



RAHARA N.S.
SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA RATH ARADH

Information Booklet for Parents/Guardians

Rahara National School
Athleague Road,
Rahara,
County Roscommon
Roll No: 17100V

School Details:

Name: Rahara National School
Address: Athleague Road
Rahara
County Roscommon
F42XR20

Roll No: 17100V

Telephone No: 090 6623393

E-mail: raharans@gmail.com

School Hours:

Junior and Senior Infants: 9:20 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

All Other Classes: 9.20 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

Children who arrive at school prior to official assembly time are not the responsibility of any member of staff.

There is a short break at 11.00 a.m. Lunch break is at 12.50 p.m.

School Mission Statement:

In Rahara N.S., we seek to provide an environment where the Christian values of mutual respect, tolerance, care and justice are encouraged and nurtured.

Our school complements the efforts of parents and parishes in the fostering of a living faith.

Each student is unique and has different gifts and different needs. As a result, our school strives to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which develops the individual's talents and abilities.

Rahara N.S. encourages self-discipline and responsibility, and fosters the development of skills, which enable students to use their leisure time positively and creatively.

It is our wish that students share fully in the life of the school and leave Rahara N.S. as caring and capable young adults who will contribute positively to their communities.

Rahara N.S. will prepare students to be life-long learners who are able to show positive growth each year academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.

School Motto:

Believe Receive Achieve
Respect Connect Learn

School Staff

<i>Mrs. Aoife Mc Gowan</i>	-	<i>Principal Teacher (Junior and Senior Infants, 1st and 2nd classes)</i>
<i>Ms. Niamh Watson</i>	-	<i>Deputy Principal & Class Teacher (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes)</i>
<i>Mrs. Kathy Dolan</i>	-	<i>Special Educational Teacher (S.E.T)</i>
<i>Mr. Oliver Connaughton</i>	-	<i>Principal Release Day</i>

Ancillary Staff

<i>Care taker</i>	-	<i>Padraig Lohan</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	-	<i>Lynda Pearce</i>
<i>Hurling Trainer</i>	-	<i>Mr. Prionsias Killion</i>
<i>Gaelic Trainer</i>	-	<i>Eugen</i>
<i>Soccer Trainer</i>	-	<i>Ashley</i>

Board of Management:

<i>Chairperson</i>	-	<i>Fr. Ray Milton</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	-	<i>Tom Carney (Treasurer)</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	-	<i>Aoife Mc Gowan (Principal)</i>
<i>Members</i>	-	<i>Niamh Watson (Teachers Representative)</i>
	-	<i>Noel Moran (Parents Representative)</i>
	-	<i>Marie Moran (Parents Representative)</i>
	-	<i>Laurence Fallon (Community Representative)</i>
	-	<i>Breege Kenny (Community Representative)</i>
	-	<i>Tom Carney (Treasurer)</i>

Timetable:

<i>School Commences:</i>	<i>9.20 a.m.</i>
<i>Break:</i>	<i>11.00 a.m.</i>
<i>Lunch:</i>	<i>12.50 p.m.</i>
<i>Dismissal of Infants:</i>	<i>2.00 p.m.</i>
<i>General dismissal:</i>	<i>3.00 p.m.</i>

Staffing and Organisation:

The school is organised into two groups, each consisting of four combined classes. In all subjects the curriculum is matched to cater for children of different abilities, including children with special educational needs.

Rahara National School

Rahara National School is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a welcoming, caring, happy and secure atmosphere and endeavours to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community.

Rahara N.S. will identify and address the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils.

Junior and Senior Classes

*Infants are not allowed to go home on their own unless this is specifically requested **in writing** by parents. Whoever collects your child from school should try to be at the school before dismissal time so as not to cause him / her unnecessary anxiety. The pupils in the other classes are dismissed at 3.00 p.m. Pupils who bring bicycles to school are asked to alight at the gates of the school. The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for the children's property.*

School Uniform

School uniform should be worn at all times. It is as follows:

Navy crested jumper/cardigan, grey pinafore/skirt/pants & blue t-shirt

On PE days pupils may wear plain navy tracksuit bottoms (No Logos/brands)

Please label all items of the uniform to avoid confusion.

School jumpers/cardigans can be ordered from:

<https://myschooljumper.ie/collections/rahara-national-school>

General

Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.

Use of mobile phones is strictly forbidden during school time. If it is absolutely necessary that a child has to bring a mobile phone to school, then the phone must be handed to the teacher. The phone will be returned at the end of the school day.

Parents are always welcome at school. If a parent wishes to meet a teacher, it is appropriate to make an appointment so that the teacher may give the parent his/ her undivided attention.

