

**St. Tierney's Primary School**

**Roslea**



**Anti Bullying Policy**

Reviewed January 2020

## **Rationale**

At St. Tierney's PS we are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles by which we work and live. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

DE Circular 2003/13 and Article 19, The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 outline the requirement for all schools to have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils and determine policy details in consultation with staff and pupils. Human rights issues as highlighted in 'Human Rights Awareness for School Managers' (Children's Law Centre booklet), and the most recent publication from Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour' have shaped this updated policy.

## **Aims of this policy**

This policy aims to:-

- Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- Promote a 'whole school' approach, where signs of bullying are identified and swift and effective action is taken
- Show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance
- Promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure all school community, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is, and what they should do if bullying arises
- Inform children and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Assist in the provision of a positive and supportive atmosphere - for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour
- To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.

## **Definition of Bullying**

**Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum** defines bullying as the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

To avoid labelling individuals we will strive to report situations as 'alleged bullying incidents' and perpetrators as 'displaying bullying behaviour'.

The term 'bullying behaviour' refers to a range of harmful behaviour, physical or psychological and usually has the following features

- It is repetitive and persistent.
- It is intentionally harmful.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone helpless to prevent it or stop it.
- It causes distress.

## **Prevention**

Bullying is a complex and emotive issue and can never be eliminated and no school, however hard staff try, can guarantee that a child in its care will not be subjected to it. Active promotion of the school aims, Code of Conduct, Golden Rules and promotion of a positive and secure ethos can reduce incidents and build resilience in pupils and staff. This school actively promotes well-being and anti-bullying strategies throughout its curricular and extra-curricular provision. This school will take reasonable steps to minimise incidents of bullying in a proactive manner.

## **Forms of Bullying**

### **PHYSICAL BULLYING**

- hitting; pushing; kicking; tripping; spitting; hair pulling; throwing things;
- interfering with another's property by stealing/hiding/damaging/intruding upon it; extortion/threatening demands for money or other items
- writing or drawing offensive notes/graffiti about another

### **VERBAL BULLYING**

- name calling; insulting or offensive remarks; accusing; taunting; put downs
- ridiculing another's appearance/way of speaking/disability/personal mannerisms/ race/colour/religion; humiliating another publicly
- spreading malicious or nasty rumours; threatening; intimidation; mocking; sarcasm

### **EMOTIONAL BULLYING**

- excluding/ shunning others from group activity/ social setting or play;
- belittling another's abilities or achievements; mobbing the individual
- menacing looks, stares; rude signs or gestures; negative body language

### **CYBER BULLYING**

- misuse of e-mails, images, text, blogs, tweets, forums and chat rooms to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- misuse of mobile phones by text messaging/ calls or images – again to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information; impersonation
- publishing threatening comments pictures or videos online

## **Links with other school policies**

The policy forms part of the overall pastoral care provision in school and therefore links and works with the:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- ICT Policy and Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- PDMU Policy

## **Participation and consultation process**

We in St. Tierney's Primary School have met the requirement to consult with all our stakeholders in the following ways:

- All stake holders will be consulted during the completion of this policy – parents (through self-evaluation process and distribution of school information booklet and reply slips), staff (discussions in staff meetings), pupils (circle time, class council and school council) and governors (at meetings).
- The policy can be accessed via the school's website. In addition, parents and pupils will receive information leaflets stating the school's definition of bullying and outlining the school's procedures for dealing with it. Information and training for parents will be included in parents' evenings at the school:
- Awareness-raising programmes e.g. School Information Booklet issued, Posters in Reception area of school, Newsletters, Involvement in NIABF Anti-bullying Week annual events, School Council Issues, Website, NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe Programme and PSNI Bee.
- Whole school sessions will negotiate and agree a Code of Conduct for Positive behaviours within the school and class teachers will involve pupils in same process at class level.
- Awareness-raising programmes through Curriculum and involvement in NI Anti-bullying Week.
- Consultation with teaching and non-teaching staff
- Awareness-raising sessions for all staff in understanding what is bullying, developing the school's definition and levels of intervention in responding to bullying behaviour.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Responsibilities of Staff**

Our staff will:

- foster in our pupils self-confidence, 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 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 an adult about bullying when it happens;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously, record, and act to support and protect them;
- talk with the child accused of bullying to determine nature of bullying;
- record suspected cases of bullying
- report continued cases of bullying to the Vice Principal or Principal
- 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 the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- follow school rules, code of conduct and classroom contract agreements;
- 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;
- help create a climate where bullying is not accepted;
- value and respect others;
- help others achieve;
- keep others safe.

