

HOLY TRINITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

October 2022

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Introduction and Rationale

Bullying

The governors and staff of Holy Trinity Primary School are committed to creating and maintaining a safe, secure and happy environment for all our children and staff. Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse which can cause emotional and physical distress. Bullying behaviour of any kind by any member of our school community to any other member of our school community is completely unacceptable. We strive to create a positive and nurturing ethos where everyone is treated with mutual respect and positive relationships are promoted. From time to time pupils may be victims of bullying in spite of our caring ethos, our nurturing environment and effective discipline policy. All staff (teaching and non teaching) collectively work together to create an anti bullying culture and to ensure incidents of alleged bullying are investigated and dealt with swiftly and effectively.

This policy has been developed consistent with the Statutory Requirements (Addressing Bullying in Schools Act Northern Ireland 2016) which requires Boards of Governors and Principals to consult with all stakeholders regarding positive behaviour and bullying prevention measures which must be in place.

The policy takes account of guidance provided in:

- Health and safety at work NI Order 1978
- The Children Northern Ireland Order 1995
- The Education Northern Ireland Order 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries Northern Ireland Order 2003
- The Education 2006 Order NI 1997
- Education School Development Plans Regulations 2010.
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour 2001
- Measures to prevent bullying in DE Circular 2003/13
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools- A Guide for Schools DENI 2017
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures 2017
- Statutory Guidance for Schools and Board of \governors 2019

Links to other Policies

- Special Needs Policy.
- Pastoral Care Policy.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Nurture Unit Policy.
- Safe Handling Policy.
- Acceptable Use of the Internet.
- Equality and Diversity.

AIMS OF POLICY

1. To protect the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour- their needs are paramount.
2. Change the behaviour of the child who is displaying bullying behaviour
3. To promote a whole school approach to raising awareness of bullying..
4. To ensure all children are free from fear and worry.
5. To create an atmosphere where children feel confident about speaking out if they feel they are being bullied by others.
6. To develop and implement a programme and strategies to prevent bullying taking place.
7. Clarify procedures to be followed by all staff who work in the school, parents and pupils, in relation to a bullying incident.
8. Set down clear procedures to be followed in investigating alleged bullying incidents.
9. Ensure children and parents know who they can talk to if they feel unsafe in school.
10. To develop a multi disciplinary approach involving education and
 - Health professionals
 - Social Services
 - Voluntary and community groups
 - Policing

The Anti Bullying policy will be reviewed every two years and training for all staff will take place on a two year cycle also.

Training will be provided to all teachers, assistants, lunch time supervisors and office staff as part of Child Protection Training.

PRINCIPLES

Principles and values which our school upholds:

- We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- Children have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- Parents have a right to know their child is safe.
- Children should be celebrated and respected in their diversity.
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti bullying ethos across the school.
- When bullying concerns are identified, the school will work in a positive way to achieve the necessary change.

- Children who are targeted will be reassured and supported. Children who are displaying bullying behaviours will be supported and encouraged to accept responsibility to change their behaviour.

Role of the Board of Governors

1. “To promote equality, good relations and diversity and comply with education and employment legislation and anti discrimination, human rights and equality legislation”.
2. Ensure records of incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a pupil at the school are maintained.
3. Safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school
4. Consult with stakeholders on all aspects of the school Anti bullying policy.

Role of the Principal

1. To create an ethos where there is self discipline, independence, courtesy, good manners and respect for everyone.
2. When deciding on measures which will be used to encourage good behaviour in the school, must specifically include measures to prevent bullying.
3. To consult with parents, staff and pupils regarding behaviour policies within the school.
4. To establish procedures to promote good behaviour within the school.
5. To develop measures and resources to prevent bullying within the school.
6. Monitor and evaluate the policy and interventions.
7. To ensure all incidents of alleged bullying are recorded, investigated and monitored.

Role of Staff

Our staff will:

1. Foster in our pupils self esteem, a sense of their rights and their responsibilities to others.
2. Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
3. Be aware of policy and procedures in dealing with bullying incidents.
4. Respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner.
5. Discuss bullying behaviour with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is targeted and the pupil who engages in bullying behaviour.
6. Emphasise the importance of telling a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or when it is observed.
7. Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indicators of bullying
8. Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and respond appropriately to management. All stakeholders to keep appropriate record. From 2021, all the staff have been trained in the use of CPOMS and this allows an accurate

and cross referenced record of any incidents with pupils' names being linked on the system. It also provides added security.

