



St. George's National School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introductory Statement

The policy was formulated by Elayne Browne, Teresa Laird, Emer Fitzpatrick, Pamela Kidney and Niamh Grogan on 2nd of December 2005 and reviewed by the principal and staff of St. George's in September 2008, 2011 and 2012.

Rationale

Bullying is an issue which needs to be addressed as it may arise in everyday school life.

Aims

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians.
- To foster a happy environment in which children feel confident disclosing any unacceptable behaviour.
- To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

Guidelines (Content of the Policy)

- In accordance with our school ethos the content will seek to promote an atmosphere where the respect of individuals and their self-esteem is promoted and preserved, and where positive preventative strategies are promoted through our S.P.H.E., R.E. and P.E. programmes and sporting activities.
- Teachers will promote positive working relationships as a means of counteracting any form of unacceptable behaviour.
- The school will aim to provide comprehensive supervision and employ monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation, especially bullying 'hot spots.'
- All children are always supervised and we employ monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.

Action Plan

- The staff will recognise small acts of kindness on a daily basis which are rewarded with a *Maith Thú* card.
- All teachers will aim to teach at least two half hour lessons on bullying every month.
- The children take the pledge: *R-word campaign* (www.r-word.org).
- The children take the *Cyberbullying Pledge*.
- The children learn the school's slogan on bullying:
BULLY FREE STARTS WITH ME !
- *Friendship Week/Anti-Bullying Week* will be held in November every year. Each class level has a plan of work to be taught during this week. Activities include: *questionnaires, role-play/drama, artwork, watch videos* (Youtube: *The Bully Project*).
- Anti-Bullying stickers and pencils will be given out as rewards during Friendship/Anti-Bullying Week.
- The children are taught how to be an **Upstander** rather than a **Bystander**. They take the *Bystander's Pledge*.
Bystander video: www.pacer.org/bullying/video/player.asp?video=27
- Responding to Bullying: The children are taught the **CALM** approach to bullying.
Cool Down
Assert Yourself
Look them in the eye
Mean it
- **PUT THE BULLY IN THE BOX**: An Anti-Bullying Box will be located outside the office. Here the children can report any act of bullying that is of concern to them.
- Parents will be made aware of the *free guide to cyberbullying and social networking* that is available at www.internetsafety.ie
A link to this website will be put up on our school's website.

How do the staff react to a bullying incident in St. George's School?

- If a member of staff witnesses any inappropriate behaviour in school, he/she will....
 1. **STOP** the action & **TALK** to the students directly (being assertive, not confrontational)

e.g. "Stop this now! I don't like what I'm seeing here.
This behaviour is against our Code of Behaviour."

2. **WALK** and supervise the students
 3. **REPORT** the incident promptly
 4. **FOLLOW-UP** on the incident
- The teacher will take note of the incident reported by the victim, and record the details (in the victim's own words) using the school's bullying incident form.
The teacher will find out the answers to the following questions: *Who? What? Why? When? Where?* and record the content.
 - The teacher will reassure the victim that (s)he is in no way to blame and that the incident will be investigated.
 - The Principal will be informed of the incident.
 - The teacher will investigate the incident by speaking to the person who is being accused.
 - The teacher will take note of the incident as told by the accused.
 - Initially, both parties will be interviewed separately.
However if the incident is deemed to be of a minor nature, both parties will be brought together for an amicable reconciliation.
 - If it has been established that bullying has indeed taken place the school's disciplinary proceedings will come into force and the parents will be contacted.
 - If it is deemed necessary, both parties will be counselled.
In extreme cases, individuals could be referred to outside agencies, for example NEPS.
 - Strategies will be put in place to ensure that no further incident takes place.
 - The teacher will continue to monitor the situation and will maintain liaison with the Principal.
 - In light of the bullying incident, teachers will evaluate the effectiveness of their current school policy.

Useful websites:

- www.ispcc.ie/shield (free anti-bullying resources)
- www.internetsafety.ie (free guide to cyberbullying and social networking)
- www.watchyourspace.ie (free anti-bullying kit, young people show their support for victims of bullying)
- www.r-word.org

- <http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com>
- www.bully4u.ie (parent resources and training)
- www.antibullyingcampaign.ie
- www.bullystoppers.com (101 Great Comeback Lines)
- www.modelmekids.com
- www.stopbullying.gov
- www.kidshealth.org

Review and Ratification:

This policy was reviewed and ratified by staff and the Board of Management in May 2014. It will be reviewed again in 2016.

BOM: _____ Date: _____