



Caherline N.S Anti Bullying Policy

1.0 Introduction

Caherline N.S aims to ensure that children are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

2.0 Definition and Description

“Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others”. (Department of Education, 1993)

Bullying behaviour can be categorized as follows:

- Physical bullying: Constant hitting, jostling, pushing around. It may also take the form of severe physical assault.
- Verbal bullying: Persistent derogatory remarks about a child’s appearance, clothing, school work, family circumstances, ability at games etc.
- Constant interference with another child’s possessions, books, lunch, money or clothes.
- Deliberate exclusion or isolation of one child by some or all of the class group. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the victim, or passing around notes about or drawings of the victim.

3.0 Possible signs of bullying

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Fear of going home or out into the yard
- Deteriorating school performances
- Unusually anxious, nervous or tense in school
- Evasiveness when questioned by a teacher about incidents
- Becoming isolated in the class
- Regular interference with books or possessions
- Constantly asking for or stealing money (to pay a bully)
- Isolation
- Intimidation

This above list is not exhaustive.

4.0 Effects of bullying

- Reduced ability to concentrate
- Poor or deteriorating work
- Fear of going to school
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Alcohol, drug or substance abuse
- Aggressive behaviour
- Depression
- Inability to continue with education
- Attempted suicide.

5.0 Procedures for Noting and Reporting an incident of Bullying Behaviour

1. All incidents of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the teachers.
2. Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils are referred to the principal.
3. Parents of victims and bullies will be informed as soon as is practicable following the incident.
4. It is made clear to pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly. It is important to counteract a culture which may associate “telling” with “informing”.
5. Encouraging a child to hit back is mistaken because it does not address the reasons for the bullying behaviour and it could also result in a child being seriously hurt in further incidents.

6.0 Procedures for investigating and dealing with bullies

1. Children are always supervised, both in the playground and within the school building, between 8.50am and 2:40pm
2. When investigating incidents of bullying behaviour, it is necessary to seek answers to questions of what, where, who and why?
 - a) Incident Book – written up after each incident
 - b) Interview children alone and then together.
 - c) For serious incidences parents will be contacted
 - d) Re-teach Anti-Bullying techniques
 - e) Anti-Bullying Week held
3. If pupils are found to have been involved in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them that they are in breach of the Code of Discipline, and sanctions will be applied.

7.0 Work with Victims and Bullies

- Low self-esteem is an attribute which victims and bullies share. It is necessary therefore to avail of opportunities to increase feelings of self-worth among victims and bullies. Victims may need counseling to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem and bullies may need counseling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers.
- Bullying is a social problem and a whole community approach is needed to combat bullying behaviour. The school as a community is made up of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents, and the promotion of home/school/community links is a vital element in countering of bullying behaviour.
- The school's anti-bullying code is discussed regularly in each class and explained to the children.

8.0 Anti Bullying Code

- Every pupil has the right to enjoy their time in Caherline National School, free from bullying.
- Our school will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if these were not meant to hurt.
- Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.
- Bullying is regarded as a very serious matter.
- The school also has an Anti-Cyber bullying policy that should be referred to in issues that relate to this matter.

POLICY RATIFICATION

Compiled in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils (Student Council) parents/guardians (email).