### **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.

## **What Pupils Need to Recognise About Bullying.**

Pupils need to understand:

- that they have a right not be bullied at school;
- that they are not to blame if they are bullied;
- that they need to speak out and should trust the teachers to take their concerns seriously and to help them;
- that they are not alone.

## **The Responsibilities of Parents**

We ask 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 explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- co-operating with the school, if their child/children are accused of bullying, try 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 create a safe, happy and anti-bullying environment within our school.

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES TO CREATE AN ANTI-BULLYING ETHOS

### Proactive Strategies:-

- Promote School Ethos at all times
- Recognise and Reward Good Behaviour
- School Assemblies – addressing Bullying and providing Anti-Bullying Strategies Including reinforcement of anti-bullying message: **Tell, Tell, Tell**
- Vigilant supervision - playground / general school environment
- Consultation with School Council
- Use of Grow in Love programme
- Use of PDMU lessons / Circle Time
- Good Parental Communication
- Awareness of Anti-Bullying Week (in November each year)
- Use of Outside Agencies – NSPCC, Childline, PSNI, Behaviour Support Team

### Intervention Strategies

The aim of any intervention applied is to **RESPOND** to the alleged incidents, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all involved. Low level bullying must never be ignored; early intervention can diminish problems and reduce potential risk.

### The following approach will be adopted when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- Attempts will be made to resolve situation quickly
- Reports will be taken seriously
- Steps taken to ensure child feels safe and secure
- Significant incidents will involve further investigation and recording
- A clear account (reported to class teacher/ Vice Principal / Principal) Significant or repeated incidents will require parents to be informed
- Disciplinary measures / sanctions, which are proportionate, will be explained and used

Assessing the level of risk an individual pupil faces will help determine the level of severity as will taking account of the nature, frequency and duration of the bullying behaviour and the perceptions of the child being bullied. A pupil may not wish to disclose incidents so staff should be vigilant in observing symptoms such as,

- Deterioration of work
- Spurious (fake) illness and /or erratic attendance
- Isolation/desire to remain with adults
- Problems reported from home (e.g. bed wetting, nightmares)

- Childhood depression/anxiety
- Unexplained damage or loss of property
- Unwillingness to talk about school/friendships
- Unexplained bruises or marks

In selecting an intervention, we will take account of:

- The level of severity, using this as a guide to select appropriate intervention(s).
- The legal status of the act.
- The age and ability of those involved.
- Whether an individual pupil or a group is involved.
- The level of staff agreement, confidence and competence in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.
- The agreement and support of the parents/carers in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.
- Whether the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately.
- The willingness to engage in a group intervention such as the Support Group Method.
- Whether it is realistic to expect that the bullied pupil can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation. Whether or not the pupil experiencing bullying has acted provocatively.

Our procedure focuses on assessing the bullying concern to determine the suitable level of intervention required in aiming to resolve the concern. Proformas for record keeping are included in Appendix 1. Sanctions will be applied on a staged basis in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy.

### **Procedures for dealing with incidents of Bullying behaviour including contact with Parents and External Agencies**

In St. Tierney's PS each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned.

#### **The following steps will be strictly adhered to:**

##### **1. Reporting of an incident**

When a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the following people: the teacher of any child involved, the Principal or Vice-principal, Designated Teacher for Child Protection and Safeguarding, or Deputy Designated Teacher.

##### **2. Investigation of an incident**

This will be conducted by the Principal/Designated Teacher for Child Protection (or the Vice-principal/Deputy Designated Teacher) in cooperation with any class teachers concerned. All pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses

using the school's incident report form. Parents of all pupils involved will be informed of the school's action up to this point and will be kept informed of all subsequent action.

### **3. Agreeing a plan for resolution**

Working with the pupils concerned, the Designated teacher will devise a plan for resolution of the conflict. This plan will include targets for acceptable behaviour and will set out support measures which will be provided for the pupils' concerned.

Any disciplinary action required will use the system of sanctions which is set out in the school's Behaviour / Discipline policy.

### **4. Reviewing the situation**

The situation will be monitored and formally reviewed within one month of the initial report. This review will be carried out by the Designated teacher for Child Protection, in cooperation with the other teachers, pupils and parents concerned.

### **5. Involvement of other agencies in the provision of support**

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including the Education Welfare Officer, Behavioural Support team and the Educational Psychology Service. In most cases the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources. However, if it becomes clear at step 3 or 4 that outside help is needed, the school will not hesitate to avail of it.

