

**St Columba's Primary school**

**Anti-Bullying Policy**



**Reviewed by teaching staff May 2018**

**To be reviewed annually**

# **BULLYING POLICY**

## **Rationale:**

St Columba's PS is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it in any way. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. 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.

## **The Mission Statement**

St Columba's recognises that gospel values and the teaching of the church is central to the life of the school. Together with parents, who are the first educators, and parish we aim to create an environment where children can develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and morally. Together we hope to lead our children towards understanding, tolerance, justice and sensitivity to the need of others.

## **Aims of the Policy**

The aims and objectives of St Columba's P.S. in formulating this policy are as follows:

- To reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which pupils and adults are subjected to bullying or racism in any form.
- To establish appropriate means of providing support should such an incident occur.
- To mirror the Catholic ethos of the school.
- To show that we value the cultural diversity of our community and aim to prevent any form of persecution by meeting the needs of our diverse society.

The ultimate aim should be to provide a learning environment free of any threat of fear, thus being conducive to the attainment of individual aspirations.

## **In order to achieve this: WE AIM:**

- To make prayer, worship and liturgy real educational experiences, and in co-operation with parents and parish to contribute to the development of faith of each individual in the school community.
- To develop the school as a caring, sharing Catholic community, extending links into the local and wide community and to include an awareness and nurture a sense of justice and tolerance of other faiths in terms of equal opportunities for all.
- Through a well balanced and well planned curriculum the school will provide the children with a sound basis on which they can build, in order to develop opportunities responsibilities, and experiences for an adult life.
- To ensure the best opportunities for children's learning and progress by ensuring that planning and assessment of work is well structured and reviewed.

## **Definition**

The NI Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) 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."*

It is a form of unacceptable behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, involves an imbalance of power over another, and is intentionally hurtful. Hurtful remarks can be made innocently but can still be hurtful to the recipient and so should be taken seriously.

### **Forms of Bullying**

There are many different ways that bullying behaviour can be displayed. This could include:

- 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
- 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
- **CYBER- BULLYING:** Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person is fast becoming a growing problem in society, and one that we must take vigilance off in school. Much of this will invariably occur beyond the school day but it may eventually impact upon relationships in school as a consequence.

### **Setting Standards**

The values and beliefs underlying this Policy are to be considered in the context of the following statements:-

- All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it.
- The school recognises the detrimental effect on pupils and adults who may be subjected to bullying.
- Victims of bullying will be treated in a supportive manner, rather than being regarded as a burden to staff and peer groups.
- The school is committed to combating all bullying behaviour.

### **Persons covered by this Policy**

All pupils and adults whether permanently or temporarily on school premises will be expected to adhere to this policy.

### **Action to prevent bullying**

- To foster an understanding of the diversity of cultures which exist in our community.
- Circle time is one method amongst many that can be used to develop positive relationships between children and adults so that all feel valued as members of our school community.
- By the adherence to the school citizenship programme and the schools behaviour policy.
- By making all staff and pupils aware of the social and moral responsibility they have to each other.
- By making it clear to all that harassment in any form is unacceptable.

### **Action to combat bullying**

Among the activities which the school will establish and maintain in an effort to combat bullying behaviour are:

- Sanctions against children who show signs of bullying behaviour as outlined in the Behaviour Policy.
- Allocation of specific roles and responsibilities, both at staff and pupil level, in order that incidents may be detected, behaviour monitored, and appropriate support delivered. For example Year 7 pupils could be encouraged to take on a “Buddying” role towards younger pupils
- Communication of the policy and periodic update in order that staff and pupils are continuously aware of the policy and also of their individual responsibilities.
- Staff training to ensure that all responsibilities in respect of this policy can be delivered in a competent, caring and efficient manner.