9. Communicate information to parents.
10. Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
11. Each month use the Esafety lessons

Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

1. refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
2. Intervene to support any child who is being bullied, unless it unsafe for them to do so.
3. Report any concerns or instances of bullying witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff to dispel any climate of secrecy and help prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

Responsibilities of Parents

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

1. Fully understanding the definition of bullying and be familiar with the policy.
2. Signing and adhering to the School Behaviour Contract
3. Ensuring their children follow the school rules and follow the guidelines specified in the School Contract
4. Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
5. Advise their children or the parent themselves should report any bullying behaviour to the Principal, Vice Principal, Class teacher or any responsible adult within the school.
6. Ensuring that their child respects and co-operates with teachers, ancillary staff and other children
7. Advise their children not to retaliate but to inform any incident to a member of staff or to their parent.
8. Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
9. Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
10. Cooperating with the school, if their child is involved in a bullying concern, to resolve the difficulty in a way which stops the behaviour recurring and meets the needs of all children.

Language used within this Policy

- Refer to the behaviour not the pupil.
- Instead of 'bully' refer to 'pupil displaying bullying behaviour'
- Instead of 'victim' refer to 'pupil experiencing bullying behaviour'

Definition of Harm

In the context of the bullying criteria we define harm as:

- **Emotional or psychological harm** distress or anxiety intentionally caused by scaring, humiliating or affecting a pupil's self-esteem
- **Physical harm** as intentionally hurting a pupil causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Definition of Bullying

"Bullying includes, but is not limited to the repeated use of

- a) Any verbal, written or electronic communication
- b) Physical abuse
- c) omission
- d) Any other act including emotional abuse, racist or homophobic comments
- e) Any combination of the above

by a pupil or 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.

It is the wilful, conscious, repeated, continuous behaviour which makes another feel uncomfortable, frightened or threatened.

Pupils may be targeted on the basis of race, religion, culture, gender, or perceived sexual orientation.

The school may view serious "one off incidents" as bullying behaviour e.g a one off cyber bullying incident, which is repeatedly viewed and shared by others may be deemed as bullying behaviour". We will consider a one-off incident as bullying if we feel the situation causes significant emotional/ and physical harm and where there is evidence of premeditation.

While our definition for bullying refers to the persistent acts against an individual, there are also one-off incidents which will fall within the scope of this policy.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

- severity and significance of the incident
- evidence of pre-meditation

- impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
- impact of the incidents on wider school community
- previous relationships between those involved
- any previous incidents involving the individuals

Any incidents which do not meet the legal criteria of bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Bullying Behaviours

The following are unacceptable behaviours but only constitute bullying behaviours when they are recurrent, persistent, targeted with intent and where a power imbalance between pupils is evident. This list is not exhaustive but covers many of the actions considered bullying.

Physical Bullying

- Kicking
- Head butting
- Hitting
- Spitting
- Pushing
- Punching
- Biting
- Scratching
- Tripping
- Elbowing
- Stealing
- Nipping
- Poking
- Grabbing
- Choking
- Twisting arm or hand

Verbal Bullying

- Name calling
- Calling a member of the family names
- Laughing at them
- Making inappropriate remarks
- Making homophobic comments
- Commenting on a person's appearance
- Teasing
- Laughing at someone
- Being sarcastic
- Being cheeky

- Swearing at them
- Telling lies
- Spreading false rumours
- Trying to make pupils dislike each other

Written/ Non Verbal Bullying

- Giving dirty looks
- Glaring
- Looking at a person for a long length of time
- Physical abuse as mentioned above
- Making signs behind their back
- Writing something nasty
- Cyber bullying
- Leaving them out of games
- Excluding
- Sticking tongue out/making faces behind their back Telling lies
- Spreading false rumours
- Trying to make pupils dislike each other

Emotional Bullying

- Talking behind back
- Leaving a child out
- Threatening
- Ignoring
- Spreading rumours
- Writing nasty notes
- Spoiling their games/work
- Not inviting them to an event
- Turning back on them
- Giving dirty/nasty looks Glaring
- Telling lies on them

Indirect bullying

- Isolation.
- Refusal to work with
- Refusal to talk to
- Refusal to help others
- Interfering with personal property.
- Misusing mobile phones.
- Using internet programmes, mobile phones etc. to humiliate, threaten or isolate another.

Electronic/Cyber Bullying

- Misusing technology to bully and harass- social media, text messages, posting inappropriate photos or comments

Omission

- Pupil is deliberately left out
- Wilful failure to include a pupil
- Leaving a pupil out of a group of friends, an activity, games or group work in class.

