

1 Anti-Bullying Policy

1.1 Main Objective of Knockadoon Camp

The fundamental purpose or mission for the existence of Knockadoon Camp is first and foremost a place for people to learn, to growing their faith and human development, this being done in the setting of a residential atmosphere where they will feel secure and safe.

It was hoped that the young people who form the community of Knockadoon Camp will gain a renewed and healthy view of themselves and other people, the need for co-operation and compromise, and ultimately the importance of every individual whoever they may be and wherever they may be from, the development of mutual respect and understanding to deepen their own spirituality.

Whereas it is the hope of all involved in the management and running of the camp that everyone staying in Knockadoon camp experiences the camp as such place, the main beneficiaries must be the campers.

1.1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The policy is aimed to inform all participants involved in Knockadoon Camp about bullying and to agree to remove it from the Knockadoon environment.

- To implement and maintain a policy dealing with the prevention, identification and investigation of bullying in Knockadoon.
- To create a camp ethos which encourages participants to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To make minors aware of the different forms and effects of bullying.

1.1.2 KNOCKADOON CAMP'S STANCE ON BULLYING

Knockadoon does not see bullying as a trivial matter, as it can manifest itself on a regular basis in all shapes and forms. Knockadoon will not tolerate bullying in any form at any level on camp. The camp will raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour, with all participants involved with Knockadoon. The purpose is to emphasise the devastating effects of bullying on the individual and Knockadoon as an organisation. Leaders and the Dominican Community will promote mutual respect and self esteem among all participants. Leaders will regularly raise awareness of bullying and be alert to incidents of bullying.

1.2 Defining Bullying

The following section gives the definition of bullying from *Children's First (2011)*.

'Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it be verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening,

hitting or extortion by one or more persons against a victim. Bullying can also take the form of racial abuse. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the Internet and other personal devices.

Bullying contains 7 key features:

- An intention to be hurtful
- This intention is carried out
- The behaviour harms the target
- The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
- There is often no justification for the action
- The behaviour repeats itself again and again
- The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target

1.3 Aspects of Bullying

Bullying can occur through different methods, mediums and involve different people. This section provides information on the people involved, types of bullying, and the effects of bullying and the symptoms of bullying. The lists outlined are not exhaustive.

1.3.1 THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The following section aims to provide a description of the parties involved in bullying.

THE TARGET

The term target is used to describe the person experiencing the bullying behaviour. Targets of bullying may be categorized as follows:

- Classic Target – one who is not responsible for being bullied and has done nothing to merit this behaviour;
- Provocative Target – one who provokes and antagonizes, and then is quick to complain when his/her peers retaliate;
- Passive Target – one who is afraid and feels helpless. This young person is sometimes on the edge of friendship groups as (s)he has difficulty gaining support from peers;
- Colluding Target – one who takes on the role of victim to gain acceptance and popularity;
- False Target – one who complains unnecessarily about his/her peers;
- Perpetrator/Target – one who takes on the behaviour of either the perpetrator or the target, depending on the circumstances.

THE BULLY/PERPETRATOR

The bully or perpetrator often convinces him/herself that the victim deserves the treatment handed out. The following are a list of types of bullies:

- Reactive Perpetrator – these perpetrators may lash out at others because they are hurt and are crying out for help. This may be due to circumstances such as a family crisis, or bereavement.

- Anxious Perpetrator – these perpetrators may have low self-esteem, emotional distress and insecurity. By bullying others they are attempting to gain confidence and status.
- Sadistic Perpetrator – these perpetrators have little or no sympathy for their targets, are very aggressive, have high self-esteem and they enjoy inflicting pain on their targets. The sadistic perpetrator rarely shows remorse or guilt towards their target.
- Home-grown Perpetrator – here the perpetrator may come from a background where they were bullied and bullying is a learned behaviour. They see this type of behaviour as their only form of control.
- Underachieving Perpetrator – this perpetrator may be struggling academically/socially and seeks status by bullying others.
- Perpetrator/Target – this perpetrator may have been bullied and takes their frustration out on others who are perceived to be weaker, by bullying them.

