Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour

in Primary and Post-Primary Schools

September 1993

Introduction and Background

Since 1990 the Minister for Education has issued a number of Circular Letters to the Managerial Authorities and Principal Teachers of Primary and Post-Primary Schools on:

(a) Guidelines Towards a Positive Policy for School Behaviour and Discipline,
(b) A Suggested Code of Behaviour and Discipline, and
(c) Procedures for Dealing with Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse.

Those Circulars comprehended the issue of bullying within the general context of School Behaviour, Discipline and Child Abuse. The positive role played by school management, teachers and parents in countering bullying behaviour is acknowledged. However, the incidence and nature of bullying is such that the Minister now considers that additional measures are required in order to deal specifically with the problem.

The aims of the 'Guidelines on Bullying' presented here are twofold, firstly to assist schools in devising school-based measures to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and, secondly, to increase the awareness of bullying behaviour in the school community as a whole e.g., school management, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians as well as those from the local community who interface with the school. It is of particular importance that the issue of bullying behaviour be placed in a general community context to ensure the co-operation of all local agencies in dealing appropriately with it.

The role of the school is to provide the highest possible standard of education for all its pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. As such, it is an issue which must be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school-based measures and strategies through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour.

Bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved; it affects everyone in the classroom, in the school community and, ultimately, in the wider community. It is recognised internationally that bullying behaviour is not confined to pupils and schools alone; it is prevalent in society, in the workplace and in the home.

Bullying behaviour thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty and secrecy in which the victim often feels a sense of hopelessness and futility against the power being exercised by the bully; a high degree of collective vigilance is needed throughout the local community, the school, and other agencies and by parents if bullying behaviour is to be identified and dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.

Types of Bullying

Pupil Behaviour

Physical Aggression:
This behaviour is more common among boys than girls. It includes pushing, shoving punching, kicking, poking and tripping people up. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While boys commonly engage in 'mess fights', they can often be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Damage to Property:
Personal property can be the focus of attention for the bully; this may result in damage to clothing, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Extortion:
Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out) in the event of the victim not promptly "paying up". Victims' lunches, lunch vouchers or lunch money may be taken. Victims may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to the bully. Sometimes, this tactic is used with the sole purpose of incriminating the victim.

Intimidation:
Some bullying behaviour takes the from of intimidation: it is based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting to victims can be the so-called 'look' – a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

Abusive Telephone Calls:
The abusive anonymous telephone call is a form of verbal intimidation or bullying. The anonymous phone call is very prevalent where teachers are the victims of bullying.

Isolation:
This form of bullying behaviour seems to be more prevalent among girls. A certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the victim on blackboards or in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the victim or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard.

Name Calling:
Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(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, e.g. 'big ears', size or clothes worn.

Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes; first, there are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be slow, or weak, academically. These pupils are often referred to as 'dummies', 'dopes' or donkeys'. At the other extreme are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are labelled 'swots', 'brain-boxes', licks', 'teachers' pets', etc.

Slagging:
This behaviour usually refers to the good-natured banter which goes on as part of the normal social interchange between people. However, when this slagging extends to very personal remarks aimed again and again at the one individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or involves references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one's family, particularly if couched in sexual innuendo, then it assumes the form of bullying. It may take the form of suggestive remarks about a pupil's sexual orientation.

Bullying of School Personnel
Bullying of school personnel by means of physical assault, damage to property, verbal abuse, threats to people's families' etc.

<u>**Teacher Behaviour:-**</u>

A teacher may, unwittingly or otherwise, engage in, instigate or reinforce bullying behaviour in a number of ways:-

Using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language when addressing pupils; making negative comments about a pupil's appearance or background;

Humiliating directly or indirectly, a pupil who is particularly academically weak or outstanding, or vulnerable in other ways;

Using any gesture or expression of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any form of degrading physical contact or exercise;

Effects of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of their self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Bullying may occasionally result in suicide. It is, therefore, important to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention is desirable.

Indications of Bullying/Behaviour – Signs and Symptoms

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:-
- anxiety about travelling to and from school – requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing route of travel, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, mitching;
- deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
- unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour; it may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- possessions missing or damaged;
- increased requests for money or stealing money;
- unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
- reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

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

Characteristics in Bullying Behaviour

Schools need to recognise that any pupil can be a victim of, or perpetrator of bullying behaviour.

The Victim
Any pupil through no fault of their own may be bullied.

It is common in the course of normal play for pupils to tease or taunt each other. However, at a certain point, teasing and taunting may become forms of bullying behaviour. As pupils are particularly quick to notice differences in others, pupils who are perceived as different are those more prone to encounter such behaviour. However, the pupils who are most at risk of becoming victims are those who react in a vulnerable and distressed manner. The seriousness and duration of the bullying behaviour is directly related to the pupil's continuing response to the verbal, physical or psychological aggression.

