

Anti-Bullying Policy



Holy Family Primary School

Chairperson of the Board of Governors - Mr Convery

Principal - Mr Christopher Curran

Designated Teacher - Mrs Laura Gilchrist

Deputy Designated Teacher - Mrs Geraldine Sproule

Designated Governor - Mr Convery

“Our school ethos is founded on love, respect and inclusion for all and we believe that, “In our hands we hold the future”

Reviewed & Amended September 2022

Rationale:

As a Catholic School, we at Holy Family Primary School, seek to provide a caring, secure and happy environment in which all children are treated as unique individuals who are given the opportunity to grow in independence and develop self-confidence.

We believe this will enable our children to be better prepared personally, academically, spiritually and socially for the challenges of young adult life.

General Ethos:

The school aims to encourage a whole-school approach to bullying to ensure that effective learning and teaching takes place for all. We aim to prevent bullying in any form and to have a consistent approach for dealing with incidents of bullying, quickly and effectively. We will ensure that all members of the school community are aware of this policy.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of our Pastoral Care and Child Protection Policies.

Definition

According to the Act, Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

Bullying includes the repeated use of –

Any verbal, written or electronic communication,

Any other act, or

Any combination of those,

By a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

Is it Bullying?

- When someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful and they do it once, that's RUDE
- When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they do it once, that's MEAN
- When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they keep doing it- even when you tell them to stop or show them that you're upset- that's BULLYING

AIMS within our school to prevent bullying

- To create an environment where everyone associated with the school feels a sense of self-worth, involvement and ownership
- To establish a shared understanding of what bullying is
- To strive to prevent bullying in the school through early intervention and agreed action
- To let children contribute to the school's rules of behaviour
- To encourage children to talk about and report incidents of bullying

Strategies we use to discourage bullying

How a bully-free ethos is created and implemented in Holy Family Primary School:-

- A code of behaviour promoting positive class rules and a 'contract of class rules' in each class to give pupils ownership of expectations of behaviour
- To place an emphasis on friendships, avoidance strategies and assertiveness training
- Anti-bullying focused in PDMU lessons and curricular links
- Themed Assemblies/ Anti-bullying awareness week/poster competition to dissuade Bullying
- Include circle time and drama sessions in every class to : Allow children to discuss their feelings in a non-threatening situation, discuss conflict/resolution scenarios and understanding others points of view. Deal with feelings specific to anger, frustration, fear and loneliness.
- Programmes to support Anti-Bullying include Roots of Empathy, Happy and Healthy Minds.
- Pupils aware of responsibilities when they have worries or concerns. Appropriate use of the Worry Box
- School Buddies will act as observers in the class, playground, dining hall, cloakroom, toilets and when on school trips and report all incidents of bullying
- Place an important emphasis on welcoming new pupils and visitors to the school
- Encourage victims and witnesses to bullying to speak out
- Encourage the bully to talk freely about his/her behaviour and endeavour to change
- Develop and encourage pupils to examine their own self-protection strategies

Implementation of the Policy

Strive to create an environment which is safe, secure and caring by repeatedly teaching desirable caring behaviour.

- Use of school ethos to raise self-esteem- All pupils, victims and witnesses should report and talk about their concerns to the class teacher or teacher on duty
- A list of agreed procedures for responding to incidents, logging incidents and contacting parents
- Ancillary staff should report any incident that gives cause for concern to the class teacher/designated child protection teacher or Principal
- Supervision will be such as to give as few opportunities as possible for bullying to take place

- A good reporting ethos and a complaints' procedure. Child reports to class teacher. Class teacher liaises with Child Protection key staff members (Mr Curran, Mrs Gilchrist DT, Mrs G Sproule DDT) if the issue persists.
- Parents should inform the class teacher or Principal of their concerns about their child
- Teachers will keep a brief record of any incident reported and take the appropriate steps as outlines in the Child Protection Policy
- Bullying related incidents will be addressed in the curriculum
- All staff are responsible for the Pastoral care of each child within our school environment

Staff In-Service Training

Each member of staff will receive general training on the Policy and Procedures. The Principal and Vice Principal will avail of courses offered by the SEELB and other multi-disciplinary agencies.

All staff will be given appropriate training:

- Teachers at staff meetings and in-service training courses
- Ancillary staff in meetings with the Principal and whole school staff meetings as appropriate in-service training courses.

The Principal will intervene in a bullying situation

If the problem continues after the class teacher/Designated Child Protection teacher has addressed the problem

If the bullying is initially severe

At the request of the parent

When it comes to the Principal's direct attention

At the request of the teacher

Duty of the Board of Governors to secure measures to prevent bullying

Ensure policies designed to prevent bullying involving a registered pupil at the school are pursued at the school.

Determine the measures taken with a view to prevent bullying occur;

- On the premises of the school during the school day
- while travelling to or from the school during the school term
- while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school
- while the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school

Action to be taken when the school is aware of bullying

- All pupils will be involved in the development of preventing and tackling bullying issues.
 - The bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken to by the class teacher or Principal about the incident and all encouraged to think of the others feelings.
 - Reporting of any further incidents will be stressed to the bully and victim as a 'must'
 - Further bullying will result in appropriate sanctions. (See Positive Behaviour Policy)
 - Where bullying persists or is of a serious nature, parents will be informed and appropriate action taken.
 - Where it is considered that a pupil may require professional help beyond the expertise of the staff, the Principal, with the permission of the parent/guardian, will seek advise within the SEELB and/or outside agencies, ie counselling (ref. Child Protection procedures).
 - Sanctions as set out in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy may be involved.
- Record of incidents will be kept by the class teachers.

