Kilgarvan Central School
Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Kilgarvan Central_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.

The following are some of the types of bullying behaviour that can occur amongst pupils:

- *Physical aggression*
- *Intimidation*
- *Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying*
- *Cyber-bullying*
- *Name calling*
- *Damage to property*
- *Extortion*

4. ***The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are:***

- *The pupil's class teacher is deemed to be the relevant teacher.*

The principal teacher or in his/her absence the deputy principal will be verbally informed of all complaints from the outset by the class teacher and in written form using the approved recording

template following the twenty day period as outlined in the school's procedures for investigation, follow –up and recording of bullying behaviour.

*5. **The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying)that will be used by the school are as follows:***

- *Our school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance.*
- *Positive self esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.*
- *Pupils are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others. This will enable them to develop an awareness and understanding of bullying, its causes and effects, including the issue of identity based bullying.*
- *We make use of SPHE programmes such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall and Alive O to focus on developing children's awareness and understanding of bullying, its causes and its effects. Additional resources available to school staff include "Bullying" worksheets and posters.*
- *Cyber bullying is best addressed by preventing it happening in the first instance. We will educate pupils on appropriate on-line behaviour, how to stay safe on-line and also attempt to develop a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber bullying. Teaching resources available to school staff include "Bullying in a Cyber World" worksheets and posters.*
- *We are aware that extra vigilance is important in relation to children with special needs and newcomer children who may not have the skills/language to report that they are being bullied. We will attempt to cultivate a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as its central focus.*
- *The schools anti-bullying policy is circulated to all parents and is discussed with pupils.*
- *Parents contribute to and support the school's policy by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at school, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others and by communicating concerns to the school.*
- *Parents are encouraged to monitor their children's internet activity at all times.*
- *The school's supervision practices are another strategy for the prevention of bullying behaviour.*

*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:***

- *The school will follow a consistent and clear approach to dealing with bullying when it occurs.*
- *The primary aim is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved rather than to apportion blame.*

- *In investigating and dealing with bullying , the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has taken place and how the situation might be resolved.*
- *All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. 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.*
- *Non –teaching staff such as school secretary, special needs assistants, etc are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying-type behaviour witnessed by them to the relevant teacher.*
- *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 as quickly as possible.*
- *Parents and pupils will be made aware of the above approach from the outset.*
- *Teachers will take a calm unemotional problem solving approach at all times, in dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour from the outset.*
- *Incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved, in a calm non –aggressive manner.*
- *All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.*
- *Answers should be sought to questions of what? where? when? who? and why? .*
- *If a group is involved members should be met individually at first and in a follow-on meeting as a group. At the group meeting each member should be asked for his /her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.*
- *Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.*
- *Where it is determined by the relevant teacher that bullying may have occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be informed of the matter and to explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school's policy). Parents should be given opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.*
- *Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her that she is in breach of the school's anti bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.*
- *It will also be made clear to all involved (each set of parents and pupils) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required (with reference to the school's code of behaviour), this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.*
- *Follow –up meetings with the parties involved may 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.*

- *In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within **20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred**, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the attached recording template.*
- *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:*

a) *Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.*
b) *Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.*
c) *Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.*
d) *Feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.*

- *Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents will be referred as appropriate to the school's complaints procedures.*
- *In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children..*

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

- *School community, including school staff will be supportive of pupils who have been bullied.*
- *Pupils who have been bullied are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.*
- *Follow-on strategies for exploring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parent/guardian.*
- *School will provide opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self esteem and to develop their friendship and social skills. Teacher resources available include "Self Esteem" worksheets and associated resource materials.*
- *In certain cases of bullying, school may engage with the HSE/NEPS to request access to counselling services for pupils who have bullied as well as for pupils involved in bullying behaviour.*

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.

The contents of this policy may from time to time be modified by the Board of Management to cater for pupils with diagnosed Special Education Needs.

10. *This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on October 22nd, 2014*
    This policy was adopted by the Patron on October 16, 2014

11. *This policy has been made available to school personnel and provided to the Parents' Association. In addition a copy has been made available to the parents / guardians of each pupil in the school. 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, be 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.*

Signed: _____   *Signed:* _____
      (Chairperson of Board of Management)   *(Principal)*

Date: February 2nd, 2019   *Date: February 2nd, 2019*

This policy will be reviewed in 2021.