Religious Formation

Fr. Milton visits the classes occasionally. The pupils receive Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion when they are in second class. Sixth class pupils receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Parents are asked to follow the religious programme from the child's book, and help with the religion work when it is sent home.

Homework Policy

As a general rule, every child from first to sixth class inclusive is given homework each night. Parents are asked to ensure that their children complete their homework. In the event of the homework not being attempted or not completed, teachers may insist that the homework is completed by the children during break time or at the weekend. Infants will get a small amount from homework from October to help reinforce their phonics and tricky/dolch words.

The recommended average time for homework ranges from fifteen minutes in first class to thirty minutes in senior classes. At the start of each school year it takes the teacher time to adjust to the amount of homework given to the standard of each class. So please have patience over this "settling in" period.

Do not do the child's homework for him /her. Work set for homework will have been prepared in class. Please check your child's homework for neatness and point out mistakes.

Oral work is as important as written work. Please listen to your child reading and examine spellings and tables.

Parents should sign the homework notebook each night, if requested by the class teacher. As a general rule, homework is not given at the weekends. Homework must be done unless there is satisfactory explanation, either written or oral, from a parent or guardian.

Healthy Lunches

We encourage children to bring healthy lunches to school, and to choose from the following foods regularly

- *Bread/scones*
- *Pitta bread*
- *Fruit*
- *Raw vegetables*
- *Cheese, lean meat, eggs, fish, smooth peanut butter, salad*
- *Fruit Juice*
- *Yoghurt Drinks*
- *Milk*
- *Water*
- *Soup*

We recommend the following foods as treats:

- *Fresh fruit*
- *Raisins*
- *Yoghurt or Yoghurt drinks*

We discourage the following foods:

- *Sausage rolls*
- *Cereal bars*
- *Granola bars*
- *Health bars*
- *Chocolate/icing covered bars/cakes/biscuits/treats*

Please do not allow your child to bring chewing gum or nuts to school.

*A small treat will be limited to **Fridays only**.*

Children are encouraged to eat their lunches and to bring home any uneaten lunch.

RAHARA N.S. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

This Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with Rahara N.S. Anti-Bullying policy

This Code of Behaviour is formulated by the Board of Management of Rahara N.S. in accordance with the guidelines *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008* and Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Consultation has taken place with the various stakeholders in the formulation of this policy.

Rationale

- The Code of Behaviour has been reviewed at this particular time to ensure the existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to *the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:*
 - A. *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - B. *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 - C. *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 - D. *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 - E. *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.*

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The Code of Behaviour endeavours to uphold the Vision Statement of Rahara N.S. which states, 'Each pupil, through an encouraging learning environment, will be motivated to achieve his/her full potential, be a self-confident, caring and capable person who will contribute positively to his/her community and be respectful in an ever-changing world.'

Aims

The code aims at:

- Creating a caring environment where each child can feel secure and confident, so that teaching and learning can be effective and children can develop to their full potential.
- Developing a positive approach to discipline in pupils, based on respect and tolerance of others.
- Maintaining good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.

- Accommodating the individuality of each child while acknowledging at the same time the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruptive free environment.

Content of policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.

2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour

The Board of Management, Principal, Staff, Parents and Pupils of Rahara N.S. have roles to play in the success of Code of Discipline.

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
 - Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

The Principal is expected to:

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Members of staff are expected to:

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour;
- to be familiar with and follow the school's policy on "Child Protection".
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;
- deal appropriately with misbehaviour;
- record instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour in the school incident book;
- communicate with parents when necessary, always with courtesy and respect;
- provide reports on matters of concern.

Parents are expected to:

- ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- be aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- attend meetings at the school if requested

- help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed
- ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- to send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school;
- to ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- to arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- to ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on "Health Eating".
- to arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child;
- to encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- to be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work;
- to communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

School Rules:

School rules at Rahara N.S. are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults 'practise what they preach' in their interaction with children every day. The School Rules listed below provide clear guidelines for all members of the school community.

- Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.
- In the interest of safety, they must walk within the school building.
- Pupils are expected to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy.
- Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable.
- Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- We encourage pupils to wear their full school uniform.
- Jewellery is not allowed during sporting activities.
- Hairsprays/gels/deodorants are not allowed. Roll-on deodorants may be used by 4th-6th classes if required.
- Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs are not allowed.
- Cycling in school grounds is not allowed
- We encourage children to bring healthy lunches
- Children shall not have mobile phones during school hours. If a child is found with a mobile phone during school hours, it will be taken away by the teacher and only returned to the parents/guardians. In **exceptional circumstances** the parent/guardian may make arrangements with the school and the phone will be held for the child for use after school hours.

