

St. Brendan's National School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introductory Statement

St. Brendan's National School aims to provide a safe, calm and friendly environment where children are allowed and encouraged to develop an identity and personality in a supportive and caring atmosphere.

We aim to develop a harmonious environment where children can socialise, learn, play and work to their full potential.

Definition of Bullying

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

Types of Bullying

- Physical Aggression
- Damage to Property
- Intimidation
- Isolation/Exclusion
- Name Calling
- Slagging
- Extortion
- Others

A note that isolated incidences of above do not constitute bullying and will not be treated as such. Only when an incident is repeated will it be noted and deemed to be bullying.

Aims

Will strive to provide:-

- A happy, caring and safe environment in which children can learn, play and feel valued equally.

- A school which is perceived as a bully-free zone with zero tolerance for bullying in any form.
- A school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- An awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour.
- Procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour in a caring and sensitive manner.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an Incident of Bullying

- All incidents of bullying, no matter how trivial will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers.
- Cases of bullying will be referred to the Principal when:-
 - Persistent bullying occurs.
 - Serious incidents occur.
 - Parents raise concerns.
- Parents will be informed:-
 - Where, a teacher is concerned.
 - When, parents need to be alerted so as to safeguard/protect their child outside of school hours.
 - Where, a child appears distressed or there appears to be a change in usual behaviour.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The principal/Teacher investigating any incidents of bullying behaviour will adhere to the following procedures:-

Find out what? Where? Who? and why?

- Speak to the injured party
- Speak to the person accused
- Speak to independent witnesses if possible/necessary
- Record details in class and/or yard “Bullying Record Book”

- If it concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them that they are in breach of the Code of Discipline.

When a pattern of bullying behaviour emerges or a serious incident occurs, the Principal will be advised and a decision will be made regarding contacting parents, of both the “bully” and the “victim”

When parents are contacted, the action taken will be explained to them and the reasons for such action. Ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school will be discussed with them.

In cases of serious bullying, the matter will be dealt with under the Code of Discipline.

Programme for Work with Victims and Bullies

Pupils initiating bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those pupils experiencing low self-esteem opportunities will be developed to further enhance feelings of self-worth.

Pupils who become the victim for bullying behaviour may need the opportunity to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

The Anti-Bullying Code will be re-iterated on an ongoing basis in the classrooms and aspects will be reinforced at assembly where the need arises.

Procedures for Referring Individuals who need Specific Support from Outside Agencies.

In certain cases it may be necessary to refer the bully or the victim for assistance and support from outside agencies. If a parent or teacher is concerned about a pupil's behaviour they should speak to the Principal who would then be able to advise them on what support is available.

Prevention

Programmes which could be used to promote self-esteem and respect for others:-

- Anti-Bullying Code displayed in classrooms and corridors
- Artwork
- Posters
- Drama

- Co-operative Games
- R.S.E
- Stay Safe, Knowing for Growing
- Walk Tall
- Role Play
- Circle Time
- Sports Programme
- Debating
- Project Work
- Targeting Bullying in your class:- prim-ed
- Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (7 intelligences)
- Cherry Tree Books
- Nurture Club

Procedure for Parents concerned about Bullying Behaviour:

- Parent should approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the situation
- Should this prove unsatisfactory the parent should approach the principal
- If the situation is still unresolved the parent should raise the matter with the chairperson of the B.O.M

If the situation is still unresolved the parent should lodge a complaint in writing to the board which will then take the complaint to a formal stage.