

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Rockboro Primary School has a clear policy on the promotion of respect for all members of our school community. We are completely opposed to all variations of bullying which violate the values and principles of respectful tolerance and considerate kindness on which our school is based.

The Rockboro Primary School Anti Bullying Policy is in place to ensure that bullying behaviour safeguards are in place to protect each child's right to a positive educational environment. The policy is consistent with the Department of Education's guidelines for addressing bullying and negative behaviours.

The policy is a school-wide policy and applies to the children, the teaching staff, parents and the wider school community.

Bullying will not be tolerated at our school and relevant and appropriate sanctions will be implemented, when necessary, under legal guidance, in line with the policies and procedures outlined in this document, as a last and final resort.

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board), the Committee of Rockboro Primary School, Cork has adopted the following anti-bullying policy in relation to pupils within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.
2. The Committee recognises the very serious nature of bullying in relation to pupils and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. Rockboro Primary School recognizes the need to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour among our young student population with particular sensitivity and thoughtfulness. We recognize that incidents must be managed positively, and we must work towards preventing bullying behaviour. We therefore expect the adults in our school community to uphold the highest standards of good behavior and to lead by example. Our school is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying and negative behaviours:

Rockboro advocates a Positive School Culture and Climate which:

- acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a nurturing, safe and secure environment
- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
- recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents/guardians informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
- promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline, and responsibility among all its members.
- and encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.

Effective Leadership:

The Board of Management and Principal are committed to ensuring that proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents appropriately as they arise.

Staff members:

- Share a collegiate responsibility under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying and both negative and aggressive behaviour by any student. Inappropriate behaviour by parents will be addressed at committee level.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Foster an atmosphere of friendship, respect, and tolerance.
- Develop children's self-esteem (through the SPHE curriculum)
- Actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Model respectful behaviour at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils school rules and what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Emphasise examples of positive behaviour, notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- tackle the use of discriminatory or derogatory language in the school if it occurs.
- Provide constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent and:
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school's code of behaviour and follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.

a) A School-Wide Approach:

In Rockboro Primary School we wish to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment. We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy learning in a secure and supportive environment. Countering bullying behaviour in all its forms is a necessary prerequisite to ensuring this right. This policy on countering bullying behaviour will support the vision of the school to encourage the holistic development of each child.

A positive school wide holistic approach involving management, staff, pupils, and parents is key to the successful implementation of procedures.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Parents have a crucial role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour. The school recognises the need to work in partnership with parents and to keep them informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school wide basis.

b) A Shared Understanding of what Bullying is and its Impact.

All staff are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. Isolated or once off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, while not by definition Bullying, will be dealt with in an appropriate manner, depending on the nature/severity of the incident.

c) Implementation of Education and Prevention Strategies (including awareness raising measures) that

- Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils in the classroom and playground environments.
- When dealing with incidents of identity-based bullying that are deemed to be outside of the primary school curriculum we will refer back to parents/guardians in handling the matter.

d) Supports for Staff:

The Principal ensures that all school staff has sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy, and this enables all staff members to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. The school will provide whole school CPD (Continuous Professional Development) periodically.

e) Consistent Recording, Investigation and Follow up of Bullying Behaviour. (Including use of intervention strategies)

- In our school we define the **relevant** teacher as being the class teacher(s). The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording templates In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour is deemed to have occurred, appropriate sanctions will be implemented.
- The school should respond to all reported allegations/incidents within 20 school days.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

f) On-Going Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy

The Committee will undertake an annual review of this policy and its implementation by the school. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and will be available from the Administration Office.

Examples of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying can take a number of forms. These may include any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

Harassment based on the equality legislation **Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:**

- Shouting and uncontrolled anger
- Name calling, Personal insults, Verbal abuse
- Offensive language directed at an individual
- Continually shouting or dismissing others
- Public verbal attacks/criticism
- Domineering behaviour
- Open aggression
- Insulting and Offensive gestures
- Unwanted physical contact / Invasion of personal space
- Physical aggression

Intimidation, either physical, psychological, or emotional, for example:

- Behaving in a dictatorial manner
- Ridicule
- Persistent teasing
- Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort
- Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual
- Asking inappropriate questions / making inappropriate comments re: personal life/family/social life or schoolwork.

