Dingli Primary: 17, Main Street, Dingli DGL 1837, Malta

Phone: +356 21454496 • Fax: +356 21456247 • Email: snc.dingli.pr@gov.mt • URL: http://sncdingli.weebly.com

St Nicholas College

**School Anti-Bullying Policy**

**IPREA**

**PREAMBLE:**

St. Nicholas College – Dingli Primary aims to promote a positive learning environment with a focus on mutual respect, courtesy and support for one another. Our school also aims to promote a positive environment whereby incidents of bullying are disclosed and discussed with the relevant authorities so that justice is restored.

**DEFINITION OF BULLYING:**

1. Bullying behaviour is aggressive action/s which is/are repeated over a period of time by an individual or a group of individuals against an individual who has difficulty in defending himself/herself. A great percentage of bullying is rooted in the lack of respect for diversity and social inequalities.

**TYPES OF BULLYING:**

1. **Direct Bullying:**
* **Physical:** kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings.
* **Verbal:** name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks.

Usually occurs in the school corridors and in the recreational areas.

***Boys are more than girls prone to this type of bullying.***

1. **Indirect Bullying:** gossiping and spreading of nasty stories behind the target’s back to harm social reputation, cause humiliation and exclusion from a social group.

***Girls are more than boys are prone to this type of bullying.***

1. **Cyber-bullying:** harassment through the use of technology using texts, e-mails, picture/video clips. Usually this type of bullying occurs within the home environment, but its repercussions spill over onto the school context.

***Both sexes are prone to this type of bullying.***

1. **Racial/Religious Bullying:** includes physical assault, the use of derogatory names, racist jokes, verbal treats and ridiculing an individual for cultural/religious differences such as dress, food, ways of praying, etc.

As teaching professionals we are in duty bound to promote equality of opportunity amongst learners of different social and religious beliefs.

***Learners from minority social and religious groups are prone to this type of bullying.***

1. **Sexual Bullying:** occurs when sexuality(inc.LGBTI) and gender is used by learners against other male or female learners. Such bullying can occur face to face, behind the target’s back or through the use of technology.

As teaching professionals we are in duty bound to provide a safe and a school accepting environment for all learners.

***Girls and LGBTI learners are more prone than males to this type of bullying.***

1. **Other Bullying:** Learners with learning difficulties or learning disabilities are also vulnerable to bullying.

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:**

As a school we are in duty bound to create a positive learning environment where all learners acquire the skills of regulating their behaviour that enables them to function properly within the school community. When a particular learner’s behaviour becomes unacceptable, he/she must take responsibility to amend and change behaviour. The school should see that when instances of behaviour occur, both the perpetrator and the victim and supported.

**What victims should be taught to do:**

During P.S.C.D. and other class-based lessons, learners should be empowered with the skills:

1. to be aware that our school does not tolerate bullying;
2. to say, **Please stop, I don’t like it** without retaliating**.** This is to give the bully a chance to stop;
3. to pluck the courage and inform the class teacher about any bullying incidents;
4. to seek advice from school adults such as the class teacher, the guidance teacher, P.S.C.D. teachers.

**What witnesses should be taught to do:**

1. Report the incident to their class teacher or another member of staff in whom they have confidence;
2. Be truthful and only report facts not guesses;
3. Recognise that reporting a bully will eventually help both the bully and the victim.

**What the school should do:**

1. **Create the right school ethos:**

 The ethos and caring nature of our school as reflected in our mission statement should be explicit in every aspect of school life. It should be particularly emphasised through:

* morning assemblies and special morning assemblies;
* P.S.C.D. lessons (Years 3-6);
* Social Studies lessons (Years 1-6);
* Religious Education (all year groups) ;
* The staff’s example. The staff should always model appropriate behaviour towards one another and towards the children under our care.
1. **Take bullying seriously:**
* Learners should be reminded that they must report any incidence of bullying.
* Learners should be reminded of their right to be happy and safe at school.
* Learners should be referred to the school **golden rules**;
* If the **golden rules** do not stop bullying, children should speak to their class teacher;
* If children are still worried, they should have the opportunity to speak to a member of the school administration, the guidance teacher, etc..
* Cases that need continuous support should be referred to the Guidance Teacher and/orCollege Counsellor.
1. **Guarantee**:

Our school guarantees that everything possible will be done to ensure that:

* all bullying incidents will be kept to a minimum through better supervision;
* learners will be taken seriously when reporting incidents of bulling;
* learners will be protected from bullies;
* learners will be helped to deal with and given skills to prevent a reoccurrence;
* learners will be told of the result of any investigation and what appropriate action has been taken;
* learners should return to their class teacher immediately if there is a sign of a reoccurrence of the bullying behaviour;
* learners will be assured that the school personnel will be helping not only the bullied but also the bully;
* witnesses will be reassured that they should not fear confidentially speaking to their teacher or to a member of the school administration if they know of someone is being bullied.

**Tackling a bullying incident (Primary Years):**

1. **The Bullied Child:**

When the school administration receives a report of bullying the following procedure will be followed:

* The class teacher will be informed (if the report did not reach him/her) so that the child is safe from any potential bullying. This may include special provision at breaks until the full picture is known;
* Reports will be gathered from as many other sources as possible such learner witnesses;
* When a full picture is known, the victim will be counselled by a member of the school administration/guidance teacher;
* The learner will be given advice/support on how to deal with such incidents and told how the perpetrators should be dealt with;
* The learners are advised how to react to the perpetrators in the future;
* The parents/carers will be informed if there is evidence of bullying so that they can keep an eye on the situation and support the advice of the school and keep the school informed;
* Whoever correctly informed the school of an incidence of bullying will be praised and thanked in a discreet way so that confidentiality is respected.
1. **Dealing with the perpetrators:**

Those who hurt and bully others have a right to be taught not to repeat bullying. Thus:

* they will be asked about the reports and their point of view considered.
* efforts will be made to find out why they were doing it.
* the effects of their actions will be discussed.

 **Perpetrators will be asked such questions as:**

* Did you realise the effect of what you were doing?
* Did you realise that you were hurting others / bullying?
* What must you do now?

**Perpetrators will be:**

* taught what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour;
* informed of the checks that will be made on his/her future conduct;
* asked to consider how he/she can make amends to his/her behaviour.
1. **Reoccurrence:**

If there is a reoccurrence of bullying, the issue will be discussed with the parents/carers of the learner who was bullying.

1. **Review:**

 Checks will be made that the bullying has stopped. Every now and then a member of the school administration will actually talk to the victim to demonstrate that the concern is not still there and to check that the child is not suffering in silence again.

1. **Individual Programme:**

 If a bully has reached the point that an individualised programme to be devised his/her support, such a programme should be tailored to the child’s personal needs. When drafting such a support programme, the school administration should seek the support of the guidance teacher, college councillor and, possibly, anti-bullying personnel.

**Tackling a bullying incident (Kindergarten Years):**

Amongst the kindergarten learners bullying is most commonly seen as physical such as hitting and pushing.

1. **The Bullied Child:** Empower the child to stand up for oneself (eg: “Tell John that you will not play with him and be his friend if he hurts/hits/pushes you again!”
2. **The Perpetrator:** Try to make the child aware of the feelings for others and that actions have consequences. This could be done through social story books.