



# Newpark Comprehensive School

*Scoil Chuimsitheach Na Páirce Nua*

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **1. Scope Of Policy**

- 1.1. This policy applies to the students in their relationships with each other, teachers, non-teaching staff, Principal and Deputy Principal.

### **2. Links To Mission Statement/Statement Of Aims**

- 2.1. "We wish to develop in our pupils self worth, self-esteem and self confidence; to provide a supportive and caring environment to enable our students to achieve their chosen goals, to equip them with a balanced outlook with regard to academic and material success."

### **3. Links To Ethos**

- 3.1. "Newpark aspires to value equally all the children in its care. High among the values it seeks to promote are:
  - a. respect and tolerance
  - b. an appreciation of diversity
  - c. a sense of justice
  - d. social responsibility
  - e. an awareness of wider communities
  - f. Newpark aims to foster in all members of the school community –
  - g. a friendly and co-operative atmosphere
  - h. confidence and self esteem
  - i. an appreciation of excellence."

### **4. OBJECTIVE**

- 4.1. We aspire to fulfil this commitment by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding, and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the school, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged, and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

### **5. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

- 5.1. Bullying consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by word, by physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person or persons which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity. Note: This is not to be confused with the good-natured banter that goes on as part of the normal social interchange between students or the normal professional classroom management by teachers.



- 5.2. The following types of behaviour are deemed to be inappropriate whether displayed in person (physically/spoken) or written (email, web forum, text messaging etc.):
- a. Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability etc.
  - b. Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
  - c. Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
  - d. Physical abuse or threatened abuse.
  - e. Aggressive or obscene language.
  - f. Offensive joke.
  - g. Victimisation; including very personal remarks.
  - h. Exclusion and isolation.
  - i. Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker.
  - j. Repeated unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable.
  - k. Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
  - l. Threats, including demands for money.
  - m. An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individual's reputation.
  - n. Inappropriate comments concerning sexual orientation, race, religion, age, gender or disability.

## **6. STATEMENT ON BULLYING**

- 6.1. Every person in the school is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- 6.2. The School will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.
- 6.3. Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour.
- 6.4. A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- 6.5. The school has a programme of support for all involved in the bullying incident.
- 6.6. The matter will be treated confidentially as far as possible, using the correct procedures.
- 6.7. The matter will be dealt with seriously and appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

## **7. CONSULATATION WITH EDUCATION PARTNERS**

- 7.1. Discussion and agreement with students through Staff/Student Council
- 7.2. Contribution from parents
- 7.3. Input from staff as agreed at Staff Meetings
- 7.4. It is School policy to provide education on bullying in the following manner:
- 7.5. All year groups are facilitated through S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal and Health Education) programme which incorporates bullying information and learning.
- 7.6. A Mentor/Buddy system is in place, where 6th year prefects are matched with a small group of 1st year students at the start of the new academic year.

- 7.7. Positive reinforcement of behaviour for the better good of the community is encouraged through the Positive Behaviour Policy, the positive MD system and positive comments in the student journal.
- 7.8. The school has a pastoral care system in place, and reports of all incidents (wherever they may have been reported) should be filtered through the Form Tutor, Year Leader and Pastoral Care Team. The Pastoral Care Team in the school is made up of Chaplains, Guidance Counsellors and Nurses.

## **8. PROCEDURES FOR NOTING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING**

- 8.1. Students should discuss any incident of bullying with a member of staff (form tutor or another trusted adult); this is responsible behaviour rather than "telling tales".
- 8.2. Parents/guardians should contact the Form Tutor regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents.
- 8.3. There is a trained team of teachers/staff that will deal with reported incidents of bullying. A list of these teachers is available in the Staffroom.
- 8.4. Teachers who encounter incidents of bullying (whether observed by the teacher or reported to him or her) will use their professional judgement in deciding whether to respond to the incident themselves as part of their day to day classroom/corridor management or whether to refer the issue to a member of the trained team. Any issue deemed to be serious in nature should be referred to a trained team member. Special Needs Assistants and ancillary staff should in the first instance report incidents they observe to the classroom teacher.
- 8.5. A conflict resolution file where students commit to positive behaviour is stored in the Nurse's office.
- 8.6. Incidents of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, will be dealt with using a range of responses.

## **9. Restorative Approach**

- 9.1. A restorative approach will be used if all parties are in agreement.
- 9.2. A restorative approach is an approach which deals with inappropriate behaviour by putting harm done to relationships and people over the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment. It focuses on building and repairing relationships rather than managing and controlling behaviour.
- 9.3. A restorative approach focuses on:
  - a. What happened?
  - b. Who has been affected and how?
  - c. How can we put right the harm that has been done?
  - d. What have we all learnt so as to make different choices the next time?
- 9.4. The emphasis is on "we" because all those affected by what has happened are also involved in finding a solution to move forward.
- 9.5. The processes include: restorative enquiry and language, restorative discussion, mediation and problem-solving circles.
- 9.6. The aim is to make the situation as right as possible after some behaviour or event which has adversely affected people. Everyone affected has the opportunity to talk about what has happened, how they have been affected and how they are feeling. They also say what they want to do to repair the damage.

- 9.7. A report will be completed and records will be kept of the procedures that were followed. The situation will be monitored and follow-up meetings will be held. All processes will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils involved. Form Tutors and Year Leaders will be kept informed of all incidents and have access to relevant written records.
- 9.8. If there is not agreement between all parties involved on using the face-to-face approach then the following procedure will be used.
- 9.9. The trained team member receiving the report will see the student reporting the incident in a quiet location, listen to the details of the event(s) and make a written report (on a special form) with the cooperation of the student.
- 9.10. As soon as possible the team member who received the initial report will set up an interview with the other party involved and with one other staff member. Notes of the meeting will be written into the original report, together with details of outcomes or decisions made.
- 9.11. All processes will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils involved. Form Tutors and Year Leaders will be kept informed of all incidents and have access to relevant written records.
- 9.12. All parties will monitor the situation for a specific time to see if any further incidents occur. Notes must be recorded on the form.
- 9.13. If the behaviour persists, the Year Leader and the parents/guardians of the parties involved will be informed. Thus, they will be given the opportunity of discussing the matter and are in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs. Appropriate sanctions will be imposed. The incident will no longer be considered if there is no recurrence within that academic year.
- 9.14. If there is a serious incident the matter should be reported to the Vice Principal or Principal, parents will be involved and appropriate sanctions applied.
- 9.15. Where the incident is deemed to be more serious the Principal should be informed immediately and he will inform the Board of Management, if necessary.
- 9.16. All parties involved may be referred to counselling.
- 9.17. Where cases remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management or other statutory bodies.
- 9.18. In order to appeal a decision, a parent/student may request a review by writing to the Principal.

#### **10. Roles and Responsibilities:**

- 10.1. The school management team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

#### **11. Monitoring Implementation:**

- 11.1. Parents/guardians and all members of staff; include on agenda for teaching staff meetings at least once a year.

#### **12. Review and Evaluation:**

- 12.1. Full review every three years and an annual evaluation will take place.

#### **13. Legislation/Equality Proofing:**

- 13.1. Approved by a solicitor who has expertise in this area before being passed to the Board of Management for approval.

This revised Anti- Bullying policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Newpark Comprehensive School at its meeting of November 2008.

Date of next full review of Anti- Bullying Policy: November 2011

Signed: Micheal Johnston (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: Derek Lowry (Secretary, Board of Management)