Racist Bullying

- Bullying related to race, colour or Religion

Homophobic Bullying

- Name calling related to gender or sexual orientation

Signs of Bullying

Not all children will tell that they are being bullied for fear of reprisal, guilt, embarrassment or fear of not being believed. It is essential that all staff know the signs to be aware of

- being frightened to walk to and from school
- asking to be taken to school
- changing their usual route to school
- developing a pattern of headaches, stomach aches etc
- having possessions go missing
- damaged clothing
- unexplained bruising or cuts
- asking for/beginning to steal money
- crying for an unknown reason or crying themselves to sleep
- start wetting the bed
- having nightmares
- threatening/attempting suicide
- poor attention and concentration in class.
- change in behaviours
- change in mood- becoming quiet, withdrawn, anxious
- deterioration in behaviour as child tries to impress.
- work in class deteriorates.
- refusal to come to school
- increased absences from school
- starting to stammer
- starting to hit other children
- refusal to say what is wrong

Preventative Measures

Through our preventative curriculum we will actively promote positive emotional health and well being.

- The Principal/ Vice Principal, the co-ordinator responsible for developing anti bullying resources (Mrs Mc Areavey) along with all staff will proactively work towards reducing the number of bullying incidents in the school. They will be vigilant to signs of distress and bullying behaviour at all times.
- A Code of Behaviour- Positive classroom/school rules agreed by all pupils.
- All incidents of Bullying recorded on CPOMS.
- Key staff to monitor and co-ordinate repetitive incidents- Principal/Vice Principal/Head of Key Stage/Year leader.
- Monthly ESafety Codes, powerpoints and Esafetysaurus.
- Proactive use of Playground Buddies and Peer Mediators
- Staff training on procedures for dealing with and monitoring incidents of reported bullying.
- Communicating the policy and procedures to everyone in the school community including non teaching staff, parents and pupils.
- Anti bullying month- November assemblies.
- Use of Blast Off To Bullies resources.
- Clear guidelines for staff to follow when investigating an alleged bullying incident

The theme of bullying will be specifically addressed across a number of subject areas;

- In Religious Education through the RE scheme and assemblies dealing with respect for others and Catholic / Christian values
- In Literacy through the use of stories, plays and poems
- In Drama through the use of role play
- In Art through illustrations
- In PDMU including the use of the Living Learning Together Programme and the Emotional Literacy Programme. Also through the use of Social stories. Circle Time will be used in all classes to enhance and encourage co-operation among children and to provide a safe and secure atmosphere in which children can raise issues of concern
- In incorporating the Nurturing Principles throughout the school.
- In rewarding children who have been kind/shared/generous/ a good friend/caring etc- their name will be called out at assembly for inclusion on the Friendship Tree.
- Pupil of the Week Merit system – the citations will include acts of friendship and kindness.
- Staff will include group work in their lessons developing and encouraging co-operation, sharing, turn taking and friendships.
- ICT- Powerpoint, lessons etc using the Monthly code to deter cyber bullying and promote Internet Safety. Use of Esafetysaurus.

- At all times staff will actively promote relationships characterised by respect, tolerance, friendship and co-operation among and between children and staff.

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF ALLEGED BULLYING

Staff should be vigilant in looking for signs of distress both within the classroom and while on supervision duty in the playground.

When staff suspect an incident of bullying or if an incident has been reported to them by a pupil, parent or other member of staff they should act immediately to protect the child who has experienced bullying.

1. **Listen-** listen sensitively the child who has experienced bullying, child who displayed the bullying behaviour, any witnesses. Make notes. (5 'w' questions)
2. **Believe-** believe that a bullying incident has occurred until you can prove otherwise
3. **Reassure** –Reassure the child who has experienced bullying that it is not their fault and you will investigate the matter fully. Reassure the person that has informed you that they were correct to inform the school, thank them and reassure them it will be investigated.
4. **Investigate-** in the first instance the teacher will discuss what happened with the children involved. If this was a one off incident the teacher may seek a reconciliation between both pupils where the child who engaged in the bullying behaviour will apologise and the teacher will monitor the situation. Classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors may be informed to be extra vigilant at lunchtime.
5. **Action-** If a serious bullying incident occurs or if bullying occurs more than once the teacher should inform management who will investigate the incident and speak to the children involved. Parents of both parties will be informed. Sanctions and support (see below) will be put in place. Attempt to resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour
6. **Record** – make a record of the incident and action taken. Staff should record all incidents on CPOMS. This will be monitored by management.
7. **Monitor the situation.**

Post investigation

- Arrange care arrangements for the child experienced the bullying behaviour- buddy system.
- Break up possible “bully allies” where there is more than one person involved e.g do not allow them to sit, play or dine together
- Through Circle Time and Role Play discuss
 - The effect on the child experiencing bullying behaviour
 - The contribution bystanders can make to defuse a situation
 - use role play to highlight the effects of bullying
 - the notion of “telling” must be taught as a positive strategy as distinct from mere telling tales

We understand that bullying is not fixed by a sanction but pupils on both sides require support.