THE BYSTANDER

Bystanders can be described as those who are neither perpetrators nor targets but are aware that bullying is taking place. Bystanders may choose to ignore the bullying behaviour as they themselves do not want to become a target for the perpetrator. Bystanders may take on various roles while witnessing bullying behaviour, they may:

- Assist the perpetrator and join in with the bullying behaviour;
- Reinforce the bullying behaviour – these bystanders may not be physically involved in bullying but may provide positive reinforcement to the perpetrator by observing the bullying, making encouraging gestures or laughing;
- Outsiders – those bystanders who stay away and do not take sides. By doing this they are condoning the perpetrators behaviour;
- Defenders – those bystanders who provide comfort to the victim and support them while trying to make the bullying behaviour stop.

As bystanders have a critical role to play in creating an anti-bullying environment, it is important for an organisation to acknowledge the power of the bystander and create a supportive environment in which encouragement is given to reporting an incident of bullying. Bystanders need to feel empowered to speak out when they are aware of an instance of bullying.

1.3.2 TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying can happen in various forms. The following list outlines some of these (not exhaustive):

- **Direct bullying:** the behaviour is obvious and bystanders will be aware of it. Types of direct bullying include physical or verbal bullying;
 - **Verbal bullying** Slandering or ridiculing an individual; such as:
 - **Slagging:** this behaviour usually refers to the good natured banter which goes on as part of the normal social interactions between people. However, when this slagging extends to very personal remarks aimed again and again at the same target(s) then it may be described as bullying; Directed at the same target(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates

should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour or remarks aimed again at the individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family – then it is bullying.

- **Abusive telephone calls:** the abusive and/or anonymous telephone call is also a form of verbal intimidation or bullying;
- **Name calling:** persistent name calling directed at the same target(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Most name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance.
- **Physical bullying** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, and tripping people up;
 - Assaults or threats of physical assaults;
 - Damage to a person's property;
- **Indirect bullying:** This type of bullying is more difficult to recognise. Types of indirect bullying include intimidation or isolation;
 - **Intimidation:** Aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon, i.e. a "look" of facial expression which conveys aggression or dislike.
 - **Isolation:** a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some of the class groups.
- **Gesture bullying:** Non-verbal gestures/glances which can convey threatening or frightening messages/intent;
- **Cyber-bullying:** the use of e-mails, instant messaging, chat rooms, mobile phones, or other forms of information technology to deliberately harass, threaten, intimidate and attack others, either directly or indirectly, e.g. rumour mongering. Cyber bullying can include such acts as making threats, sending provocative insults or racial or ethnic slurs, gay bashing, attempt to infect the victim's computer with a virus, and flooding an email inbox with nonsense messages.
- **Relational bullying:** this type of bullying is most common among girls. It is any behaviour that sets out to deliberately damage another person's friendships or feelings of inclusion in a friendship group. Behaviours involved in this type of bullying include exclusion, isolation, subtle verbal aggression, gossip and rumours.
- **Extortion:** The deliberate extraction of money or other items of property accompanied by threats; Demands for money may be accompanied threats if the person does not "pay".
- **Homophobic bullying:** Homophobic bullying is a kind of bullying that is typically aimed at young people who are gay, or who are perceived to be gay. This can involve name-calling, isolation and violence. Homophobic bullying is very common and demeaning.
- **Racial bullying:** racial bullying can be expressed physically, socially or psychologically when one is labelled negatively as being different from others according to one's race;
- **Mobbing:** this is another word for bullying. Mobbing generally means that the target is being bullied by a group of perpetrators and not just one perpetrator.

1.3.3 THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

Anyone can become the victim of a bully at some point in their life. Bullying can cause severe consequences both short and long term. The following list (not exhaustive) outlines some of the effects.

- Target(s) being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable.
- Target(s)' self-confidence may be damaged.
- Long term effects may include nervous breakdown, heart attack and suicide
- On the cognitive level bullying can affect a target's thinking process and result in mistakes, decreased problem solving ability, low motivation, concentration difficulties and irrational judgement
- On the behaviour level, an individual can become withdrawn, aggressive, irritable, increased consumption of alcohol and other substances, reduced productivity, absenteeism and show signs of mood changes
- Bullying can result in psychological symptoms, such as anxiety, irritability, angry thoughts, crime, insomnia, feelings of depression and paranoia

1.3.4 INDICATIONS OF BULLYING/BEHAVIOURS – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

The following signs/symptoms may suggest someone is being bullied (not exhaustive):

1. Unwillingness to attend activities, refusal to attend, creating excuses.
2. Loss of concentration, enthusiasm and interest in activities.
3. Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches).
4. Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before or after returning from trips, holidays, etc.
5. Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, and difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting.
6. Spontaneous out-of-character comments.
7. Possessions missing or damaged.
8. Increased requests for money or stealing money.
9. Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing.
10. Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

Those signs do not necessarily mean that someone is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination, those signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the person.

