



## **SCOIL NANO NAGLE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The bullying policy is viewed as an integral part of the code of behaviour policy. It was reviewed following the review of the revised code of behaviour. The existing bullying policy was deemed satisfactory in the main, with amendments made to the section on Disciplinary Action for Bullying.

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING:**

*Bullying is defined as a repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical by an individual or group against another or others. (Department of Education and Science). Isolated incidents of aggression, which cannot be condoned, do not constitute bullying.*

### **FORMS OF BULLYING:**

**Physical:** Punch/kick/hit/pinch/spat at.

**Verbal:** Name calling directed towards gender, race, academic achievement, personal hygiene, appearance, personality, disability, family members.

**Isolation:** From games/discussion/activities, excluded from those believed to be their friends.

**Damage/theft:** stealing/threatening/damaging clothes, school books/taking lunches.

**Extortion:** blackmailing, extorting money, lunches etc.

### **INDICATIONS / SIGNS OF BULLYING:**

- Anxiety travelling to / from school.
- Unwillingness to attend school-mitching
- Deterioration in school performance, loss of interest and enthusiasm
- Pattern of physical illnesses – headaches, tummy aches
- Mood swings / change in personality at home especially after long breaks from school.
- Stammering, withdrawn, bedwetting, crying, not sleeping, nightmares, not eating.
- Spontaneous out of character comments about pupils or teachers.
- Possessions missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained bruises, cuts or damage to clothing.
- Refusal / Reluctance to discuss if anything's wrong.



## WHY DO SOME CHILDREN BECOME BULLIES?

- They may be bullied themselves by parents or brothers / sisters.
- They may feel inadequate and lack confidence.
- They may feel under pressure to succeed at all costs.
- They may be very spoilt and totally unchallenged at home.
- They may be influenced by television, video games, computer games and / or peer pressure.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS A BULLY?

- Get your child to acknowledge that they are involved in such behaviour.
- Try to find out if this bullying behaviour is a temporary response to some problem in the child's life (e.g. death in family, loss of a parent etc.)
- Talk to your child and try to get him / her to understand how the victim feels.
- Talk to the child's teacher.
- Bullies often suffer from a lack of confidence. Don't compare your child's achievements with others. Praise helpful, kind behaviour at every opportunity.
- Channel your child's energy into purposeful enjoyable activities e.g. music, dance, sport, swimming. Be more involved in your child's life.

## WHAT THE VICTIM SHOULD DO IF HE / SHE IS BEING BULLIED.

- Observe "Stay Safe" rules- No/Get Away/Tell if bullied in school, stay in school.
- Stay with a group of friends– safety in numbers.
- Tell parents/teachers if you are afraid of being bullied going to/from school.
- Don't fight back or get friends to fight back – it only makes matters worse.
- Try not to show the bully if you are upset. It is hard but a bully likes to see you afraid – it gives the bully power.
- Be assured that adults and teachers will support you and deal with bullies in a way which ends the bullying.
- Keep telling until you are heard.
- Tell an adult immediately if he / she witnesses someone else being bullied.
- Do not be or pretend to be friends with the bully.

## PARENTS – WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED.

- Look for unusual behaviour in your child.
- Always take an active role/interest in your child's day at school – enquire as to how the day has gone, not straight after school as children need time to relax and unwind after the day. (Bedtime, bathtime and mealtimes).
- 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.**
- It is important that you advise your child **not** to fight back.
- Reassure your child that there is nothing wrong with him or her.
- Make sure your child is aware of school policy on bullying and that **bullying is not acceptable.**
- Help your child to be assertive and role play situations at home.



- Arrange for the child to be brought to and from school by an adult until the situation has been fully resolved and the child's confidence has been restored.

***Parents are asked to watch out for all the pupils in our school and inform the school immediately if they are aware of any pupil being bullied.***

#### **WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO.**

**The school will listen and act promptly on any complaint of bullying. We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.**

##### **The school will:**

- Be consistent and fair in enforcing the Code of Behaviour.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other e.g. Religious Education, Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall Programmes, Assembly and Circle Time.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

#### **WHEN A BULLYING INCIDENT IS REPORTED THE FOLLOWING ACTION WILL BE TAKEN:**

**The Class teacher and Principal will support the parents of the victim in the following ways:**

- Listen, record and investigate the incident.
- Assure the parents that all possible steps will be taken to avoid a re-occurrence of the bullying incident(s).
- All teachers will be informed of bullying incidents.
- Arrange a follow-up meeting.

#### **We will support the victim in the following ways:**

- Meet the victim and give them an opportunity to talk about their experience.
- Assure the victim the situation will be dealt with.
- Inform the victim's parents/guardians if they are unaware of the bullying situation.
- Offer the victim immediate opportunity to discuss the bullying incident.
- Reassure the victim that the situation will be dealt with and that the bully will be disciplined.
- An opportunity will be offered to meet the bully so that the offender will offer an apology to the victim and give a guarantee that the bullying will not reoccur.



## **HOW THE SCHOOL WILL DISCIPLINE AND SUPPORT THE BULLY.**

**We will discipline yet help the bully in the following way:**

- Meet the bully individually and give him an opportunity to talk about what happened and try to establish why he/she became involved.
- Afford an opportunity to meet with the victim and offer an apology and a guarantee that it won't happen again.
- Inform bully's parents/guardians of bullying incident(s) and seek their co-operation in monitoring the situation.
- Disciplinary steps will be discussed and taken.
- The bully will be closely monitored and positive behaviour will be reinforced.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR BULLYING.**

**Depending on the nature and seriousness of bullying incidents, the following disciplinary steps will be taken:**

- Investigation into the incident will take place.
- Official warning will be given to stop offending.
- Inform the parents of both victim and offender.
- An apology and acknowledgement of wrongdoing will be sought from offender and a commitment not to offend again will be expected. (written contract if age appropriate).
- Loss of privilege, in accordance with code of behaviour.
- In instances where there is repeated pattern of bullying behaviour, recommendations for suspension will be made by the principal to the Board, in accordance with code of behaviour procedures.
- In exceptional and extreme cases, the bully will be recommended to the Board of Management for expulsion, in accordance with the code of behaviour procedures.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Amendments will be implemented with immediate effect and in conjunction with the revised code of behaviour.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA:**

- Positive feedback from parents/teachers/children.
- Observation of behaviour in classrooms, corridors, yard.
- Reduction in recorded incidents.

## **RATIFICATION**

Amendments to the policy were ratified by the Board of Management on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2017. It will be distributed to all new entrants.

Reviewed with staff September 2017

*Next review Sept 2018*