### **Links with Other Policies**

As Bullying can cross many social interactions within school, there are intrinsic links to other policies within the pastoral domain, namely:

Pastoral Care; Child Protection; Positive Behaviour / Discipline Policy; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

### **Responsibilities of all Stakeholders**

#### **The Responsibilities of Staff**

Our staff will:

1. Foster in our pupils’ self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
2. Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
3. 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 a teacher about bullying when it happens
4. Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
5. Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
6. Report suspected cases of bullying to Mrs Callan the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or Mrs England Deputy Designate Teacher for Child Protection
7. Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken
8. Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures

#### **The Responsibilities of Pupils**

We expect our pupils to:

1. Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
2. Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
3. 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 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.***

### **The Responsibilities of Parents**

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

1. Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their child/ren, which might be evidence of bullying
2. Advising their child/ren to report any bullying to Mrs Callan (Principal), or to the class teacher, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils
3. Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
4. Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
5. Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
6. Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
7. Co-operating with the school, if their 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 combat and minimise the effects of bullying from our school.**

### **Preventative Measures.**

1. Promote School Ethos at all times
2. School rewards scheme
3. Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities
4. Recognise and Reward Good Behaviour
5. School Assemblies – addressing Bullying and providing Anti-Bullying Strategies
6. Vigilant supervision - playground / general school environment
7. Consultation with School Council
8. Use of Alive O Programme
9. Participation in the annual Anti-Bullying Week, with associated relevant learning activities
10. Use of PDMU lessons / Circle Time
11. Questionnaires- pupils, parents and teachers.
12. Good Parental Communication – Consultation /Questionnaire
13. Awareness of Anti-Bullying Week (in November each year)
14. Use of Outside Agencies – NSPCC, Childline, PSNI, Behaviour Support Team
15. Staff Training / Effective Communication
16. Use of Creative Learning to enhance social and emotional skills

## **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents: (See Appendix 1 & 2)

- 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 the situation quickly
- **Reports will always be taken seriously**
- Steps shall be taken to ensure the child feels safe and secure
- Significant incidents will involve further investigation and recording
- A clear account shall be reported to Principal/ Vice Principal/ Class Teacher/ Designated or Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection
- Significant or repeated incidents will require parents to be informed
- Disciplinary measures / sanctions, which are proportionate, will be explained and used
- Records will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying
- If necessary relevant professionals will be contacted eg. EWO, Behaviour Management Team, Education Psychology, etc.

### **Resources and training**

The Principal, in conjunction with Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and training of staff is arranged and updated as necessary. Material resources will be budgeted for accordingly.

### **Monitoring and Review of the Policy**

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A report on implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on Pastoral Care provision. This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed with the whole staff every 2years. Consultation and valuable input will be sought from the whole school community, parents/carers and pupils.

**AT ALL TIMES CHILDREN'S CONCERNS ARE OUR CONCERNS**

## Appendix 1

### **PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

#### STEP 1

##### **REPORTING OF AN INCIDENT (significant/repeated/intentional incidents or serious one-off incident)**

When such a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to following people

- The teacher of any child involved
- The Principal
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection

#### STEP 2

##### **INVESTIGATION OF AN INCIDENT**

- ✓ This will normally be carried out by the Principal/Designated Teacher for Child Protection, in co-operation with the class teacher / adults involved
- ✓ Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's incident report form ( see appendix 2)
- ✓ Parents of all pupils involved will be informed of the school's action up to this point and kept informed of subsequent action

#### STEP 3

##### **AGREEING A PLAN FOR RESOLUTION**

- ✓ Principal/Designated Teacher will devise a plan for resolution of conflict
- ✓ Targets for acceptable behaviour will be set out including support measures for ALL pupils concerned
- ✓ Any disciplinary action required will use the system of sanctions as set out in the school's Discipline Policy/ Positive Behaviour Policy

#### STEP 4

##### **REVIEWING THE SITUATION**

- ✓ Situation will be monitored and formally reviewed within one month of initial report
- ✓ This may involve Principal, Designated Teacher, class teacher, staff community, pupils and/or parents concerned.

#### STEP 5

##### **INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER AGENCIES**

- ✓ Where necessary the school will draw on support of Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, Educational Psychology Service ...

**Alleged Bullying Incident**

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other children involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Details of alleged incident; (include where, when, who was involved and any witnesses that saw the incident)

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