Interference with property, for example:

- Persistently moving, hiding, or interfering with property
- Damaging/defacing property

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:

- Writing of anonymous notes
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating or upsetting another person
- Knowingly spreading rumours
- Derogatory or offensive nicknames (name-calling)
- Using electronic or other media for any of the above (cyber bullying),

Ostracising or isolating, for example:

- Deliberately marginalising an individual
- Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group
- Deliberately preventing from joining in an activity, schoolwork-related or recreational
- Blaming a pupil for things s/he did not do

Relational

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Isolation & exclusion
- Ignoring
- Taking someone's friends away

False reporting of bullying behaviour as a bullying behaviour in itself.

3. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

1 - Class teacher

2 - Principal

- The responsibility of the relevant teachers is to determine whether bullying has occurred.
- This may be done in consultation with the Principal.
- Learning Support/Resource/Auxiliary teachers and staff will report incidents observed or reported to the relevant teachers i.e., class teachers

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

School-wide approach

Links to other policies

- List school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying, e.g., Code of Behaviour, Child Protections policy, Supervision of pupils, Acceptable Use policy, Attendance, Conflict Resolution Framework

Prevention Strategies for Cyber Bullying

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) ensures the following:

- Supervision is always in place when students are online.
- Websites are previewed and evaluated (Net Nanny)
- Firewalls and filters are installed through the school's Broadband scheme and these are regularly updated.

Students do not have access to social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

4. Rockboro Primary School's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident which has been reported directly to them or witnessed by them to any staff member in the school. This will then be reported to the relevant teacher.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching, auxiliary and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, , caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- The school will work to ensure that there is no lack of clarity and that judgements are in line with school policy and not subjective.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy. Efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Follow up and recording

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording of bullying behaviour

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher
- While all reports, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record in the class incident book of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same. The class incident book is stored securely in the classroom.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records in the class incident book which will

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- In the case of more serious incidents of bullying behaviour the records will be stored securely in a file in the principal's office.

Formal Stage 2 The relevant teacher must use the recording template to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. Incidents will be recorded in the class incident book. From Formal Stage 2 records will be stored securely in the Principal's office until the timeframe for the storage of records has passed (see Records and Recordkeeping policy).

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Follow up Circle Time
- Assist the person who has misbehaved to find a better way to resolve problems or meet goals.
- Restorative conferencing

Established intervention strategies

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows

- All in-school supports, and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g. Group work such as circle time, SPHE and STAY SAFE programme
- If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to supply parents with the relevant information/contacts. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, parents will be required to provide the school with an assessment undertaken by a recognised professional accepted by the school.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school will report to the HSE Children and Family Social Services Any alleged or perceived incidents of Bullying, will be reported to the Committee by the Principal as part of the regular reporting on Child Protection issues, which is on the agenda of each Board of Management meeting.

Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

Supports for parents/guardians

Parents/guardians who wish to discuss their child's difficulties in relation to bullying will be facilitated to meet on a one-to-one basis with the child's teacher, or with a relevant staff member/s. Any parental suggestions for appropriate supports for their child in the school setting will be considered and implemented, as far as practicable, within the school. Any parent who considers that their child's mental health is being affected by bullying and is having a seriously detrimental effect on their child, should also contact their own GP for referral, if necessary, to the HSE's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Support and advice for parents and their child may also be available through local professional, accredited counsellors and psychotherapists, specialist organisations and support services. Many websites also provide information for parents to help their child in relation to bullying.

