

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Moneynick Primary School

November 2016



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Moneynick Ethos Statement**

*We believe that each child is unique with individual talents, abilities and needs.*

*We at Moneynick Primary School strive to ensure that each child develops to the very best of their ability in a caring, Catholic environment, producing responsible young people prepared for life in society.*

One of the core values of our Ethos Statement is that the children in Moneynick come to school in a 'caring, Catholic environment'. There is no place for bullying behaviour at Moneynick Primary School.

This policy gives information on Anti-Bullying and is intrinsically linked to the school Discipline and Child Protection policies. It is available to parents upon request.

In Moneynick Primary School the highest standards of behaviour are expected from all of our pupils. Good behaviour is imperative to the function of learning and teaching. Our school has a statutory duty under the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. Only if this is the case will all members of our

school community be able to achieve their maximum potential. Bullying behaviour of any kind can affect this secure environment.

Where bullying exists the victim must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within our school. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour and increase understanding for both the victim and the bully. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent the occurrence of bullying and this policy contains guidelines to support that ethos.

Annually, Moneynick Primary School will take part in Anti-Bullying Week (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum - November). This raises awareness of bullying for the children, staff and families of our community.

“School bullying can have serious consequences for children, leading to academic underachievement, physical and emotional distress, loss of self-esteem, eating disorders and truancy. It must be tackled through both preventing incidents from occurring by awareness raising **and** responding to reported incidents by providing support to all involved.”

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum website

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is any deliberate hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself. It is the conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. There are three main types of bullying: physical, verbal or indirect. It can include: -

- Using cruel nicknames
- Being unfriendly
- Making threats
- Teasing
- Taking or hiding property
- Insults
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Exclusion

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## BULLYING CAN HAPPEN: -

- In classrooms
- In corridors
- In playgrounds
- On buses

- Outside school
- In homes

## AIMS

In Moneynick Primary School we will:

- maintain a school ethos which encourages children to identify, disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- teach the rules of acceptable social behaviour
- help pupils acquire the social skills necessary in forming relationships
- provide opportunities for improving pupil's self-esteem, assertiveness and independence
- help children to express their own feelings and emotions
- help pupils to develop skills of co-operation, listening, sharing
- raise awareness of bullying, as a form of unacceptable behaviour, with staff, pupils and parents
- develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour and for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour
- establish and develop links with outside agencies e.g. Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum website, N.S.P.C.C. and the Behaviour Team (EA North Eastern Region)



In Moneynick Primary School we have a Buddy System in place. This ensures that children have a point of contact in each class that they can talk to if they wish. Buddies are easily identifiable in the playground as they wear fluorescent waistcoats. There is also a Buddy Bus Stop where children can wait for assistance.

All staff, teaching and supervisory, are aware of the Buddy System. Children are openly encouraged to report any bullying behaviour or misdemeanours.

The Buddy prefects form the school council who meet with the principal to discuss any issues arising. There is a Bright Ideas box so as children can make suggestions on improving their surroundings or if they wish to raise any concerns anonymously.

Annually children take part in Anti-Bullying week.

Parents are issued with an Anti-Bullying Flyer every other year.

## PROCEDURES FOR NOTING AND REPORTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

- All reports of bullying no matter how trivial will be investigated and dealt with by the individual class teacher or playground supervisor
- A victim will always be given time, listened to and not rejected
- Serious cases of bullying behaviour will be referred immediately to the principal, Mrs Hughes
- Parents of victims and bullies must be informed immediately if their child is involved in serious or persistent bullying. They will be invited into school where they will have the opportunity to discuss the matter. Sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained
- We believe that good advice and support can change the behaviour of the bullies and their victims

While there is little history of bullying in Moneynick Primary School, we believe that one case is one too many and therefore it is essential to review this policy to ensure that we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue.



## CYBERBULLYING

“Cyberbullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself.”

*Report to the Anti-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths College, University of London*

Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. But their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through 'cyberbullying'. It is crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobiles and the Internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse. School staff, parents and young people have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it wherever it appears.

