

Anti -Bullying Statement

Blackwater Community School, Lismore, Co. Waterford.

Anti-Bullying awareness among our students is an important aspect of learning at BCS. Both issues are serious and can have a profound impact on any student.

1. Bullying

Our approach here is twofold – preventative and rapid response to reported cases of Bullying.

Preventative:

We work hard to emphasise that there is zero tolerance to bullying in BCS. The role of Tutor linked with Chaplain/School Counsellor is key. The tutor outlines clearly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Early in first year, tutors have extended meetings (all of 1st class) to have an anti-bullying week. Examples of bullying, how to react and what to do are some of the topics covered during the week. At the end of that week a set of class rules developed by the class are displayed on a poster in a prominent place. This rules highlight what is unacceptable behaviour.

First years also have a special link with 5th years – the Cairde. These Cairde look out for the first years and alert the tutors/year head to issues that arise outside of the classroom/yard/corridor. The Cairde system reassures first years that senior students are looking out for them.

As students move into 2nd/3rd year reflection weeks are held. The topic of bullying is revisited by tutors and a reminder of the rules set by them as first years.

Bullying is addressed as part of coursework of SPHE. This would span the three years of junior cycle. Strand 2 deals with **Minding myself and others**. Part 4 specifically targets anti-bullying:

2.10 describe appropriate responses to incidents of bullying

2.11 appraise the roles of participants and bystanders in incidents of bullying

2.12 review the school's anti-bullying policy and internet safety guidelines explaining the implications for students' behaviour and personal safety

Rules relating to Cyberbullying are in the students PR book.

Rapid Response:

If we become aware of an issue between students we aim to solve the problem. The year head and tutor (and other staff) can be involved in investigating the issue. Both sides have the opportunity to give their 'side of the story' and other accounts (other students and staff) are taken into consideration. In some cases the discipline system and its consequences apply and in others mediation between the 2 students 'bully' and 'victim' is used. Each issue is dealt with on a case by case basis and the outcome varies per case.

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