



Kilkenny College

Anti-Bullying Policy (Cineáltas)

This policy is informed by the Cineáltas, Action Plan on Bullying 2022. This plan is outlined in Section A. The policy is also 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 **Kilkenny College** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Conduct. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

Section A; Cineáltas.

Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying is rooted in the following four key principles:

1. Prevention: Through the generation of empathy and the provision of training which provides a foundation for knowledge, respect, equality and inclusion
2. Support: Tangible and targeted supports based on a continuum of needs which provide a framework for school communities to work together
3. Oversight: Visible leadership creates positive environments for children and young people and all members of our school community
4. Community: Building inclusive school communities that are connected to society, and that support and nurture positive relationships and partnerships

Culture and Environment

- The importance of a welcoming school community that has a culture of promoting inclusion, equality, respect and diversity with zero tolerance for bullying which is supported by the **Kilkenny College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy**
- The key role of school leaders in creating this culture
- Access to safe places within the school, and the need to consider both internal and external spaces to ensure that the risk of the potential for bullying is reduced, **the Kilkenny College Amber Flag group actively promotes positive mental health**
- Greater focus on school culture and student wellbeing.
- Supports available for students and staff, when required, **the Wellbeing co-ordinator will review and liaise with management about provision of such supports.**



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- The importance of trying to prevent bullying instead of simply reacting to it, **Sticks and Stones programme in Form 1 and Bystander Intervention in TY, or similar programmes.**
- Raising awareness of how to address bullying and the impact of bullying among all members of the school community, teaching staff have been introduced to the UCC **Bystander Intervention Programme**

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- An inclusive curriculum, which includes education on diversity and respect for other cultures, anti-racism and an increased awareness of unconscious bias for the whole school community
- An increased focus on inclusion, equality, and diversity
- Building teacher skills to prevent and address bullying
- The importance of evidence based, age appropriate and culturally relevant antibullying programmes such as **Bystander Intervention, Sticks and Stones**
- Books and lessons which reinforce the message of inclusion and equality, and that reflect the evolving nature of society

Policy and Planning

- The importance of inclusive approaches to school policy development, involving the meaningful participation of children and young people, **at student leadership level (the prefects and the student council) our student mentors, and through the form tutor system.**
- The wellbeing of the whole school community at the heart of policies and plans
- The development of a range of effective approaches to enable the safe reporting of bullying behaviour, including anonymity in reporting, *specifics of reporting are identified later in this policy.*
- The need for reporting of all alleged bullying incidents, including details of the type of bullying behaviour and the approach to addressing it
- The importance of school staff being given access to training to implement a range of appropriate responses to alleged bullying behaviour, such as Suicide Prevention and Restorative Justice.
- The need to collect disaggregated data on bullying to inform future policy, and to guide continuous professional development
- The importance of regular review of school policies



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- The importance of school policies setting out clearly and accessibly the roles and responsibilities of each member of the school community ensuring that information is also presented in age appropriate and child friendly language
- The value of the School Self-Evaluation process for wellbeing promotion

Relationships and Partnerships

- The importance of positive relationships across the whole school community to promote empathy, understanding and respect and raise awareness of unconscious bias
- The importance of all school staff keeping a 'watchful eye' on the children and young people in their care with all school staff being confident in their knowledge of best practice in how to address bullying behaviour, **a care meeting is held once per fortnight for each year group. This care meeting involves the Year Head, the Principal, Deputy Principal(s), the counsellor(s), the nurse, the heads of boarding. Observations and concerns are raised here and solutions are pursued**
- The importance of a trusted adult in relation to disclosure of incidents of bullying
- The meaningful involvement of children and young people, *the role of student leadership and the form tutor system in promoting the importance of the student voice integral to this.*
- The importance of engagement with parents in recognition of their key role in preventing and addressing bullying, *The Kilkenny College Parents' Association plays an important role in educating parents through engagement of speakers and through highlighting concerns*
- The benefits of encouraging greater diversity of involvement across the whole school community, including student councils and school staff
- The potential for student mentors to play a role in preventing bullying in schools
- The valuable role that Student Support Teams have to play, the care meetings for each year group provide a team approach to pastoral care concerns.

Definition of bullying behaviour

Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.



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A. Targeted behaviour

- Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the child or young person displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the child or young person experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the child or young person experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other child or young person, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

B. Repeated behaviour

- Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

C. Imbalance of power

- In incidents of bullying, the child or young person experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted person to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying

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 **Kilkenny College** has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Conduct. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.



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2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

(a) A positive school culture which

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

(b) Effective leadership

(c) A school-wide approach

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-

- build empathy, respect and resilience in students; and
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying;

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of students

(g) Supports for staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (with a focus on restorative practice); and

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of this 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.”