Measures to support both children may include:

- A quiet word and explanation of how the other child may be feeling.
 - Talking to the child who has been bullied and the child who has displayed bullying behaviour and seek a resolution and reconciliation
 - Re-arranging seating.
 - Staggered start/finishing times..
 - A verbal/written apology
 - Time out
 - Lunch time detention
 - Withdrawal from playtime/privilege.
 - Exclusion from a trip/activity.
 - Sent to another classroom/yard
 - Sitting on their own
 - Standing out at lunchtime
 - Informing parents
 - Suspension
6. Support the child who has displayed bullying behaviour- anger management, discussing why they selected that child, emotional regulation strategies, counselling, anger management support
7. Monitor and record all incidents of bullying- Regularly talk to the child who experienced bullying behaviour and child displaying bullying behaviour, ensuring it is not reoccurring.

If a Bullying situation continues to re-occur, we will

- Re-assess level of interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level.
- Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention.
- Amend strategies/interventions.
- Keep under review the Stage of the Code of Practice each pupil is on.
- Check Safeguarding requirements are being met.
- External/multi-agency input is required (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- Engage with Board of Governors.

Record Keeping

The following must be recorded

Schools are required to record:

- all incidents or alleged incidents of bullying behaviour
- where the incident(s) occurred
- the motivating factors/underlying themes
- the methods (i.e. verbal, written or electronic or any combination of these)
- information about how the incident was addressed

A record must state what, from all of the circumstances appears to be the motivation of the incident.

Motivation may relate to:

- differences of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital status
- differences between persons with a disability and persons without
- differences between persons with dependents and persons without
- differences between persons based on gender reassignment

Recording information on how the incident was addressed

Maintain an Evidence File on CPOMS to demonstrate action taken and support provided, this could include the following:

- Pupil and staff self-assessment and review evidence e.g. of strategies
- Communication records (e.g. tel. records/e-mails/letters etc.)
- Risk Assessment/Risk Reduction Action Plan
- Minutes from meetings
- Personal Learning Plan
- Photos of group activities
- Support from EA agencies , e.g. consultation with Educational Psychologist, Educational Welfare Service, Behaviour Support Service, Youth Service etc.
- Support from external agencies, e.g. CAMHS, Counselling, Family Support Hub etc.

All recording should:

- Be sensitive.
- Be appropriate for the 'audiences' it may be shared with, i.e. parents/carers, other staff, Social Services, etc.
- Be factual and balanced, avoiding subjective judgements.
- Be dated and tagged by the recording member of staff.
- Allow for tracking of incidents.
- Allow for evaluation of positive behaviour strategies.

BULLYING WHICH OCCURS OUTSIDE SCHOOL

The revised legislation, gives schools the explicit power to take action to prevent bullying which is taking place outside school, but which is likely to have an impact on the pupil's education in school. While this gives schools the option to take action, it does not place a duty on schools to do so.

We will investigate and deal with incidents which occur when a child is:

1. Travelling to and from school, during term time.
2. Wearing their school uniform.
3. On a school trip.
4. Representing the school at an event.

Where incidents occur within the community, we may choose to intervene to prevent the issue extending into school.

CYBER BULLYING

In Holy Trinity we are proactive in trying to prevent cyber bullying.

This includes

1. Monthly Internet safety codes including "Be Kind Online" month.
2. Resources, power points, Youtube videos, links to Think You Know website.
3. Esafetysaurus.
4. Internet Safety week in February.
5. Information regarding internet safety on parents site on the school website.
6. Awards- Cyber Resilience and Internet Safety Awards, Digital School of Distinction award, NAACE award, Third Millennium award.
7. External agencies providing guidance- BEAM Creative,
8. Mobile phones are not permitted in school. Occasionally, parents will request that a child has a phone for emergency use. On this occasion the phone will be given to the teacher for safe storage.

Monitoring and Review

- The policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years.
- Every three years, parents, staff and pupils will complete a questionnaire containing questions related to bullying.
- The results of the questionnaires will be used within the School Development Plan to update policies, procedures and guidance.
- Annually the pupils in the Pupil Council will review the policy.

