



FACT SHEET ON BULLYING

SEPTEMBER 2021

St. Munchin's College Anti Bullying Policy is available for all parents and students to read on our web page. It is essential that parents and students familiarize themselves with this very important policy.

The following is a fact sheet on bullying behaviour. Please read through the fact sheet with your parents. Once both you and your parents have read through the information, sign it (parents and students signature required), **then return it to your tutor**. If at any stage throughout the year you feel that you are being bullied or a student in your class is making you feel uncomfortable, you must speak immediately to an adult that you trust in the school. **Bullying behaviour is anti social behaviour and is unacceptable. You must always report incidents of bullying, remember that your teachers are here to help you.**

Anyone can be bullied- it is a lot more common than people think and can happen at school, at home, on the sporting field, at work or online. If you are being bullied, it is important to remember that you are not to blame, and that there are steps you can take to stop it. Bullying is a serious matter and no one should have to put up with it.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

"Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or group against others" (Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying in Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013.)

Since 2013 all schools have an obligation to possess and enact an Anti- Bullying Policy. This is a directive from the Department of Education and Science and is now the law. Bullying is no longer behaviour that is ignored or explained away by statements such as "boys will be boys" or indeed by claiming that aggressive behaviour was "only a bit of horseplay". All students come from differing homes with different rules around what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable. In a school population of over 670 students all students are expected to comply with our Code of Behaviour and our Anti Bullying Policy.

BULLYING BEHAVIOUR INCLUDES:

- Hurtful words or gestures
- “Pantsing”-pulling down another students trousers/shorts
- Repeated name calling
- Exclusion or isolation of a person by another person or group of people
- Physical aggression
- Threats
- Mimicry (“taking off the way in which a person walks or talks”)
- Interference with another student’s property
- Cyber bullying (texting, twitter, face book or any other forum of social media)
- One off serious threatening words, gestures or actions may also be considered bullying
- Bullying by its nature often depends on observers or “bystanders”, who sometimes passively participate and facilitate bullying behaviour. Such persons will also be held accountable for their action or inaction.

H= Hurtful

A=Aggression

R=Repeated

D=Deliberate

WHEN ISN'T IT BULLYING?

Bullying usually is not a one off incident (but can be in the event of an attack on another person). For example a friend being in a bad mood one day, and not being very nice to you and then apologising later is not bullying. If this behaviour is repeated then it is bullying.

HOW BULLYING AFFECTS PEOPLE?

Bullying can have a serious impact on how some one feels about him-self. People who are bullied often feel that they are alone and think there is nothing they can do to change the situation. Ongoing bullying is of great concern. It lowers a person’s self- esteem and often leads to feelings of sadness, depression, anger and confusion. **If you are being bullied remind yourself that it’s not your fault and that there is something that you can do to stop it. The best place to start is to talk to people you trust, parents, friends and teachers.** If you are not comfortable approaching a teacher then tell your parents and they can contact the school. If you report a bullying incident and it is repeated then you must report again. Keep reporting until the bullying stops!

WHY DO PEOPLE BULLY OTHERS?

No human being is born a bully. We learn bullying behaviour and characteristics as we go through life. We may learn bullying behaviour in the home, on the pitch or in school. **Either way it is up to us as the responsible adults around our children, to teach them about bullying behaviour and to prevent it as best we can.** If bullies have learned to be bullies then they can also learn to change their bullying behaviour. Bullying can be carried out by an individual person or by a group of people. Anyone can be a bully, including a friend, brother, sister or another family member. A bully can also be an older person, or someone in a position of power such as a teacher, a coach or a manager. **Often bullies have low self- esteem and may even have been bullied themselves in the past. They may use bullying as a way of making themselves feel more powerful. People who bully can be motivated by jealousy and some do not understand the hurt that their behaviour causes.**

WHAT DO I DO IF I AM BEING BULLIED?

You must tell someone that you trust and you must ensure that a person in authority (Tutor, Year Head, School Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal) is informed about the bullying. If you are leaving school on a daily basis feeling upset or down because of something someone has said to you or done to you- **STOP**. Report this to your Parents, Tutor, Year Head, School Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal or Principal. It is our job to help you. To seek help is a sign of courage and strength

Key Points to Remember:

Everyone in St. Munchin's College has the right to live, work, study, and play in an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence. No one deserves or asks to be bullied. We pride ourselves in this College on that fact that we are such a tight knit community. We do not bully people in our own community or indeed in any community. St. Munchin's College students stick together and help each other. Reporting bullying or asking for help does not mean that you are giving in to the bully. It means that you are older now and know that what the bully is doing is wrong and you want to stop that behaviour. Reporting a bullying incident is about looking after yourself and making sure that you feel happier and more comfortable.

I have read the above fact sheet with my son and feel that both he and I are fully aware of what bullying behaviour involves. Please submit this signed form to your tutor at tutor time this week. Your tutor will have a designated box in their tutor to receive all signed forms.

Parents Signature:_____ Date:_____

Students Signature:_____ Date:_____

Dear Parent,

If you would like clarification on any of the aforementioned information or have any questions relating to the issue of bullying, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Quilter, Ms. Shiels, Ms. D. Collins (Anti Bullying Co Ordinator) or Ms. B. Ni Fhlatharta (Year Head)

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. D. Quilter () Ms. L. Shiels ()

Ms. D. Collins () Ms. B. Ni Fhlatharta ()