

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy ensures that the school meets its statutory duty under the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. It reflects the school's Core Values and is linked to the Pastoral Care, Child Protection, Positive Behaviour and ICT Policies, with the aim of building an inclusive environment where every child can fulfil their potential.

RATIONALE

The school is completely opposed to bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work and learn in a secure and caring environment. All members of the school community also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

PRINCIPLES

- Pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear
- The needs of the pupils who have been targeted by bullying behaviour are paramount.
- The school will not tolerate bullying behaviour
- Pupils who are the target of bullying behaviour will be listened to
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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 may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of people.

FORMS OF BULLYING

The following are examples of bullying behaviour that are unacceptable in our school.

- 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
- Using the Internet to intimidate or cause distress to another pupil

PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Awareness raising of bullying for staff and pupils
- Questionnaires distributed to staff, parent representatives on the PTA and the School Council
- Involvement of the School Council in promoting an anti-bullying school
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing procedures and the policy

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- Foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- Discuss bullying behaviour with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage caused to both the child who is bullied and to the person who exhibits bullying behaviour, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- 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, Mrs Caldwell, Mrs Buchanan, Mrs Beattie, Mr Hamilton, Mrs Thompson or Mr Torrens, the named teachers for Child Protection
- 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
- Follow the processes and procedures laid out in the NIABF Anti-bullying document

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the 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 bullying 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 their class teacher and explaining the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- Keeping a written record of any suspected instances of bullying
- 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, to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and to eradicate bullying

PREVENTATIVE INTERVENTIONS TO CREATE A BULLY FREE ETHOS

- School rules
- Promotion of the school's core values
- Classroom management
- Pastoral provision
- Curriculum content. Circle Time. PDMU
- Adult supervision at all times
- Participation in anti-bullying week
- Anti-bullying leaflet for the children and posters designed by the School Council
- Assembly themes
- Buddy system at lunchtime
- Talks by PSNI about cyber-bullying

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Action which may be taken

- Records kept
- Contacting parents/carers of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident
- Investigation
- Feedback to those concerned
- Support for both parties
- Sanctions
- Contacting relevant professions such as EWO, Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support Team etc.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Training

- Core Values
- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying policy, reviews and procedures to be followed
- Use of information from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bully Forum

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents in 2018

Policy review may take place in light of certain incidents that occur before the stated review date.

Shared Education

During shared education activities the teacher in charge will follow the procedures appertaining to their own school.

If an incident/concern occurs with a child from the partner school, the teacher in charge will inform the child's class teacher who will then deal with the incident/concern.

If this is not immediately possible the teacher in charge will deal with the incident, according to their individual school's policy and report it as soon as they can to the child's class teacher in the partner school.

Review date

See policy review table for renewal date.

PRINCIPAL _____

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS _____

DATE _____