



St. Mary's Road
Buncrana,
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St. Mura's National School

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Anti-Bullying Policy

The following Anti-Bullying Policy was drawn up by the staff of St. Mura's N.S.. The policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2003. It has been circulated to all parents through use of the Handbook for New Parents ever since.

The policy was formulated in accordance with the Education Act 1998, Section 15, (1), (2), Section 21, (1), (3), (4), Section 23 (2), (3) and in accordance with Circular 20/90 of the Department of Education and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools of the Department of Education.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. We say a pupil is being bullied or picked on, when another pupil or group of pupils say nasty or unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a pupil is hit, kicked, threatened sent nasty notes or when no-one talks to him/her.

Aims of the Policy

1. To create school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
2. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teacher, pupils, parents/guardians.
3. To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
4. To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour.
5. To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.

Contents of Policy

1. Each class will engage in the Stay Safe programme as part of S.P.H.E.
2. The school will have a Bullying Awareness Day annually, for teachers, children and parents which will:



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- a. Focus on personal experience of bullying and develop an empathy for bullies and victims.
 - b. Outline the procedures for reporting incidents.
 - c. Class Teachers will emphasise the importance of reporting incidents to the class Teacher as well as the teacher on yard supervision.
3. A rota will be drawn up to ensure that the yard is supervised at break times.
 4. The identification of bullying behaviour will be highlighted at one staff meeting per year.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an Incident of Bullying Behaviour

1. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be investigated and dealt with by class teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in "telling". This confidence factor is of vital importance.
2. Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils will be referred immediately to the principal.
3. Parents or guardians of victims or bullies will be informed by the principal earlier rather than later of incidents so that they are given the opportunity of discussing the matter. They are then in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs.
4. Non-teaching staff such as caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, to the teaching staff.
5. In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should be raised with the principal.
6. Where cases, relating to either a pupil or a teacher remain unsolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the school's Board of Management.
7. If not solved at Board level, refer to local inspectorate.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by either pupils, staff or parents/guardians. In any incident of bullying, 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 with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way.

1. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why, in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with the conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
2. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then the individuals are met as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said. Other pupils may also be interviewed to get a clearer picture.
3. Incidents of once-off aggression will be dealt with according to the schools Code of Behaviour. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.



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4. The 'No-Blame' approach may be used to resolve less serious incidents of bullying.

The 'No Blame' Approach

- Interview the child being bullied and the bully.
 - Interview the others involved.
 - Explain the problem.
 - Share responsibility.
 - Encourage pupils to identify solutions.
 - Meet them again.
5. Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour will keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident.
 6. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, meet with the parents or guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate to (a) explain actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy, (b) discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.
 7. Separate follow-up meetings, with the 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. This can have a therapeutic effect.