It is of note that some pupils can unwittingly behave in a very provocative manner which attracts bullying behaviour.

The Bully
It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour.

Pupils who bully tend to display aggressive attitudes combined with a low level of self-discipline. They can lack any sense of remorse; often they convince themselves that the victim deserves the treatment meted out.

Pupils who bully can also be attention seeking; often they set out to impress bystanders and enjoy the reaction their behaviour provokes. They tend to lack the ability to empathise. They are unaware or indifferent to the victim's feelings. Others seem to enjoy inflicting pain. It is of note that many bullies suffer from a lack of confidence and have low self-esteem.

It is not uncommon to find that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour are also bullied. They tend to be easily provoked and frequently provoke others.

Where does Bullying Happen?

(a) Pupil Behaviour

Bullying in schools frequently takes place in the playground. School playgrounds with hidden or obscured parts may provide an environment conducive to bullying. Many of the games which pupils play present possibilities for bullying because of their physical nature. It is relatively easy to single out and harass another pupil. The noise level masks much of what is going on. The playground provides the opportunity for older pupils to pick on younger pupils. The playground is also the ideal setting for the 'bully gang'. Continuing provocation may eventually lead to a physical fight, and ironically in some cases the victim may appear to be the aggressor because he/she finally gives vent to his/her frustration.

Toilets, cloakrooms, locker areas, changing rooms and showers may be the scene of verbal, psychological and physical harassment. The behaviour of pupils in those areas needs careful monitoring.

Bullying may also take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks and sniggers but may take the more overt form of physical intimidation. It may also be exacerbated if a classroom atmosphere prevails whereby pupils are allowed to make derogatory comments

about their classmates or other teachers. However, teachers need to be alert to the underlying reasons for such comments in case pupils are trying to disclose something which is disturbing them and thus needs further investigation.

Bullying may also, occur between classes irrespective of whether the class or the teacher moves. In the former situation the bullying goes on in the corridors and corners, while in the latter case the classroom is the arena for various forms of hurtful behaviour.

The area immediately outside the school, the local shops and local neighbourhood are often the scenes of bullying. Bullying also takes place on the journey to and from school, whether the individuals are walking, on bicycles or on school buses.

Teacher Behaviour

The teacher behaviour of a bullying nature as referred to in Section 3(b) is most likely to take place in a classroom situation but not exclusively so. Such behaviour may, for example, also take place in the school playground, gymnasium or the sportsfield.

Prevention of Bullying

The Circular Letters issued by the Minister for Education to the Managerial Authorities and Principal Teachers of primary and post-primary schools referred to in the Introduction comprehended the issue of bullying behaviour in schools within the general context of School Behaviour, Discipline and Child Abuse. The prevention of bullying should be an integral part of a written Code of Behaviour and Discipline in all primary and post-primary schools. These Circular Letters stated, inter alia, that "Codes of Behaviour in schools should be considered in the context of the school being a community of which mutual respect, co-operation and natural justice are integral features".

International research clearly indicates the crucial importance of the existence of a School Policy, which includes specific measures to deal with bullying behaviour within the framework of an overall school Code of Behaviour and Discipline. It is considered that such a code, properly devised and implemented, can be the most influential measure in countering bullying behaviour in schools.

While it is recognised that home factors play a substantial role in the prevention of bullying, the role of the school in preventative work is crucial and should not be underestimated. School-based initiatives will either reinforce positive efforts or help counteract unsuccessful attempts of parents or guardians to control unacceptable behaviour.

Managerial authorities of primary and post-primary schools recognised by the Minister for Education are responsible for the management, organisation and administration of the schools and are, therefore, responsible for ensuring the adequate and reasonable measures approved by them to counter bullying are in operation in their schools. The managerial authority of each school in developing its policy to counter bullying behaviour must formulate the policy in co-operation with the school staff, both teaching and non-teaching under the leadership of the Principal, and in consultation with parents and pupils. In this way, the exercise of agreeing what is meant by bullying and the resultant development of school-based strategies for dealing with it are shared by all concerned. It is essential that all parties concerned have a clear understanding of the policy aims and content if the policy is to form the basis for developing effective school-based strategies for dealing with the problem.

The policy must be promoted by the school Managerial Authorities within the school to all pupils, parents, and staff on a repeated basis with particular attention being given to incoming pupils and their parents.

Elements of Policy:

Policy Aims:

i) To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
ii) To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
iii) To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
iv) To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
v) To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
vi) To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
vii) To work with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour.
viii) To evaluate the effectiveness of school policy on anti-bullying behaviour.

