**Anti Bullying Policy 2014**

**Rationale:**

The anti-bullying policy of Ballinabranna N.S. was amended in order to comply with the requirements set out in Circular 045/2013.

**Aims**

1. To raise awareness among all the stakeholders of what constitutes bullying behaviour
2. To ensure the relevant authorities are alerted to any and all such behaviour
3. To provide the relevant authorities with the tools to deal effectively with bullying behaviour so as to cause it to cease.
4. To restore the previous relationship between the individual(s) involved.

**Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School**

This amended anti bullying policy reflects the catholic ethos of Ballinabranna N.S..

In adopting the use of restorative practices it provides the opportunity for offenders to reform and rebuild relationships. This policy reflects the Christian values espoused in Ballinabranna N.S. and our approach as a Health Promoting School.

**Success Criteria**

This policy shall be judged a success if …

1. There is increased awareness among the stake holders of what constitutes bullying behaviour
2. If incidents of bullying are brought to the attention of the relevant authorities
3. If incidents are effectively resolved
4. If the pre-existing relationship between the parties is restored
5. If the incidences of unwanted behaviour are greatly reduced.

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 Ballinabranna N.S. Milford, Co Carlow 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; Continuous Professional Development
* 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.

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:

1. deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
2. cyber-bullying and
3. 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 Appendix 1.

4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows: (see Section 6.83 and section 68.4 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*): **The class teacher, Support teachers, School Principal and School Deputy Principal. Initially the relevant teacher is the class teacher. Supervising teachers report to the class teacher.**

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*):

School Wide approach;

* A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
* The 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.
* Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
* School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
* Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
* The school’s anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour.
* Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
* S.P.H.E. Curriculum.
* Stay safe and RSE.
* Alive –O Programme.
* Walk Tall Programme.
* Health Promoting School.
* Support of NEPS psychologist.
* Resources from [www.antibullyingcampaign](http://www.antibullyingcampaign) .i.e. Awareness Raising and Dealing with an alleged bullying incident.
* Seperate needs of SEN pupils will be addressed.
* Class behaviour contracts.
* School ethos.
* Restorative Justice.

Structured Programme of Awareness Raising Lessons to be taught on a monthly basis in all classes from Jnr Infants -6th Class

Jnr-1st Teacher designed tasks based on S.P.H.E./Alive –O /Walk Tall Programmes.

2nd -6th Structured Awareness Raising Lessons from Handbook 1 Anti-bullying campaign.

Specific support programmes for children with socialisation difficulties and SEN pupils who may need support to develop the skills and strategies to enable them to respond appropriately.

1. 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 Appendix 2.

See **Handbook 2-Tools for dealing with alleged bullying situations** www.antibullyingcampaign.ie

Stage1.Establishing the Facts

Stage 2.Interviewing an alleged perpetrator and victim

Stage 3.Resolution

Stage 4.Rehabilitation

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*):

* Lessons on increasing Self Esteem and Social Skills.
* Circle Time, Role Play.
* Social, Personal and Health Education Programme.
* Alive-O Programme.
* Support from resource teachers re specific socialisation or behavioural issues.
* Support from N.E.P.S. Psychologist or other outside agencies.
* Stay Safe Programme

**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. The schools AUP ensures that online activities in the school will be monitored that age appropriate online practices are observed. As part of the AUP policy pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones or internet devices to school.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [date].

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.

**Implementation and Review**

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 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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_