

# ANTI BULLYING POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

Our mission statement clearly states that we are a caring school, which values each individual. Every child has the right to enjoy both curriculum and leisure time free from intimidation. Therefore our school community will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting or causing distress to another child, either physically or emotionally. Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. Bullying is not just face-to-face, but can also be experienced by use of electronic media.

Most definitions of bullying consider it to be:

- **Deliberately hurtful and/or repeated, often over a period of time**
- **Difficult for victims to defend themselves against**

Bullying can be:

- Emotional      being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures
  - Physical        pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence/aggression
  - Cyber            Internet chatroom and e.mail misuse, mobile phone call threats/ text messages, social media misuse.
  - Verbal           name-calling, sarcasm, spreading malicious rumours, insults relating to family members, teasing
  - Sexual            unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
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- Racist            racial taunts/name-calling, graffiti, gestures
  - Homophobic    focusing on the issue of sexuality
  - Transphobic    focusing on the issue of gender orientation
  - Disablist        focusing on the issue of disability
  - Other            other prejudices e.g. appearance, family, religion.

## PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin our approach to bullying and are consistent with our mission statement.

Bullying will be taken seriously

- We accept that, as adults in our school, we serve as role models for our pupils, therefore, through our speech and actions, we have a responsibility to promote non-bullying behaviour.
- Everybody has the right to a safe, caring and protective environment in school
- Responses to bullying should aim at control and prevention
- In response to bullying it is not the bully as a person of whom we disapprove, but his/her actions.
- In attempting to deal with bullying behaviour that is repetitive and persistent, it is important that the perpetrator is brought to an understanding of the consequences of his/her actions

- Open and frank discussions are to be encouraged if pupils are to feel confident in reporting all instances of bullying
- We aim to become a 'telling school'
- All members of our community have the responsibility to prevent bullying occurring

### **PROCEDURES parents need to understand that the school will:**

- Take all reports of bullying seriously
- Act as quickly as possible
- Establish all the facts
- Record the incident, assess the seriousness
- Reassure victim, give support and advice
- Invite parents into school to discuss the situation
- Ensure 'bully' is aware of disapproval of actions
- If sanction is used, inform 'bully' of the reason for it being given. Sanction should be in relation to the seriousness of the incident
- Inform all concerned of the action taken. This will reassure students that bullying will not be condoned
- Depending on the nature of the bullying, take appropriate action to modify the behaviour of the 'bully' and log actions taken.
- Use regular follow up checks

### **THE ROLE OF THE PUPILS**

- Be alert to any incidents of bullying and immediately report them to an adult. Ignoring incidents is a form of condoning the actions – that makes you just as bad as the bully!
- Support those who are being bullied
- If you are being bullied, arrange to speak to a member of staff in school, this includes dinnertime staff at lunchtime, and tell your parents immediately.
- If you are being bullied by a gang of pupils, you must be brave enough to inform staff immediately.

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS to show respect towards members of staff who will deal and monitor the situation:**

- Be alert to any changes in your son/daughter's general attitude, mood or pattern of behaviour as this may be a sign that they are being bullied
- Listen to your child and take all reports of bullying seriously
- Inform your son/daughter's class teacher immediately – action will be taken – either through a meeting or in writing.
- Help us to educate all our young people that bullying is wrong and it will not be tolerated
- Work with school to solve the difficulties – even if your child is the bully, by contacting school and making an appointment.

### **THE ROLE OF THE CLASS TEACHER**

- Be alert to any changes in a student's general attitude, mood or pattern of behaviour as this can be a sign that the student is being bullied
- Arrange to talk with the student at the earliest possible time. Such meetings need to be sensitively handled in private
- Support and advise the student whilst the situation is being dealt with
- Report the incident using the appropriate (blue) recording sheet

### **THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR STAFF**

- Co-ordinate the school's response in dealing with the problem and give support to the victim
- Adopt the 'No blame approach' when speaking with students involved in the incident
- Involve parents
- Liaise with other members of staff and listen to the views of the school council.
- Carefully monitor the situation, in order to determine the effectiveness of actions taken to prevent further bullying

### **THE ROLE OF THE LEADERSHIP GROUP**

- To oversee, review and develop the procedures outlined. In serious cases of bullying a member of the Leadership Group will be directly involved in the case.

### **WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES**

#### Raising Awareness

- School expectations clearly communicated through the class charter
- Classroom based activities, e.g. discussions, role play, written work
- Specific work on bullying covered in PSCHE, Circle Time, RE and English
- Through assemblies and displays
- Bullying as a topic as an agenda item for the School Council. The school will seek to act upon recommendations or concerns raised by students

#### Prevention

- Staff will deal with bullying in their professional role – thought should be given to assemblies, styles of teaching which involve co-operation, group work, and ways which help build relationships
- Possibly review seating arrangements and lesson procedures where bullying is perceived to be a problem
- Staff on duty maintaining a high profile, especially in and around shared areas
- New staff briefed about procedures
- Attention to external seating, lunchtime activities and the creation of 'safe' areas
- In certain circumstances 'buddying' arrangements with an older student or a group of students may be set up.

#### Monitoring

- Staff to be informed of specific bullying problems as appropriate.

#### Evaluation

- Through discussions at various meetings on effectiveness of strategies adopted
- Assessment of feedback received from staff, students and parents of victims