

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Scoil na mBuachaillí
(Clonakilty Boys National School)





DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

Unwanted and unwarranted behaviour that hurts and is detrimental to the well-being of the recipients, limiting their opportunities to be effective and satisfied at work or in school. (Jacinta Kitt)

Bullying is repeated aggressive behaviour of a verbal, physical or psychological nature. (Mona Moore)

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical - conducted by an individual or group against others. (Department of Education)

Bullying is the breaking down of a person.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLYING

Bullying thrives on secrecy. A well accepted code among students is that they must not squeal or tell tales. Very often the victim is too terrified to tell fearing that worse may happen if he does. Furthermore, whether physical or mental, all bullying has psychological effects.

Parents - What can you do?

- If a parent has a suspicion that their child is a victim of bullying, they should contact the school **immediately** and discuss the matter with the principal. **It should not be left for a while - the earlier the school knows about the incident the easier it is to deal with it.**
- Parents of pupils who are involved in bullying incidents have a major responsibility in changing their child's behaviour. These parents will also be expected to support and reinforce the actions taken by the school.
- The Code of Discipline should be read in conjunction with this policy.

RESOURCES/IMPLICATIONS

- Policies updated regularly and made available to the stakeholders.
- A file for each child, which will be kept throughout the child's school life.

MONITORING/EVALUATION/REVIEW

- This policy to be reviewed at intervals to assess its effectiveness.

This policy was drawn up on 26/03/01 and reviewed in February 2002, October 2002, October 2004, October 2005, October 2008, August09, September 2013

Serious Incidents

- For *serious incidents*, the parents of the child engaged in the bullying behaviour are contacted immediately. A meeting will be arranged to meet with the principal. At the meeting ways of reinforcing and supporting actions taken by the school will be discussed.
- A meeting with the victim's parents will also be arranged.
- Follow-up meetings and/or phone calls will be arranged.

Programme of work with victims, bullies and their peers

- Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis.
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities will be encouraged, where the child get the opportunity to work in teams or small/large groups.
- "Catch them being good" - use the opportunities mentioned above to bring out the best in the child and reward/praise accordingly.

School working with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying as an anti-social behaviour

- There should be a whole community approach to the problem of bullying behaviour. Board of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians should be involved.
- However incidents of bullying extend beyond the school. Because of this members of the wider school community should be encouraged to play a positive roll in assisting schools to counter bullying behaviour by reporting such behaviour to parents and/or schools as appropriate.

Evaluation of effectiveness of school policy on bullying behaviour

- The policy will be evaluated and reviewed at staff meetings.

AIMS / PURPOSES

- a) To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
- b) To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with pupils, school management, teachers, parents/guardians.
- c) To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- d) To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
- e) To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- f) To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- g) To work with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour.
- h) To evaluate the effectiveness of school policy on anti-bullying behaviour.

PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

School Ethos

- Our Mission Statement states that the school is "*caring - centred and respects different colours, creeds and intellect*". This aim will be reinforced at all times - in the classroom and in the school playground. The pupils will be able to see this in action in the way staff and pupils relate to each other and in the way pupils relate to each other.
- Our Code of Discipline has as its main aim, self - discipline. The highest standard of behaviour is expected of each child. It is always stressed that it is the undesirable behaviour that is being rejected and not the child. Children are expected to show respect for each other.

Raising awareness that bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour.

- The *Stay-Safe / RSE* programme will be used to emphasise that bullying behaviour is an unacceptable form of behaviour.
- Informal class discussions or a talk by the principal occasionally may also be used.
- The class teacher's influence in fostering attitudes towards bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular activities cannot be over stated.
- Sporting activities will be used to help children channel and control their aggression in a positive way.
- The Garda Liaison Officer can speak to the children from time to time about the issues around bullying.

Supervision

- In line with our Supervision Policy, the children are under supervision at all times - in the classroom, in the playground and during extra-curricular activities.
- There is a rota system displayed in the staff room and on staff website.
- Children in the senior classes are encouraged to look out for the younger pupils in the yard.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an incident of Bullying Behaviour

- All incidents of misbehaviour are noted in the child's file. This record is added to throughout the child's time in school.
- If there is an allegation of bullying, the incident is **immediately investigated** by the teacher and by the principal.
- It is hoped that by acting on reports from children, that they will get confidence in telling.
- The principal is **always** notified of bullying incidents.
- If the incident is the first incident of this kind the child, who is responsible for the bullying, will be spoken to, the incident will be recorded in his file and he will be told

that if there is a reoccurrence, his parents will be written to. He will be spoken to over the coming months on a regular basis by the Principal.

- The child who is a victim of the bullying will also be spoken to and informed of the action taken. On a regular basis over the coming months he will be asked by the Principal if he is experiencing any further incidents of bullying. This is to ensure that the problem is solved. If appropriate his parents will also be contacted.
- It will be stressed that children who report incidents of bullying are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non - teaching staff e.g. caretaker, secretary and classroom assistant will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour they witness or mentioned to them to the principal.

If the incident is a serious one see below for the procedures taken.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

- Children will be interviewed individually.
- Any other children who may have witnessed the incident will also be interviewed individually.
- Answers to **what, where, when, who and why** will be sought.
- The answers will be recorded in the child's file.

Minor Incidents

- For **minor incidents**, a warning will be given to the pupil engaged in the bullying behaviour. He will be told that is in breach of the Anti-Bullying Code and the Code of Discipline. He will be informed that if there is any reoccurrence his parents will be written to. The incident is recorded in his file.
- Whenever possible the child engaged in the bullying should be helped to see the situation from the victim's point of view.