- Pupils must respect the school building and property. If any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.

School Environment:

We pride ourselves on obtaining and flying the School's Green Flag denoting an environmentally friendly policy.

- Pupils are expected to value our school environment and to care for it. The playground is a litter-free zone.
- To protect the environment, the school is involved in various projects:
Composting: Fruit peels, pencil parings, etc. are collected for the purpose of composting
Recycling: Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling.
- All pupils must bring home their own waste (including wrappers/containers) from their lunch/snack – this includes Afterschool

Behaviour in Class and in School Building:

- Pupils must not behave in such a manner as to disrupt class work or to cause unnecessary disturbance.
- It is school policy that every pupil listens to the class teacher, works hard; making best use of his/her time in school.

Behaviour in the Playground:

- All pupils have a right to enjoy their time out in the playground in a safe environment at break periods.
- Misdemeanour consists of any action that puts the safety of self or others at risk.
- Fighting, rough play, abusive/bad language or any physical force is not tolerated.
- In the interests of safety, climbing on the perimeter walls is strictly forbidden.
- Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teacher on yard duty. Children must remain within clear view of teacher on yard duty at all times.

Swimming Days

- All children shall obey the rules of the Coral Leisure Centre Roscommon and the rules of Rahara N.S.

School Tours and outside school activities

- The code of behaviour will apply where pupils, although outside the school, are still the responsibility of the school e. g. school tours, games, extra-curricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Strategies to promote Positive Behaviour:

- Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Matching work with pupil's abilities.
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal
- Use of Circle Time

(The above list is not comprehensive and consists of examples only.)

4. Rewards and sanctions

REWARDS

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal
- Golden Time in the senior classes

SANCTIONS

The use of sanctions is an important element in the school code. They are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns.

- The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child
- The frequency, duration and persistence of the behaviour
- Whether it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour
- The context of the behaviour, will determine the strategies to be employed

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity, frequency, persistence, context of such misdemeanours. Whether it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour will also be considered.

Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:

Interrupting class work/ arriving late for school/ running in school building/not listening and speaking out of turn/leaving seat without permission at break or lunch time/ placing unfinished food in bins/ leaving litter around school/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous or unmannerly/ not completing homework without good reason/ not bringing explanation notes for absences and homework/ cycling in school grounds

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with Minor Misdemeanours

- The class teacher will normally deal with classroom misdemeanours.
- Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- Time out from friends and others (to reflect on the misbehaviour).
- Loss of privileges such as Game time, extra recreation time etc.
- Noting incidence of misbehaviour in incident book
- Note to parents.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with REGULAR occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept of regular instances of misdemeanour.

- Following **three** instances of misdemeanour the pupil is sent to Principal.
- Class teacher meets with parent(s)/guardian. Communicating with parents sooner rather than later
- Principal meets parent(s)/guardians concerning behaviour.

Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies/stealing/damaging or interfering with another person's property/bullying/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ using or writing unacceptable language/ bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, matches or constantly bringing chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids or other solvents to school/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger/ deliberately leaving taps on/ misuse of fire equipment.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Bullying:

Bullying is a serious misdemeanour and the sanctions applied are the same as those listed below for serious misdemeanours.

- Apology to the victim
- A record is kept. Pupil/s write an account of the incident/s that lead to the Bullying behaviour and what they have learned from this episode in their lives – parents must sign this.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others.
- Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the Principal/Deputy Principal informs parents.
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept of all serious misdemeanours.
- Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others
- Pupil is sent to Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- Principal contacts parent/guardian
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:

Deliberately vandalising school property/ aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil. Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, matches to school.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Gross Misdemeanours:

- A record is kept
- Principal contacts parent/guardian
- Suspension or expulsion may be considered

Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care services provided by the Western Health Board.

5. Suspension / Expulsion

SUSPENSION

(See also NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, Chapter 11, pp 70-78).

For the purpose of this policy suspension is defined as:

‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’.

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student.

Grounds for suspension: The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Immediate Suspension: In exceptional circumstances the Chairperson in consultation with the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary, where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

'Automatic Suspension': The Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction.

Procedures in respect of suspension:

The following procedure will be followed in Rahara N.S.

