

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## Scoil Muire Banríon, (Edenderry B.N.S.)

### 1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy was formulated in 2010. It is a review of an existing Anti-Bullying Policy by Teachers, Ancillary Staff, Parents and BOM. This review was co-ordinated by Seán Fitzgerald, Principal.

### 2. RATIONALE

The School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. The School also has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour.

***Bullying is WRONG and will not be tolerated***

It is important therefore that the School has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both pupils and parents/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

### 3. RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

Bullying affects everyone--- not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

### 4. AIMS

- a. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.

- b. To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- 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, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- e. To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- f. To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti bullying behaviour.

## 5. GUIDELINES (Contents of Policy)

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

#### Cad is Bullaíocht ann ?

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It is any action which sets out to frighten or hurt another child.

It can be:-

#### **a). PHYSICAL**

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

#### **b). VERBAL:**

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling or threats of any kind. It can take the form of hurtful sneering/teasing—very often this hurtful sneering is seen as mere fun or 'MESSING' by the child who does it. In many cases this occurs while the bully is 'showing off' to his/her 'pals'. The bully may even need convincing that any harm is being done—to him/ her it is just a 'mess' This type of bullying may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or particular type of personality, etc.

#### **c). EXCLUSION.**

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.

#### **d). DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT.**

Physical threats may be used by bullies in order that the pupil hand over property or money to them.

As a young person/child-

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

*Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon! Bullies are afraid of one thing—they are afraid you will tell—so tell someone—always tell some one.*

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG!**
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

## IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:-

- a) **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

## AS A PARENT:

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School **IMMEDIATELY**. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!

- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

**'Edenderry Boys' N.S. does not welcome Bullies !!'**

**AS A SCHOOL:**

- a) Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- b) Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the RSE / Bí Folláin/Stay Safe programme.
- c) Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- d) Review the School Policy and its degree of success.
- e) The School Staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.
- f) Not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- g) Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- h) Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- i) We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our School.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED.**

If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the victims in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- Informing the victims' parents/guardians.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- Arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
- By taking one or more of the eight disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
- By investigating appropriate support from Health Services—i.e. Child Care, Child Guidance etc.
- By continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- By taking one or more of the eight disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

### **DISCIPLINARY STEPS:**

- a) They will be warned officially to stop offending.
- b) Informing the bullies' parents/guardians: In school diary or by letter.
- c) They may be excluded from the School premises at break and/or lunch times.
- d) We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
- e) If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended for a minor fixed period (one or two days).
- f) If they then carry on they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period.
- g) For a single serious incident of bullying a child may be suspended without warning—pending the earliest possible consultation with parents.
- h) If they will not end such behaviour, they will be requested to appear before a special council of discipline of the school—made up of Chairman of the Board of Management, Principal, class teacher and one other teacher.

### **6. BOM**

The Board of Management of Scoil Muire Bannrion has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in our school. It will support of the Principal in the application of a fair code of discipline within the school'

The BOM was consulted in the drafting and reviewing of the anti-bullying policy. The BOM has a major role to play in dealing with serious incidences of bullying as these incidents may be referred to it for discussion and periods of suspension may follow such incidents

### **7. REFERENCE TO OTHER POLICIES**

The following school policies support our Anti-Bullying Policy

- SPHE plan
- Code of Behaviour
- Record keeping Policy

- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs Policy

## **8. SUCCESS CRITERIA**

Success of our Anti-Bullying Policy will be indicated by

- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Observation of behaviour in the school yard, corridors and classrooms.

## **9. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **a) Board of Management**

- Provide a safe and comfortable environment
- Support the Principal and Staff in the implementation of the policy
- Ratify the policy

### **b) Principal**

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure the Anti-Bullying Policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for a review as required

### **c) Teachers**

- Create a safe working environment for each pupil in his/her class.
- Deal appropriately with reports of instances of bullying
- Keep a record of instances of bullying
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **d) Pupils**

- Avoid behaving in any way which would hurt others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Report any instances of bullying

### **e) Parents**

- Be familiar with the Ant-Bullying Policy and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.

## **10. IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

This policy is currently in force throughout the school.

## **11. TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed in 2012 and this review co-ordinated by the Principal.

## **12. RATIFICATION & COMMUNICATION**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management after its review by the Parents' Association.

**Signed: *Cyril O'Neill***  
**Chairman Board of Management**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

### **Reference Section**

- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website [www.irlgov.ie/educ](http://www.irlgov.ie/educ)
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board
- Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network. Wexford Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994
- Anti-Bullying Unit. Trinity College. Dr. Mona O Moore.
- Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino
- Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO, 2000
- Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying. HSA, 2002
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5)
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA.
- Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breathnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin Spring 1997. Ch. 4 p.56-61 Recommendations for Schools