The advent of cyberbullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours; there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unseen and unidentifiable.

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### CATEGORIES OF CYBERBULLYING

As a school we recognise the harmful effect of cyberbullying and the increased prevalence of it in today's society. We recognise that there are seven categories of cyberbullying:

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or that cause discomfort
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks

- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them
- **Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online
- **Bullying via websites** includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying

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## KEY MESSAGES

The following are the key messages that will be taught to our pupils in an effort to help prevent cyberbullying:

- If you feel you are being bullied by email, text or online, **do** talk to someone you trust
- Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult
- Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender
- Why not log into a chat-room with a different user ID or nickname? That way the bully won't know who you are. You

could change your mobile phone number and only give it out to close friends

- Contact the service provider (mobile phone company, your internet provider) to tell them about the bullying. They may be able to track the bully down
- Use blocking software - you can block instant messages from certain people or use mail filters to block emails from specific email addresses
- **Don't** reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails- this could make matters worse. It also lets the bullying people know that they have found a 'live' phone number or email address. They may get bored quite quickly if you ignore them
- **Don't** give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you, build up a picture about you
- **Don't** forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone. You could be breaking the law just by forwarding them. If they are about you, keep them as evidence. If they are about someone else, delete them and don't reply to the sender
- **Don't** ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account
- **Remember** that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law

## PUPILS AWARENESS REGARDING BULLYING WILL BE HEIGHTENED BY

- Discussion in Circle Time and Assembly regarding the necessity for understanding and forgiveness
- Through class discussions in PDMU etc
- As a separate issue for discussion, when appropriate
- School rules and discipline procedures

## RULES ABOUT BULLYING

- Bullying will not be tolerated in our school
- Everyone has the right to a happy school life
- Bullying must be reported at once
- Report acts of bullying if you see them
- Help other children who are being bullied
- Do not suffer in silence
- Do not retaliate
- Report any incident without exaggeration

## STAFF AWARENESS

All members of staff have a duty to be alert to and respond to incidents of bullying. They must:

- Emphasise that bullying is not permitted in school
- Watch for signs of early distress
- Always be willing to listen and when necessary, take action. Any reported incident of bullying should be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated
- Interview bully and victim separately. Decide on an appropriate sanction for the bully in accordance with the Discipline Policy
- Inform the principal and inform all members of staff and lunch-time supervisors, so that they can be vigilant at all times. Constant supervision is essential at break and lunch times
- Meet with the parents of bully and victim if necessary and inform them of action taken or intended to be taken. Keep a brief account of each significant incident
- Provide support for victims by emphasising that it is not their fault and helping them to assert themselves. Helping the victim by ensuring that another child or small group of children befriends and supports the victim during the school day

## **PARENTAL AWARENESS**

Teachers must encourage parents to take a pro-active role.

Parents should:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child and be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying
- Take bullying seriously and find out the facts
- Inform the child's teacher if bullying takes place in school and outside incidents, which may have an adverse effect on the child in class. Keep a written record if bullying persists
- Help the child to assert him/herself. Reassure child that it is not his/her fault
- Make sure their child understands how to use technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- Inform the school, mobile network or the Internet Service Provider if their child reports a problem with cyberbullying
- Explore and apply relevant parental control software or settings on Internet supply at home

## **SUGGESTED SANCTIONS**

In Moneynick Primary School sanctions may include:

- immediate verbal checking of misbehaviour
- a minor penalty, relative to the offence
- referral to another teacher
- time out - removal to another classroom
- loss of freedom – break or lunch play time
- loss of privileges – non-attendance at organised outings or other activities
- referral to the principal
- parental consultation
- being placed on report
- the drawing up of a behaviour plan
- suspension or expulsion for continued, or severe, or gross indiscipline

## CONTACTS AND HELPLINES

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Tel: 0800 11 11

**NI Childline**

Tel: 028 9032 7773

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

Tel: 0808 800 2222

**NSPCC**

**help@nspcc.org.uk**

[www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk](http://www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk)

[www.niabf.org.uk](http://www.niabf.org.uk)