bullying.
5. Continue to liaise weekly with the class teacher.



STEP 4 FORMAL SANCTIONS

1. In consultation with the principal & class teacher, discuss aspects of interventions that have worked.
2. The principal will discuss with you whether it is appropriate to implement formal sanctions at this stage.
3. These sanctions will be reported in writing by the principal to the Board of Management.

1.8 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TEMPLATE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

All sections of this template must be completed

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 Kilcolgan Educate Together 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.

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.

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

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

All cases of alleged or suspected bullying should be referred to the Principal, who will, in consultation with the class teacher identify a relevant teacher who will monitor and record any instances of bullying. This may be the principal, the deputy principal, the class teacher (see 1.4.2 b)

5. 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*):

See 1.3

6. 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*) :

See 1.4

7. 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*) :

See 1.4.2

8. 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.

9. Prevention of Harassment

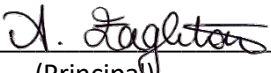
The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 21.10.2024

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

12. 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 (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: 21.10.2024

Date: 21.10.2024

Date of next review: December 2025

Appendix 4 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 <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	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
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?	N/A
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N/A

Signed  _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 21/10/24

Signed  _____
Principal

Date: 21/10/24

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the anti-bullying policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Kilcolgan Educate Together wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 21/10/24.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 21/10/24

Signed _____
Principal

Date 21/10/24