

ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying is destructive behaviour. It is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be tolerated, should not be described as bullying. Only inappropriate aggressive behaviour which is systematic and ongoing is regarded as bullying.

School Priorities

- Raise overall awareness.
- Continually evaluate schools procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying.
- Ensuring good quality home-school links.

Parents Role

On hearing that their son/daughter is involved in a bullying incident parents should:

Firstly: Parents should not panic. Rage and further aggression will not help resolve the issue. Parents need to support their son/daughter to work through the situation. It is important to listen carefully to your son/daughter.

Secondly: Parents should contact the school sooner rather than later. The class journal, a note/letter or phone call are suggested for first contact. Then a meeting can be arranged. This gives everyone time to compose themselves and deal with the situation effectively.

Thirdly: While the bullying behaviour can be stopped quickly, parents should note that their son/daughter needs support and understanding over a longer period to deal with the upset. This is when home/school contact needs to be kept up.

Prevention Strategies

1. Bullying is covered in SPHE & RE classes and tutors go through the anti-bullying policy with students during Pastoral Care annually. Anti bullying posters are created and displayed throughout school by students.
2. Phones are banned in classes.
3. Guest speakers/workshops where applicable (eg Graffiti and Anti-Bullying Workshops)
4. Information evenings held by HSCL & Career Guidance Departments, eg Cyber Bullying.
5. Bullying procedures are outlined in the schools Code of Behaviour.
6. Ongoing positive re-inforcement by teachers.

Procedures for reporting and dealing with an alleged bullying incident

1. All incidents of bullying should be reported to the principal or deputy principal who will record the matter.

2. The principal or deputy principal will assign an investigating teacher to investigate the matter further.
3. The investigating teacher will inform the class tutor
4. Non teaching staff should be encouraged to report incidents of bullying
5. The investigating teacher will make an informal investigation to ascertain nature and extent of the alleged incident. Report form will be completed by the investigating teacher and presented to the principal or deputy principal.
6. The students involved will be asked to make a written report of incident.
7. The investigating teacher will contact parents and inform them of their findings.
8. The investigating teacher will report to the class tutor and records findings. They will take steps to stop the bullying.
9. Management will report incidents of Bullying to the Board of Management.
10. Students involved will be referred to the Guidance Counsellor if necessary.
11. The tutor and the investigating teacher will review situation within a few days and record findings.

If the initial intervention proves not to have worked or the nature and extent of the bullying warrants it, the following formal procedures will be followed:

1. The investigating teacher and class tutor interview parties involved separately. They will identify key words used to describe behaviour; name calling, mocking voice, making fun of...
2. They will identify the feelings of bullied person
3. While interviewing the “bully”, they will identify offending behaviour eg I pushed, I mimicked, I made fun of....
4. They will “tease out” the consequences of the offending behaviour.
5. They will counsel the bullied student to prepare him/her to meet with the offender(s)
6. The tutor and the investigating teacher will facilitate a meeting of all parties where each state what they did and how they felt.
7. The tutor and the investigating teacher will record the outcome and report to Parents
8. The matter will be reviewed inside two weeks and the outcome recorded.
9. The class tutor will continue to monitor the situation and report where necessary.

Schools programme of support for working with students affected by bullying

1. SCP
2. HSCL
3. The Careteam
4. Career Guidance Counsellor who may refer to an external counsellor if necessary
5. Pastoral Care
6. Discipline Co-Ordinator

Policy will be reviewed regularly
Next date for renewal is Sept 2015