



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(to be read in conjunction with the positive behaviour policy)

Principles and values

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Learners and parent/carer(s) should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

Objectives of this policy

- All learning facilitators and non-teaching staff, learners and parent/carer(s) should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All learning facilitators and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All learners and parent/carer(s) should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

What is bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying at iCAN is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs ‘lots of times, on purpose’.” Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time. Bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racial	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
Direct or indirect Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber bullying	All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat Twitter, Facebook misuse, Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, iPad, games consoles...

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- Additional learning need or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances,
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and in cyberspace.

It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

Perpetrators and victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of child abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of additional learning needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Learners who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Signs and symptoms for parent/carer(s) and staff

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do make less effort with school work than previously
- comes home with clothes torn.
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings

- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Outcomes

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class learning facilitator or by a member of the leadership team. Parent/carer(s) of the perpetrator may also be questioned about the incident or about any concerns that they may be having.

The child displaying unacceptable behaviour, may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding).

Other consequences may take place e.g. a parent/carer being informed about their child's behaviour and a request that the parent/carer(s) support the school with any sanctions that it takes (See behaviour policy). Wherever possible, the children will be reconciled.

In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others e.g. counsellor

In serious cases (this is defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions, that is, no change in behaviour of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), support from behaviour outreach such as Indigo or Ragamuffin, counselling, reduced timetables, or even fixed or permanent exclusion will be considered.

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in the bullying log (see recording bullying section) and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

At iCAN we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying through the promotion of the personal goals, together times, PSHCE, the school vision, assembly themes, peer massage programme and e-safety sessions.

The ethos and working philosophy of iCAN means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Appropriate and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying, this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and lead to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our vision and our personal goals.

Staff to actively support every child in our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child, even if this is done in jest. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Learners are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules
- writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behaviour towards others are dealt with quickly
- creating an item for the school website.

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)

- Tell a friend
- Tell your pupil council rep
- Tell a learning facilitator or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your PSCH time

Recording of bullying incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to record and report each incident. In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Principal.

General incidences of bullying should be recorded in the behaviour log this would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same child(ren) may be prevented from happening in the future.

Advice to parent/carer(s)

As the parent/carer of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:

1. Report bullying incidents to the learning facilitator.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Principal notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

Do not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents.
 2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.
- Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is supportive of our iCAN vision:

To inspire every child to recognise their full potential, believe they can make a difference and respect themselves, others and the world in which they live.