



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Developed: February 2006.

Reviewed: 2010

Due for review: 2013

Policy

In devising a policy on Bullying, Rosemont has been careful to neither overestimate nor underestimate this form of misbehaviour but rather seek to incorporate this policy in our overall aim of providing the highest possible standard of education for all our pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal and bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education and can impose psychological damage.

While the systems we have in place in Rosemont from class teachers, to the tutorial system, to lunchtime supervision minimise any bullying, we in the school acknowledge that bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved, it affects everyone in the classroom and in the school community.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.

Bullying includes such behaviour as physical aggression; damage to property; intimidation; abusive telephone calls, text messages, emails; isolation; name calling; slugging; intimidation of school personnel. Parents should be aware that bullying can occur on social networking sites. It is important that parents monitor this.

All of the above need to be dealt with swiftly, fairly and comprehensively by the school.

Obviously prevention is the best antidote and the prevention of bullying should be and is an integral part of our Code of Behaviour. Positive motivation and reinforcement of good behaviour will minimise any danger of bullying. Class issues which may arise are quickly dealt with by class teachers and coaches as they build up a rapport with their pupils and are an ideal conduit to avoid problems.



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Clear sanctions laid down in the Code also provide a disincentive to students. As part of our ethos is to create a positive school climate and encourage pupils to be concerned for each other this also helps prevent possible incidents.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

- All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial should be noted, investigated and dealt with in the manner stated below. In this way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.
- The reported pupil will be spoken to first of all by the class teacher who will try to ascertain what is behind the unacceptable behaviour.
- The coach may also be informed of the situation so as to follow it up in a more informal setting.
- If the situation does not improve the Deputy Principal will speak with the pupil and the parents will be requested to attend a meeting in the school at which two members of the Management Committee will be present.
- It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are acting responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as Administrators, Secretaries, cleaners etc should be encouraged to report any concern they might have in this area.
- In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member the DES Child Protection Guidelines must be followed.
- Where cases relating to a pupil are unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the school's Board of Management.
- We will always aim to take a calm unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with such incidents. These incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the "victim" or of the pupil engaged in the bullying, involved.
- If a group is involved, each pupil will be interviewed individually and then the group will be met together. Each member will be asked for her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else said.
- If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to her how she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour & Discipline.
- Each member of the group will be helped to handle the possible pressure that they may face from the other members after an interview with the teacher.



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Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour must keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be a good idea to ask the pupils involved to write down their account of the incident.

Central to the tackling of any bullying issue is getting at the root of the problem.

Why is this pupil behaving thus?

- Are they lacking self-esteem? Why? What can be done?
- Are they seeking attention? Why?
- Are there possibly problems at home about which the school has not been informed?
- Are there any other issues of which we are unaware?

It is also essential to get the pupil who is bullying to recognise their behaviour as such.

The school and parents also need to be very much on the ball to pick up any warning signs that a pupil may be being bullied. These may include:

- Anxiety re: coming to school
- Refusing to attend school
- Deterioration in educational performances
- Loss of concentration, enthusiasm and interest in school
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour
- Frequent illness
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Refusal to talk in coaching session about what is obviously troubling her

Summary

Aim is to outline a positive school policy on countering bullying

- Rosemont acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- Rosemont promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all staff and pupils
- We recognise and encourage the need to co-operate with and keep parents informed on procedures to deal with problems that arise within the school community.



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- Staff members share a collegiate responsibility under the direction of the Principal to act in preventing bullying / aggressive behaviour by any member in the school.
- We are committed to consistent review and evaluation of our school's policy on bullying.
- We are confident that with these guidelines and the support structures we already have in place in Rosemont that issues of bullying can be kept to an absolute minimum.