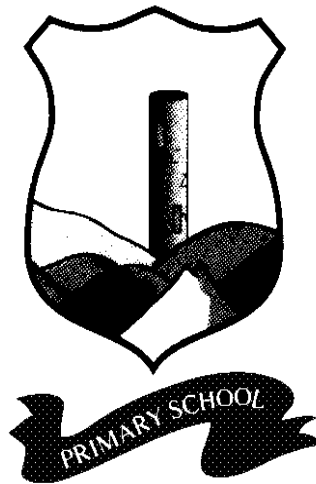


St. Joseph's

Carryduff



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

A Guide for Parents

Rationale

The school mission statement states that we:

aim to provide an inclusive, caring and safe environment in which all children can grow in self-esteem, independence and confidence. Our care for children enables their holistic development. Integral to this is the recognition of the self-worth and value of every child, the fostering of the key values of Catholic education and the promotion of mutual understanding and respect for others. In order to accomplish this, we seek to create a learning community where the children, parents, staff and governors demonstrate a commitment to achieving high standards, mutual care and support for each other.

Each member of the school community has the responsibility to contribute to the creation and protection of such an environment. This is a responsibility which is taken seriously and is reflected in a positive and preventative approach to the issue of bullying. At St Joseph's P S we seek to listen to children and act appropriately on information received. Our school is a 'TELLING' school. Pupils in St Joseph's know that 'telling' someone about inappropriate behaviour is the best way of everyone keeping safe. All incidents of bullying are treated confidentially.

In developing this policy, the school followed the guidance contained in 1) DE Circular 2017/04 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools' and 2) NIABF's 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour'.

Aims:

- To stop bullying
- To encourage pupils to "tell" and the teachers to listen
- To clarify for staff, children and parents that bullying is always unacceptable and that it will not be tolerated.
- To create an environment in which individual children can flourish and fulfil their true potential
- To promote self-discipline, self-respect and respect for others
- To promote an awareness that we are all responsible for creating a climate in which all children feel safe
- To emphasise the importance of and, to strengthen communication between, home and the school

Definition

Bullying is repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

Bullying can take many forms: and these include:

- physical: e.g. hitting, spitting, kicking, jostling, physical intimidation, or damage to personal property or belongings
- verbal: e.g. threats, name calling, jokes, insults
- indirect: e.g. spreading rumours, isolation or excluding someone from social groups

- emotional: e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others
- cyber: inappropriate use of the internet and mobile phones

Bullying behaviour can be classified as follows:

- racist: e.g. racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual: e.g. unwanted physical comment or sexually abusive comments
- homophobic: focusing on the issue of sexual preference
- disability: e.g. taunts or name calling which refer to an individual's disability
- sectarian: e.g. taunts or name calling which refer to an individual's religious and /or political affiliation

(Please note this is not an exhaustive list.)

We understand that if unchecked, bullying behaviour can be profoundly damaging to the child who is being bullied both emotionally and physically. It can seriously disrupt or impair a child's capacity to learn and develop.

Not all aggressive behaviour is bullying. Behaviour which appears to be bullying may be exhibited by some children, especially very young children without the intention or awareness that it causes distress. Some individuals may feel they are being bullied, even when there is no intention to cause them distress. These situations can often be easily resolved, nevertheless, such perceptions of bullying will be taken seriously.

The School's Response to Bullying:

Links with other Policies

The Anti Bullying Policy is a key element of the pastoral provision within the school. This policy is linked to the Pastoral Care Policy, the Behaviour Management Policy, eSafety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy and the Child Protection Policy. This policy is an important element in the school's efforts to ensure that a safe and secure environment is created for all children in which they are able to develop to their full potential.

The School's Response to Bullying:

One of the key elements in our preventative strategy is the creation of a positive ethos that reinforces a child's sense of self-worth. Some of the measures that contribute to the creation of that ethos are listed below:

- celebration of achievements at weekly assemblies
- a variety of methods of rewarding achievement are in place in each classroom
- Star of the Week and Helper of the Week
- Liturgical celebrations
- The Grow in Love programme and accompanying liturgical services
- Understanding what bullying behaviour is through the delivery of the PDMU
- Dealing with issues that arise through Circle Time activities
- Positive marking policy celebrating a child's success in his/her work
- Class rules prohibiting bullying

- Clear pastoral care procedures
- Staff awareness of Child Protection and Safeguarding issues and the procedures that should be followed
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities providing opportunities for children to develop their talents
- Careful supervision at break and lunch times
- Training for all school staff to equip them with the necessary skills to be able to respond to any incidents of bullying behaviour
- Effective liaison with parents
- Safeguarding Week
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Keeping Healthy/Keeping Safe Week
- Respecting Difference programme
- Rights Respecting Schools Award

All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take action when they are aware of it happening. All staff should take any report of bullying seriously, treat the matter confidentially and take the requisite action. Staff will adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns. They will be given training on how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Staff should first listen to the child reassuring them that they have done the right thing in 'telling'. The staff member should make enquiries as necessary to clarify what has been happening.

Teachers will assess the situation and its level of severity. They will then determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively.

Summary of the Procedure for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying:

1 Incident

- a. reported – completion of Bullying Concern Assessment Form
- b. the child who is exhibiting bullying behaviour and the child who is the target of this behaviour will be counselled separately by staff involved
- c. strategies employed to resolve the issue including Circle Time and group resolution work (where agreed as being appropriate by the target of bullying behavior and his/her parents)
- d. restorative measures implemented (if needed) for the child who is exhibiting bullying behaviour
- e. parents/guardians of the child who is exhibiting bullying behavior contacted (letter or phone call); the parents of the child who is being bullied will be informed if they are not already aware of the incident
- f. the incident will be revisited by the teacher or the Designated Teacher or the Principal to ensure that it has been resolved satisfactorily

2 If incidents continue

- a. both set of parents will engage with relevant school staff
- b. strategy developed with the consent of both sets of parents

3 If incidents still continue

- a. parents contacted again
- b. further counselling (additional external help may be sought for the child who is exhibiting bullying behaviour and the child who is the target of bullying behaviour)
- c. completion of a risk assessment and the development of an individual plan to address the behavior. This may include the involvement of outside agencies.

4 If incidents still continue

- a. exclusion procedures (in line with Employing Authority guidance) may begin

If you are unhappy with how your complaint about bullying has been dealt with you should follow the steps set out in the school's 'Complaints Policy'.

Review

This policy was revised following a review of the N.I. Anti-Bullying Forum's 'Effective Response to Bullying Behaviour' guidance. It will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team as part of its evaluation of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. Any issues parents wish to raise in relation to the Anti-Bullying Policy should, in the first instance, be referred to Mrs Brownlee (Designated Teacher for Child Protection and Safeguarding).