- An investigation of the facts shall be held to confirm serious misbehaviour.
- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about the incident.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

If a student and his/her parents fail to take the opportunity to respond, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

If suspension is still decided upon

- The principal will notify the parent in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm.
 - The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
 - The reasons for the suspension.
 - Any study programme to be followed.
 - The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
 - The provision for appeal to the Board of Management
 - The provision for appeal to the Secretary General of the DES under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. (Only where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days.)
 - Where the cumulative total of days reached 6, the NEWB will be notified.

Records and reports.

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

EXPULSION:

(See also NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, Chapter 12, pp 80-87).

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron.

Procedures in respect of expulsion.

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
- Consideration by the BOM of the principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
- BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- If BOM is of the opinion that the student will be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The intention to expel a student does not take effect until 20 school days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notification. The NEWB will be notified using a Notice of Intention to Expel form which is available on www.schoolreturn.ie or from the helpline (1890 36 3666). This form will be completed and sent to School Return Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16-22 Green St, Dublin 7.
- Consultations arranged by the EWO.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29)

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

Reference to other Policies

This Code of Behaviour has been drawn up with reference to the following policies and plans:

- o Anti-bullying
- o Enrolment
- o Record keeping
- o Home / School links

- o Health & Safety
- o Special Educational Needs
- o SPHE plan

Success criteria:

The success of the Code of Discipline will be judged under the following criteria:

- Improved discipline within the school
- Implementation of the policy by staff
- Feedback from staff, parents and pupils
- Improvements in behaviour

MONITORING:

Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. Within the classroom the teacher monitors his/her class. Teachers consider themselves responsible for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any instance of unacceptable behaviour. The principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management (BOM) has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of discipline applies therein.

RAHARA N.S. ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

This Anti-Bullying policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour, in particular the Sanctions section.

Rahara N.S. believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. The school also has a clear policy on the promotion of RESPECT for everybody where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is important therefore that the school has a clear, written policy to promote this belief, where pupils and parent(s)/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

Bullying is **repeated** aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not condoned, cannot be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is **systematic** and **ongoing** it is bullying. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those children who watch and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by the group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up and it rarely sorts itself out.

TYPES OF BULLYING

PHYSICAL: This includes punching, kicking, pushing, hitting or spitting etc. This also includes damaging property of a victim.

VERBAL: Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling, abusive language, slander, slugging, threats etc.

PSYCHOLOGICAL: This includes isolation – exclusion from discussions/ activities, extortion – obtaining (e.g. money, lunch, sweets etc.) from a person by force or threat etc.

Combating Bullying and the Action towards Prevention:

Role of Staff

- The principal and staff exercise constant vigilance in the matter of misbehaviour. Our aim is to prevent misbehaviour rather than control. Positive behaviour is always recognised, affirmed and sought.
- Any complaints of bullying are dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.
- The principal is informed of any instance of bullying.
- Awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour is addressed in the classroom, and through the school RSE and SPHE plans, through the Alive-O religion programme and other informal occasions when the opportunity arises.
- Pupils are taught skills and encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

Advice for Pupils

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG**.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Be assertive – shout **NO**. Walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse– So don't fight back. **REPORT** to a teacher or parent(s)/guardians instead. If you need support find a friend and both of you speak to the teacher.
- Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. The teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- **TAKE ACTION** – Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Advice for Parents

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard, ask for money or begin stealing money.
- Always take an active role in your child's education by enquiring how they are getting on.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school **IMMEDIATELY**. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School Policy concerning Bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help;

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an incident of Bullying Behaviour

1. All procedures of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in reporting. This confidence factor is of vital importance.
2. Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils will be referred immediately to the Principal.

3. Parent(s) guardians of victims and bullies will be informed by the Principal earlier rather than later of incidents so that they are given the opportunity of discussing the matter. They are then in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs.
4. Non-teaching staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, to the teaching staff.
5. In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should normally in the first incidence be raised with the staff member in question and if necessary, with the Principal.
6. Where cases, relating to either a pupil or a teacher remain unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the School's Board of Management.

Procedure for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying:

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by either pupils, staff or parent(s)/guardians. Such incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim or the pupil engaged in bullying behaviour. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way:

1. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
2. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and the individuals are met as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone also has said.
3. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.
4. In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, a meeting or discussion will take place with the parents or guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate to:
 - a) explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy
 - b) discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.

Disciplinary Action and Sanctions to deal with Bullying:

Disciplinary actions and sanctions are contained in our Code of Behaviour.

Bullying is treated as a serious misdemeanour and the sanctions applied are those listed for serious misdemeanours.

Sanctions are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns. The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed.

Programme for work with pupils

Learning strategies should allow for the enhancement of each pupil's self-worth – SPHE programme, Circle Time, Stay Safe Lessons.