Record keeping to insure measures are followed to prevent bullying must;

1. State what, from all of the circumstances, appears to be the motivation of the incident;
2. State the methods of bullying, as defined by definition within the anti-bullying policy
3. Include information about how the incident was addressed

Monitoring and Reviewing the Effectiveness of the Policy

- In-service training
- Internal staff audits/questionnaires
- Liaison with ALL staff
- Monitoring number of bullying issues logged in school's Child Protection file

The policy will be given to each member of the Board of Governors, and available to all staff, parents and volunteers. It will also be available from the Principal's Office for consultation purposes. The Governors will seek the views of all staff, pupils and parents when carrying out a review of the policy and procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner as considered necessary to meet changes in school circumstances and/or SEELB/DENI guidelines and/or new legislation.

REF:

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

DENI Curriculars 2003/13 (Measures to prevent bullying)

Challenging Bullying Behaviour (Primary)

See Appendix 1

Cyber-Bullying

In Holy Family Primary School, we promote the positive use of technology to support engaging and effective learning and all pupils are monitored and guided when using this technology in school. Unfortunately, as mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Cyber-bullying can be a serious issue and can constitute a criminal offence. Tackling cyber-bullying will be an on-going process as technology develops further.

The whole school community has a part to play in ensuring cyber safety:-

- We shall issue key safety advice and leaflets about cyber bullying to Key Stage 2
- We will continue to welcome local PSNI to address parents and pupils in this regard
- Parents should inform school if they know of any cyber-bullying incidents involving a child or children school.

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Programme (P1-P7)

Pupils' learning and work in this curricular area will include opportunities for them to explore self-awareness, relationships, feelings and emotions, safety, similarities and differences, and managing conflict.

Further opportunities for children to learn how to recognise bullying, and strategies to deal with bullying will be provided through:-

- Circle Time
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Assemblies
- Religious Education Topics
- Classroom Management Plans (where rules, rewards and consequences are clearly defined)

Steps Towards the Resolution of Bullying

Following a report of bullying, staff will always try to assess the true nature of the incident before drawing up an action plan. Individual discussions will take place with the perpetrator and the victim, taking into consideration that both may need help. A written report of serious and/or repeated incidents will be recorded

The Victim

- The pupil will be encouraged to tell that bullying has taken place.
- The pupil will be encouraged to say 'No' to unacceptable behaviour.
- The child will be given time to talk in private to the teacher who will reassure and support.
- Parents will be informed of any serious incident if they are not already aware of the situation.
- The child might require several sessions to air their concerns with the teacher who will follow up checking that the child settles happily again.

Strategies for Coping

- All pupils in Holy Family Primary School are encouraged to tell their teacher as soon as possible after bullying has taken place.

- It will be stressed that personal safety must always be the priority.
- Friendships; the pupil will be supported and encouraged to build friendships within his/her peer group.
- We will encourage Assertive Discipline strategies, including saying 'No', staying calm and looking confident, and walking away from the situation.
- Pupils will be familiar with the school's network of support teaching staff for pastoral care- Mr Curran, Mrs Gilchrist and Mrs Sproule.
- Bullying issues will be addressed individually and as a whole class so that attention is not drawn to the pupil in question.
- A range of resources will be available to help children understand and cope with bullying.

The Perpetrator

The pupil will be given time to speak in private to the teacher who will try to determine if there are circumstances which may have contributed to, or caused the behaviour, for example:-

- Modelling behaviour experienced elsewhere.
- A crisis in the child's life.
- The child will be asked how he/she thinks the situation could be resolved.
- Parents will be informed of any repeated or serious incident.
- We may suggest a referral for in-school counselling or seek external support.
- Details of these incidents and follow-up
- Discussions will be recorded.

Sanctions

IN most cases a quiet word and an explanation of how others feel is sufficient to make a difference. In Holy Family Primary School, we believe that learning from mistakes, and being genuinely sorry for them, is part of growing up to be a socially well-adjusted person. We believe much can be achieved by talking with the perpetrator and the victim to achieve a resolution and reconciliation.

In some cases, however, 'talking things through' will not make sufficient difference and in these cases we reserve the right to apply a range of sanctions.

Depending upon the seriousness of the bullying incidents, the following sanctions will apply in this order:-

- A verbal/written apology from the perpetrator to the victim.
- Time-out.
- Withdrawal from playtime or privilege.
- Exclusion from a range of school activities, including After-School Clubs, class visits and other educational visits.
- Exclusion at Lunchtime.
- Suspension from school.

Responsibilities and Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

Teachers:

- Aware of procedures in relation to bullying
- Listen to children and take all reports seriously.
- Attempt to deal with issue and investigate
- Log all incidents
- Liaise with staff and Designated Teacher/feedback

- Follow-up/monitor continuously all incidents

Ancillary Staff:

- Be observant in all supervisory situations.
- Report any incident of concern to the class teacher.
- Follow all school rules and reinforce positive behaviour at all times.

Parents:

- Be familiar and support school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Listen to their children if they express any worries regarding school.
- Discourage any tendency towards bullying behaviour.
- Suggest to their child non-aggressive strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Inform school if they suspect bullying.

Pupils:

- Avoid any behaviour which could be considered as bullying.
- TELL if being bullied (Teacher/ Designated Teacher)
- TELL parents.
- Pupils should not react aggressively.
- Respect each other.