

# Ballylifford Primary School



## **Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures**

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### **The Responsibilities of Staff**

Our Staff will:

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem and respect for other;
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour;
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling a teacher about when it happens;
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- Lead Anti Bullying assembly each November; as part of Anti-Bullying week
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to (class teacher and, e.g. our designated teacher for child protection is Mrs Sweeney/ Deputy Designated Teacher - Mrs Muldoon
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

## **The Responsibilities of Pupils**

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

## **The Responsibilities of Parents**

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- Advising their children to report any bullying to Safeguarding team of Mrs Sweeney/ Mrs Muldoon, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and other pupils;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying.

## **BULLYING**

### **Definition**

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it maybe unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by a group of pupils.

### **Forms of Bullying - Physical, Verbal, Emotional**

- Physical violence, such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it;
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil; or his / her family;
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements;
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil;
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity;
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is integral to our Pastoral Dimension at Ballylifford.

Bullying can take many forms and has many definitions - we follow one rule:

**No one is entitled to make someone else either afraid or uncomfortable by word, look or deed for any reason.**

This must not be done either in class, in the playground, on buses or anywhere else. All our classes frequently do lessons and activities that target how we relate to each other. This is done as part of the Religion programme, the PDMU programme as well as other areas of the curriculum. It is also a theme that is spoken about as part of our assemblies, in particular at the Anti-Bullying Week Assembly which is held annually in November.

## Friends and Friendship

We encourage children to be friends with all and not just the best friend of one. Friendships among children develop in many ways, sometimes much more slowly for some than for others. It is distressing to think that a child has no or few friends. It is always great when someone seems to be the most popular or the one that everyone wants to be a friend of. Many things lead to both of these situations. Every child has his / her own personality and is fully entitled to it. They may be outgoing or withdrawn, excel at games or not someone who plays easily. We can only change things that we wish to do with great sensitivity and by taking each child along with us.

School is a key part of children developing friendships and social skills. We encourage our children to be part of groups, sporting and otherwise, this helps them to mix with many others. This can be especially important during summer months. A small number of children play with few others outside school. Play, mixing and taking part not only develops friendships, it also helps increase any child's self-esteem and confidence.

All of us, as adults, must be sensitive to children's feelings encourage your child to talk about their play and their friends. Encourage them to be friendly with all. ***Be sensitive around times like parties***, it is the school's policy that birthday invitations are to be delivered outside of school by parents, to avoid any pupil being isolated. It is very difficult to see a child feeling sad and left out because he / she is the only one in a group who has not been invited to a birthday party.

Sadly, it is not a part of real life that everyone feels or is popular. We can and we should display sensitivity in the things we do and say. All of us, parents, teachers and others, share duties in helping our children grow to be confident and responsible young people, able to take their places in the world.

Children are encouraged to know that if someone is 'bullying' them they should tell an adult close by at once. Please encourage your child to do this. This can be a teacher or a supervisor. The children are encouraged to follow The School Safety Net, which is on display on the main corridor for all to see and use. If a child is not able or willing to speak to someone they should also know that another child could speak on their behalf or use the school 'WORRY BOX'

Do not let a worry or concern mount. Please contact the school and let us know. All complaints are taken seriously. Every effort is made to deal with difficulties within school. When necessary parents will be contacted about incidents that have happened.

The sooner difficulties are dealt with the more likely a lasting solution can be found. We encourage children to talk to each other about what has happened and to apologise and shake hands when necessary.

A record of complaints is kept in a Behaviour/Discipline Book which is kept in the School Office.

The issues that are connected to bullying are part of the pastoral Care programme. Staffs regularly discuss these matters and take part in related In-Service Training. Anti- Bullying policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that staff is following necessary guidance.

It is very important to stress that, while sometimes children do hurt and annoy each other, it is far more so the case that children are friendly, very well behaved and are kind and considerate to each other. Together we can build on this.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ **BoG Chairperson**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ **Principal**

Approved by Governors: May 2019

Next Review: May 2021