Supports for staff

The Committee will ensure that members of the school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. Supports for staff will be appropriate to the individual's role and will enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and, where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases. Staff will be facilitated by the Committee to update skills on a regular basis in relation to bullying and its impact on pupils, and where approved in advance by the Committee, funding will be made available for members of staff to attend training in specific areas at various centres or as part of whole school training.

Prevention of Harassment

The Committee confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy was adopted by the Committee _

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and will be readily available to parents/guardians on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed and updated by the relevant personal once in every two school years.

Furthermore, every month from October 2019 at each monthly Committee meeting, the Principal will provide a report to the Committee and attending Trustee's setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template) since the previous report to the Committee and
- confirmation that all cases referred to above have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

The minutes of the Committee meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any personal details of the pupils involved.

APPENDIX 1

Types of Bullying Behaviour

Physical Aggression:

This behaviour includes but is not limited to pushing, hitting, shoving, spitting, punching, kicking, pinching, poking, tripping others. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in 'play fights' they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain. The school does not allow this behaviour (see Code of Behaviour).

Verbal Behaviours and Intimidation:

Persistent name calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates. Some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation: it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

Emotional Behaviours:

Threats of persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Teasing, taunting, threatening, exclusion, or extortion. Bullying behaviour thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty and secrecy in which the victim often feels a sense of hopelessness.

Damage to Property:

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a pupil's bag or lunch. The contents may be scattered on the floor, items of personal property be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Mobbing Child/Adult

Bullying of an individual, in any context, such as a family, peer group, school or parent body. When it occurs as emotional abuse, to force someone out of the school environment through rumour, innuendo, intimidation, humiliation, discrediting, and isolation.

APPENDIX 2

How the school supports the development of Self-Esteem in our Pupils

The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school's Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme incorporating the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes and Circle Time. These are intended to develop self-esteem in our pupils and to heighten the awareness among pupils of respecting themselves and others.

Examples of lessons from these programmes are:

Walk Tall:

Junior Infants – Belonging and Co-operating Me and Others, Feelings

Senior Infants – Developing Self-Esteem, Belonging, Feelings

Stay Safe

The following areas are dealt with in all classes over a 12 week period:

Feeling Safe and Unsafe

Bullying/Cyberbullying

Touches

Secrets and Telling

Strangers

Through this programme of positive action, the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect and tolerance. It emphasises that bullying is unacceptable while also helping pupils to adopt strategies on how best to deal with bullying if it should occur.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RSE

- Junior Infants: I can be Safe, We have Feelings, Making Choices, We are Friends
- Senior Infants: Making Decisions, Others have Feelings too, These are my Friends.

Teaching Support & Input

Ensuring that pupils know **who** to tell and **how** to tell, e.g.:

- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Hand in a note with homework journal
- Make a phone call to the school
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation

APPENDIX 3

Advice for Parents for the Prevention of Cyber Bullying at Home

Please take note: In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Young people under the age of 16 may not sign up for online services, such as social media sights without the explicit approval of their parents or guardian.

- Parents/Guardians must take full responsibility for their children's inappropriate use of the Internet or mobile phone outside school.
- Know your child's internet and phone use. Encourage children to show you websites they like visiting and what they do there.
- Register as a contact on your child's phone. Mobile operators in Ireland provide a 'Dual Access' service. This service allows both parent and child to have access to the account records held by the mobile phone company including account balances, numbers called and the services available on the mobile phone.

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- Encourage respect for others. Talk to your child about the harm that can be caused by cyber bullying and ensure that they understand what the consequences might be for everyone involved.
- All incidents of cyber bullying that have their origins in school will be fully investigated, recorded and dealt with under the procedures laid down in the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Incidents of cyber bullying that take place outside and affect a student in school will be brought to the attention of parents/guardians.

The development of the school's Acceptable Use Policy to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.

This policy was adopted by Rockboro Primary & Pre-School on ____

Signed: _____

(Chairperson Rockboro School)

Date: _____

Signed:

(Principal)

Date:

Signed: _____

(Trustee)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____TBC_____