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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 Conduct.

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 Conduct.

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

The list of examples below is non exhaustive.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • 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 • Looking in an intimidating way • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
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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 • Image-based sexual abuse • 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. TikTok, Snapchat, BeReal, Instagram, VSCO, Facebook Twitter, YouTube or on 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 the Traveller 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 the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion based on any of the above



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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 • Looking in an intimidating way
Sexual	• Inappropriate sexual comments or rape jokes • Unwanted touching or invasion of personal space • Harassment • Wolf whistling, jeering, cat calling • Stalking • Gaslighting • Up skirting
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

4.

The relevant personnel responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in **Kilkenny College** are:

Principal
Deputy Principals
Year Heads
Form Tutors
Heads of Boarding
Guidance Counsellors

However, any teacher may be involved in investigation of alleged bullying if circumstances warrant it.



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5.

School-wide approach

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Students will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Professional development of the ISLT, SLT and other interested staff in the *UCC Bystander Intervention programme*.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community??
- Supervision and monitoring of 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. See *Kilkenny College Use of Mobile Device Policy*
- Involvement of the students, through the student leadership groups, in contributing to a safe, happy and respectful e.g., Prefects, mentors, Amber flag group which help to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.? This will be done in collaboration with the Whole School Community.
- The implementation of whole school bullying awareness and prevention of bullying measures; student surveys, using the structures of year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, year heads and form tutor classes.
- The above structures will encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. It will be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. Bystander Intervention training is now part of the programme for all TY students.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Get a parent/guardian/ friend to tell on your behalf.
 - A confidential questionnaire will be given periodically to all students.
- This policy is supported by;
 - Kilkenny College Code of Behaviour
 - Kilkenny College Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Kilkenny College Wellbeing Policy and Strategy
 - Kilkenny College Mobile Device Usage Policy
 - Kilkenny College Acceptable Use Policy
 - Kilkenny College Attendance Policy and Strategy



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Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula.
- Regular Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- Age-appropriate delivery of workshops on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Sticks 'n Stones to first year students.

6.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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);

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant personnel.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant personnel.

Investigating and dealing with incidents:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the staff member will exercise her/his professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students 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;
- All interviews will be conducted with due regard to the rights of all students concerned.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant personnel should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant personnel that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken.
- When an investigation finds that a student(s) has(have) been involved in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to her/him(them) how he/she(they) is(are) in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy.



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Follow up

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant personnel must, as part of her/his professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
 - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is(are) not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be referred, as appropriate, to Kilkenny College's procedures.

Recording of bullying behaviour

All recording of bullying incidents will be done in an objective and factual manner.

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

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them using the Kilkenny College Report of Bullying form, (**Appendix 1**)
- All incidents must be reported to the relevant personnel
- After all reports of bullying have been investigated and dealt with by the relevant personnel, written records of the investigation, the actions taken and any other relevant information will be noted using the Kilkenny College Report of Bullying form
- The relevant personnel must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated. All written records are given to the principal to be stored securely.
- Summary Report given at Board of Management meetings of bullying incidents (GDPR Compliant).

These records will be kept in line with GDPR and Schools Retention Policy



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7. Kilkenny College's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience. This can include any combination of the following as considered appropriate by the personnel involved;
 - Pastoral care system, including the school guidance counsellors
 - Mentoring/prefect system
 - Form Tutor & Year Head system
 - Care Team
 - Chaplain
 - Referral to outside Agency
- If students require counselling or further supports the school will liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the students affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Students should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and

The following questions will be used in considering and reviewing this aspect of the policy annually:

- Are the monitoring and supervision practices in the school effective and appropriate?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified in consultation with students and parents?
- How effective are student support/care structures (including year heads, form tutors, SPHE, Guidance, RE, CSPE, Learning Support teachers) in counteracting bullying behaviour?
- How effective are the student leadership structures in counteracting bullying behaviour?
- Can clubs and ECA play a role in counteracting bullying behaviour?
- In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed:
 - Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
 - Does the school regularly monitor students' Internet usage?
 - Have students been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
 - Have students been instructed to access only those chat rooms, discussion forums and messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school?



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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 students and staff or the harassment of students and 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.

All accusations of harassment will be thoroughly investigated and followed up in the same manner as in Sections 6 & 7 above.

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

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, is published on the school website and is provided to the Kilkenny College Parents' Association.

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 and will be notified to the school community.

Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:

(Principal)

Date: 24th September 2025

Date: 24th September 2025

Ratified by the Board of Management on 13th March 2024

Ratified by the Board of Management on 24th September 2025

Date of next review: **September 2026**