### **Sanctions in Discipline**

Sanctions used to combat bullying behaviour will be in line with our Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Even with good classroom practice it will be necessary to have sanctions. These are necessary for three main reasons:

- To make the particular child aware of the school/teacher disapproval of unacceptable behavior.
- To ensure that effective learning and teaching is not disrupted for other children
- To protect the authority of the teachers should that be threatened.

#### *Sanctions should*

- Be constructive
- Be applied with sensitivity, flexibility and without discrimination
- Where possible be related to the misdemeanor
- Be specific to the culprit and not applied to whole group



Sanctions will include:

- Removal of golden time
- Partial loss of Break time
- Repeated \ extra work
- Loss of Privileges
- Being sent to a senior member of staff
- Parents notified
- Pupil placed on weekly report/behaviour plan
- Monitor progress and reviewed with parents

Sanctions will be applied on a “staged basis”. However, in some instances, pending the nature of the unacceptable behaviour it may be necessary to move to a more advanced stage. This will be determined by Mrs Murray in liaison with the class teacher.

### **Stage 1: Unacceptable behaviour – Not following school rules**

At stage one the teacher or supervising adult will have responsibility for applying **sanctions** as and when required. These may include;

- Immediate verbal checking of misbehaviour
- A minor penalty relevant to the offense, e.g. an apology and/or temporary loss of break or removal to another class for a short period.
- If continuous misbehaviours persist the teacher will refer the pupil to Mrs Murray who will place the child on to stage 2 of the behavioural stage.

The class teacher should always be informed by a classroom assistant or supervisor if they have had to check unacceptable behaviour of a pupil during their supervision. Mrs Murray may also be involved at Stage 1.

### **Stage 2: Repeated or Unacceptable Behaviour – referral to Mrs Murray**

Stage 2 referral will be for repeated misbehaviour as in stage 1 and/or use of physical force, disrespect shown to staff members/property or other more serious misbehaviours

- Loss of a break /golden time
- Temporary removal of a pupil from his/her peers into another class
- Temporary or permanent loss of privileges – Eg. Golden time, Committee membership
- Removal from a class outing/sports events etc.
- Informal parental consultation (may include phone call/meeting with class teacher/principal)
- Short term placement on an Individual Positive Behaviour Plan

### **Stage 3: Repetition of behaviours as at stage 2**

- Formal consultation to include child, parent and staff
- Long term placement on an Individual Positive Behaviour Plan
- Permanent loss of privileges including committee membership, participation at school events/activities and /or attendance at school trips etc.

### **Stage 4: After formal consultation consideration will be given to**

- Referral to EA Behaviour Support Team for advice /guidance
- Suspension/Expulsion. Advice will be sought from appropriate CCMS/EA/DENI

Acceptance of admission to the school implies the parent's acceptance of the School's Anti Bullying Policy.

**Monitoring and Evaluating**

This policy is continually monitored by the school principal. This policy will be reviewed every two years and/or up dated when advice is given by DENI. All stake holders will be involved in the review through a consultation process.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1:

St. Tierney's PS

Alleged Bullying Incident Form

	Name	Gender	Class / Teacher
Complainant (s)		M / F	
Alleged child who has been bullied (if different from above)		M / F	
Alleged child who has displayed bullying behaviour		M / F	

Date of incident:
Location of incident:
<p>Type of incident:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Physical bullying (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking, any other physical contact)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal bullying (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indirect bullying (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)</p>
<p>Theme (if applicable):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cyber (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Racist (related to skin colour, culture and religion)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sectarian (related to religious belief and/or political opinion)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Homophobic (related to perceived or actual sexual orientation)</p>
Details of incident:

Name of action/support for child who has been bullied: (please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined ongoing support/monitoring from staff
- Parents involvement (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Name of action / support for child who has been displaying bullying behaviour :  
(please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined ongoing support/monitoring from staff
- Parents involvement (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- Fixed exclusion
- Permanent Exclusion
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Outcome (level of satisfaction)

Good = 1	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 3	Unresolved = 4
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Child who has been bullied	
Parents of above child	
Child who has displayed bullying behaviour	
Parents of above child	

This record is now:

- Filed
- Passed to Class Teacher
- Passed to Principal/Designated Teacher
- Passed to Vice-Principal/Deputy Designated Teacher
- Passed to external agency, please state\_\_\_\_\_

Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

Date:

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **This Policy was informed by;**

The Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection – a guide for schools” (DENI Circular 2017/04)

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) Effective responses to Bullying Behaviour Document (2014)

Addressing Bullying in Schools (NI) Act 2016

Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992

The Area Child Protection Committees’ Regional Policy and Procedures (2005)

Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001) Paragraph 125 states the following:

*“As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with accepted school policy and procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour.”*