An active school policy on Bulling is most effective when integrated in a school climate, which encourages respect, trust, caring, consideration and support for others. As pupils model their behaviour on the behaviour of adults, Principals and teachers have to be careful to act as good role-models and not misuse their authority. Moreover, they should be firm, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures. Techniques based on positive motivation and recognition have been shown to be more effective in promoting desired behaviour than methods that are based on threat and fear.

As self-esteem is the single most influential factor in determining behaviour and indeed a greater predictor of success than intelligence, teachers should provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth.

Research has shown that pupils can achieve significantly more in classroom situations where they are rewarded for effort and improvement and where expectations of their performance are positive. An integral part of this approach is the development of co-operative learning. A pastoral care system should operate in schools whereby designated teachers would seek to build up a relationship of trust and confidence with their pupils with a view to preventing cases of bullying behaviour.

Note: Factors having their origins in difference of conflicts between parties outside the school may contribute to increased incidents of bullying within the school.

Drawing up a School Policy for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Elements of School Policy

School Ethos

At the centre of a whole school response to bullying is the creation of a positive school climate which focuses on respect for the individual, the key elements of which are outlined in Figure 1. The prevalent misconception among adults and many pupils that bullying is a normal phase of development, that it teaches pupils to toughen up needs to be challenged. It is important that pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying. This may require a change in attitudes so that pupils realise that they have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of fellow pupils.

The school behaviour policy should underwrite the non-bullying school ethos. The school Board of Management must approve and endorse this policy. The Principal has a key role in dealing with bullying behaviour in school because he/she is in a strong position to influence attitudes to, and to set standards in dealing with such behaviour in school. If staff, pupils and

parents/guardians are involved in the development of the policy, they are more likely to actively support it. The policy should stress the need to prevent and not just control bullying. It is not sufficient to discipline the bully and to give support to the victim. Following an incident of bullying the issues relating to the prevention of bullying need to be examined. Aspects may need to be altered which may make bullying less likely in the future. It is desirable that there be a consensus within the school community on how bullying in the school should be treated and the creation of a proper school atmosphere is, therefore, beneficial towards this objective.

Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils and parents/guardians

Each school must raise the awareness of bullying in its school community so that they are more alert to it and its harmful effects. Schools may choose to have a staff day on the subject of bullying complemented by an awareness day for pupils and parents/guardians. This may help the development and adoption of an anti-bullying code. Such a code will give the parents/guardians of a pupil who is a victim the confidence to approach the school and will also send a clear message to the parents/guardians of a pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a major responsibility in changing their child's behaviour. The anti-bullying code should be included as part of the School Plan/Policy Statement and should be available to all by way of a written Code of Behaviour and Discipline for the school.

It is of note that teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of circular initiatives. In English, there is a wide range of literature available which could be used to stimulate discussion. In Social Studies the interdependence of people in communities at local, national and international levels is stressed. In Geography and History references to colonisation and exploitation and the long line of dictators could be used to illustrate the negative aspect of power. The work could be extended into Art, Drama, Religious Education, Physical Education, etc. Co-operation and group enterprise can be promoted through team sports, clubs and societies in schools as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. Programmes such as the Stay Safe Programme in primary schools, Health Promotion in schools and various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour. In addition, schools might organise an awareness day on discipline in general and on countering bullying behaviour in particular.

Published material on bullying from various sources mentions the use of anonymous questionnaires to ascertain pupils' perceptions of bullying behaviour. Schools should be aware of the possible abuses that can arise from use of such questionnaires and should exercise extreme caution should they choose to use them. If used, questionnaires should not be used to identify the pupils involved but only to ascertain the extent and type of bullying, where it happens and the level of reporting, etc.

Comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation

It is important and, indeed, it is the responsibility of the school authority in conjunction with staff and pupils to develop a system under which proper supervisory and monitoring measures are in place to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour. Such measures might include control of school activities on a rota basis. All pupils but, in particular, senior pupils can be seen as a resource to assist in countering bullying. School councils, where applicable, and other school clubs and societies may also be of assistance. It would, of course, be most desirable that non-teaching staff be part of the process in measures to counter bullying behaviour in schools. Also schemes need to be developed to involve all parents/guardians.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an incident of Bullying Behaviour

School authorities should ensure that there is a procedure for the formal noting and reporting an incident of bullying behaviour and that such a procedure should be seen to be an integral part of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline in the school. This system should, also, provide for early detection of signs of indiscipline and/or significant change in mood or behaviour of pupils.

All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils should be referred immediately to the Principal or Vice-Principal.

