

REPLACED JULY 2014 Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy was drawn up by teachers, parents, the School Board of Management, with Jean McGearailt as coordinator.

Definition

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another/others.

Types of bullying in a school context include:

(a) Pupil/child behaviour:

Physical aggression; damage to property; extortion; intimidation; abusive telephone calls; isolation; name-calling; slugging; bullying of school personnel.

(b) Teacher/adult behaviour:

Using sarcasm; making negative comments about pupil's appearance or background; humiliating a pupil; threatening or intimidating a child; bullying of other school personnel.

Aim

In Scoil Réalt Na Mara we aim:

- to create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management / teachers / pupils / parents / guardians / school personnel.
- To ensure, as far as is practicable and possible, supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.

Approach

We aim to take a pro-active approach to bullying behaviour by working on a preventative strategy through:

- Valuing/encouraging honesty;
- Valuing/encouraging co-operation;
- Valuing/encouraging helpfulness/thoughtfulness;
- Valuing/encouraging general good behaviour;
- Raising self-esteem/confidence in pupils;
- Providing clear guidelines on general behaviour around school and in classrooms;
- Working on specific anti-bullying lessons, e.g. S.P.H.E.(Walk Tall); circle time,R.S.E. (Alive-O); Stay Safe (Prim-Ed): "Bullying" where effects of bullying are considered and children are encouraged to "tell";

Helping children develop good communication skills through S.P.H.E. and English Oral Language lessons.

Indications of bullying

- a. Anxiety about attending school.
- b. Deterioration in educational performance.
- c. Pattern of physical illness.
- d. Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour.
- e. Visible signs of anxiety or distress.
- f. Possessions missing.
- g. Increased requests for money.
- h. Unexplained bruising.
- i. Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her.

[These are all signs of a variety of problems as well as bullying.]

Dealing with Bullying observed or reported by pupils, staff, teachers, parents/guardians.

- All incidents will be noted, investigated and dealt with.
- Serious cases will be reported immediately to the principal.

- Answers to what, where when, who, why questions will be sought in a calm manner setting an example of dealing with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- Public humiliation of the victim or pupil engaged in bullying behaviour will be avoided by investigating, where possible, outside classroom situation.
- The teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and due regard for the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- If more than one is involved in the bullying behaviour, each member will be interviewed separately and then met as a group where each will then be asked for his/her account of what happened.
- Where it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the school code of behaviour and discipline and an attempt will be made to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.
- Each member of group will need help to handle the possible pressures that often face them from other members after interview by the teacher.
- Teachers investigating bullying cases will keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may sometimes be appropriate to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident.

Action when it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred:

- Parents/guardians of both parties involved will be met as appropriate

-e.g. when bullying behaviour has not been resolved after intervention, and the case is deemed to be of a serious nature.

Actions being taken and reasons for them will be explained with reference to the school policy, in conjunction with policy on discipline. Ways in which they (the parents/guardians) can reinforce or support actions taken by the school will be discussed.

Separate follow-up meetings with two parties involved will be arranged with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the victim is ready and agreeable.

In case of a complaint regarding a staff member this will be raised with the staff member first and then if necessary with the principal. If the complaint remains unresolved at school level it will then be raised with the Board of Management.

Helpful reference: Circular 20/'93

Nb anti bullying procedures dep of ed

Course trailee teacher centre on same

Download primed cyber bullying sample

Update policy.6/3/14