1.4 Preventing Bullying

There are a number of ways to prevent bullying from occurring. The following are some ways but are not a complete list.

- Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'
- Encourage young people to negotiate, cooperate and help others, particularly new or different children
- Offer the victim immediate support
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much

- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

1.4.1 CODES OF PRACTICE AND LAWS RELATING TO BULLYING

This section highlights a number of Laws relating to bullying and Codes of Practice.

- Industrial Relations Act 1946-2004
- Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004
- Unfair Dismissals Act 1977-2001
- Protection of Employees (part time work) Act, 2000
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (No.10 of 2005)
- Equal Status Acts 2000-2004
- Harassment and Harassment at Work made under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 & 2004
- ❖ Children's First Guidelines (1999)
- ❖ Code of Good Practice – Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector Guidelines (2003)
- ❖ Report of the Taskforce on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying (2001) – Dignity at Work – The Challenge of Workplace Bullying
- ❖ Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying 2002
- ❖ Code of Practice on Guidance, Prevention and Procedures for dealing with Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work made under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 & 2004
- ❖ Code of Practice Detailing Procedures for Addressing Bullying in the Workplace 2002
- ❖ Code of Practice Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – Code of Practice detailing Procedures for Addressing Bullying in the Workplace made under the Industrial Relations Act, 1990

1.5 Procedure for Investigating Bullying

All participants involved in Knockadoon should be encouraged to report issues of concern. In the case of members, they should report the incident to a leader. The member can also report the incident with a friend if it makes them feel comfortable.

All incidents of bullying should be reported to the Senior Leader.

Leaders who feel they have been bullied should report it directly to the Senior Leader. All incidents of allegedly bullying will be treated with confidence and not discussed in an open manner with other participants of camp. All details of the incident should be recorded and dealt with promptly and seriously.

1.5.1 ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

Where bullying is suspected the target(s), the suspected perpetrator(s) and any bystander(s) are interviewed separately. If any degree of bullying is identified the following action should be taken

INTERVIEW THE REPORTER

The investigation should begin with a thorough interview with the reporter to ascertain the facts behind the incident. The reporter of the incident can be the target or a bystander. The problem should be described clearly. The investigator should try to discover:

- a) Who was involved and what part they played in the incident?
- b) When the incident(s) occurred?
- c) Where the incident(s) occurred?
- d) Whether there were any witnesses to the event(s)?
- e) What was said or done?
- f) Has this happened before (during KYW activities on/off camp)?
- g) Possible solutions to the problem.
- h) Re-assure the reporter that the incident will be investigated.

All the gathered information should be noted. Asking the reporter about possible solutions will demonstrate that their opinion is valued and respected. It is advisable to record the statements in writing from all parties in the investigation, as the use of written statements tends to make matters clearer from the outset of the investigation and maintain clarity through the procedure. The reporter should be informed of the procedures which will be followed. It is essential that the confidentiality of the reporter be maintained at this time.

Where an individual reports a concern of bullying in good faith, gives evidence in proceedings or gives notice of intention to do so, they will not be victimised or subject to discipline. Victimisation as a result of reporting bullying will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline and automatically result in a formal investigation which may result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator(s). It must also be noted that malicious complaints will also result in disciplinary action being taken.

INTERVIEW THE PARTIES INVOLVED

The parties that are interviewed are those mentioned by the reporter. These can include the perpetrator(s), target(s) or bystander(s).

- (a) Explained that an incident has come to your attention;
- (b) Allow them an opportunity to be heard (asking the same questions for the reporter);
- (c) Give an unbiased hearing;
- (d) Fully inform the parties of the decision as a result of the investigation;
- (e) Be assured of confidentiality (where possible).

A written record of the information collected may also be kept.

ACTION AFTER THE INVESTIGATION

When the interviews have been completed, depending on the strength of evidence and the probability of the complaint, the course of action to be followed must be decided. If, following the investigation, the complaint is found to be valid, prompt action should be taken to stop the bullying/harassment (including, where appropriate, disciplinary action).

This action may involve:

- a) Issuing a verbal warning in cases of minor infringements;
- b) If the bullying persists or if the harassment is of a more serious nature the perpetrator(s) has to be made aware that more severe disciplinary penalties will be applied. A final warning may be warranted or suspension or even removal from the camp where the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the target(s) and the perpetrator(s) are informed.
- c) If the bullying behaviour has extended outside of the camp environment, then parents must be contacted. Should the incidents continue to a level where serious harm has occurred, the appropriate officials will be contacted.