Parents or guardians of victims and bullies should be informed by the Principal or Vice-Principal earlier rather than later of incidents so that they are given the opportunity of discussion the matter. They are then in a position to help and support their children before a crisis occurs.

Parents or guardians must be informed of the appropriate person to whom they can make their enquiries regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians.

It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
Individual teachers in consultation with the appropriate staff member should record and take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's policy and Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, caretakers, cleaners should be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the appropriate teaching member of staff.

In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should normally in the first instance be raised with the staff member in question and if necessary, with the Principal.

Where cases, relating to either a pupil or a teacher unresolved at school level, the matter should be referred to the School's Board of Management.
If not solved at Board level, refer to local Inspectorate.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying

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

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour seek answers to questions of what, where, when , who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a gang is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then the gang should be met as a group. Each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.

Each member of the gang should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from the other members after interview by the teacher.

Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident.

In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, meet with the parents or guardians of the two parties involved as appropriate. Explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy. Discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.

Arrange follow-up meetings with the two parties involved separately with a view to possibly bringing then together at a later date if the victim is ready and agreeable.

This can have a therapeutic effect.

Programme for work with victims, bullies and their peers

Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those low in self-esteem opportunities should be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. Victims may need counselling and opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem and to develop their friendship and social skills whenever this is needed.

Research indicates that pupils identified as low achievers academically tend to be more frequently involved in bullying behaviour. It is, therefore, important that the learning strategies applied within the school allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

School working with and through the various local agencies in countering all forms of bullying as an anti-social behaviour

As previously stated, there should be a whole community approach to the problem of bullying behaviour. The school as a community is made up of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians. However, incidents of bullying behaviour extend beyond the school. It is known that they can occur on the journey to the from school. It is necessary, therefore, for an anti-bullying school policy to embrace, as appropriate, those members of the wider school community who come directly in daily contact with school pupils. For example, school bus drivers, school traffic wardens and local shopkeepers could be encouraged to play a positive role in assisting schools to counter bullying behaviour by reporting such behaviour to parents and/or schools as appropriate. Through such approaches, a network is formed.

In certain cases, however, it may be necessary to invite the assistance of other local persons and formal agencies such as general medical practitioners, gardaí, health boards with their social workers and community workers.

A positive community attitude and involvement can, therefore, assist considerably in countering bullying behaviour in schools. The promotion of relevant home/school/community links is important for all schools in regard to countering bullying behaviour and should be encouraged as a normal part of the school's effective operation.

Evaluation of effectiveness of school policy on bullying behaviour

As part of the evaluation of the effectiveness of school policy on preventing and dealing with bullying a programme of support for those pupils involved in bullying behaviour should be an integral part of the school's intervention process. It is advisable to monitor the effectiveness of school policy on this issue. Random surveys could be held to ascertain the level and type of bullying behaviour in school.

A school's anti-bullying code should be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. It could be included as an item on the agenda for school staff meetings.

Fig. 1. School policy on countering bullying

CONSIDERATIONS IN OUTLINING A POSITIVE SCHOOL POLICY ON COUNTERING BULLYING

The school acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.The school promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.

The school disapproves of vulgar, offensive, sectanan or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members.

The School has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.

The school has the capacity to change in response to pupil's needs.

The school identifies aspects of curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupil's attitudes and values.

The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring system to provide early intervention when/if necessary and responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner

The school recognises the need to co-operate with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community.

The school recognises the right of parents to share in the task of equipping the pupil with a range of life-skills.

The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying.

The school promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in group and community.

The school acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his/her worth as a human being.

The school promotes qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all its members both in school and out of school.

Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the principal teacher, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school.

Conclusion

It is evident that bullying is a matter of increasing concern in our schools. It poses very real difficulties, therefore, for school behaviour and discipline. Because of this, it is essential that primary and post-primary schools adopt a policy aimed at countering the problem. This school policy should be drawn up after consultation with all the interests involved, i.e., teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians. It is necessary that the school policy should have general acceptance by the partners in the education of the pupils. In that way, it can be effective both from the point-of-view of preventing as well as dealing with bullying behaviour. An understanding of the factors that give rise to bullying is needed as well as sympathetic treatment of all those involved in the bullying behaviour. Furthermore, having regard to the nature of the problem, it must, in certain circumstances, receive the attention of others directly outside of the school community.

In conclusion, the inclusion of a module on bullying behaviour in the pre-service training of teachers would be a positive step in alerting potential teachers to the problems caused by such behaviour in schools. Also, it is considered that the expansion of in-service courses to teachers on aspects of bullying behaviour would be of considerable benefit to the teaching profession in the process of raising awareness and developing techniques to deal with such behaviour.

Primary Complaints Procedure

Procedure for dealing with complaints on bullying at primary level