Under no circumstances should the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the target(s)/perpetrator(s) be allowed to contact the perpetrator(s)/target(s) directly. If it is found that the perpetrator's behaviour had been misinterpreted and they were genuinely unaware of the effect of his/her actions, further procedures may not be necessary as the investigation may come to an end. However, the ongoing relationship between both individuals should be monitored over a number of months.

1.6 Dealing with Bullying

There are a number of ways to deal with the bullying. The following are a list of possible methods to defuse the incident.

1.6.1 MEDIATION

Mediation is the process of assisting people to find a common solution to a common problem. The process of mediation requires a voluntary agreement that all parties will abide by the course of action and the agreed solution. It is without prejudice and all notes of individual cases must be destroyed when it ends. Confidentiality is paramount in both the agreement and in the independent and joint meetings with the parties involved. The process also requires the willingness of both parties to cooperate as it will not work if people refuse to compromise.

1.6.2 NO BLAME APPROACH

Common reactions to bullying are to blame and punish the perpetrator. The 'no blame' approach takes a different focus by not concentrating on who did what to whom but instead, focusing on the feelings of the target and what the group involved in the bullying (perpetrator and bystanders) and the target can do to make this situation better.

The 'no blame' approach allows the group involved in the bullying behaviour to think about the action that has taken place and the effect it has had on the target. It promotes the perpetrator and the rest of the group involved in the bullying behaviour with an opportunity to redeem themselves. The steps to follow can be found in **Error! Reference source not found..**

1.6.3 METHOD OF SHARED CONCERN

This approach uses a non-confrontational approach, with the primary focus being to find a solution. The aim is to enable the target and the bully to function peacefully within the same

group, and not to develop a friendship if they do not wish to do so. It comprises of three stages:

- Individual interviews with the perpetrators followed by an interview with the target;
- Follow – up discussions with each of the young people to evaluate progress;
- Group discussion with all young people concerned.

1.6.4 ACTIVELY DISCOURAGING BULLYING

Publicly discouraging bullying behaviour and putting in place appropriate measures to combat instances of bullying among the workers and young people in the organisation.

1.6.5 TIME-OUT

By providing some space and time between the perpetrator and target and allowing both parties involved to think about the incident that has taken place, time apart may aid the process of resolving the bullying e.g. removal of the perpetrator away from the target to another group.

1.6.6 DENIAL OF PRIVILEGES WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDEEM ONE’S SELF

Loss of certain privileges in the youth organisation, e.g. withdrawal of permission to participate in any events or trips organised by the youth group. By using this response, it is hoped that the perpetrator may realise the impact of their actions on the target and the consequences for themselves.

1.6.7 PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVMENT

Parents of both the target and the perpetrator may need to be made aware or called on to intervene in the incident of bullying. A guide to contacting the parents is given below.

Talking to Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a Young Person who is the Target of Bullying:

1. Invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available;
2. Assure parent(s)/guardian(s) that you are pleased that they have taken time to see you;
3. Allow the parent(s)/guardian(s) to express their feelings, uninterrupted;
4. Accept their feelings (they are real for that parent, even if they might seem excessive to you). Use calm supportive language;
5. State categorically that bullying is unacceptable and that you intend to act positively. Assure the parent(s)/guardian(s) that you will keep in touch to update them on progress;
6. Keep a record of any meetings and action taken in response to the issue.

Dealing with Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a Young Person who is a Perpetrator of Bullying:

1. Invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available;
2. Assure parent(s)/guardian(s) that you are pleased that they have taken the time to see you;

3. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) in a clear and objective manner about their child's behaviour;
4. Ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) if they know of any reason for this alleged behaviour e.g. a recent bereavement or home circumstances;
5. Begin with a summary of the group's anti-bullying policy and emphasise the parent(s)/guardian(s) agreement to it;
6. Seek the parent(s)/guardian(s) help in communicating the seriousness of the incident to the perpetrator and enlist their co-operation;
7. Where necessary and based on the seriousness of the bullying behaviour inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the consequences that the group considers appropriate and enlist their co-operation.

1.7 Continued Vigilance

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated each year. Ongoing review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines, legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, members, leaders and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of Knockadoon Camp.