

St. Patrick's Primary School

Drumgreenagh



Anti-Bullying

Policy

Policy Adopted: March 2022

Next Review Date: Autumn 2025

Signed: _____

(Chair of Governors)

Introduction

In St Patrick's Primary School, we actively promote positive relationships between all members of the school community.

We acknowledge that:

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence (physical and mental). They must be kept from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them."

(Article 19 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1992)

Thus;

- We believe that all pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear
- We recognise that the needs of the child who has been bullied are paramount
- We make clear that we will not tolerate bullying behaviour
- We will take seriously all reported incidents of bullying behaviour and we will thoroughly investigate such incidents

Our policy on bullying aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur and is supported by other school policies on child protection, pastoral care, special needs, positive behaviour and e-safety.

Bullying behaviour can be defined as:

"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 a group of pupils. It can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over time, where it may be difficult for the victim to defend him or herself."

(DENI, 1999, p41)

In St Patrick's Primary School, after consultation, we believe bullying behaviour to be persistent action carried out by one or more individuals with the deliberate intention of hurting another individual either physically, verbally or emotionally. This type of behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in St Patrick's.

Our school's view on bullying

All forms of bullying are harmful to the child. The following behaviour may be considered as constituting bullying:

- **Physical attacks:**
Fighting, tripping up, hitting, kicking, punching, destroying clothing
- **Verbal abuse:**
Name calling, making fun of, threatening statements, telling lies about someone, mimicking

- **Looks:**
Threatening looks implying, “I’ll get you.....”
- **Exclusion:**
Engineering a situation so that a pupil(s) is/are isolated
- **Extortion:**
Demanding money, goods etc under pain of threat
- **Cyber:**
Misuse of technology, including computers, social networking sites, mobile phones

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list.

In St Patrick’s Primary School, we aim:

- To create a caring environment where pupils feel safe, secure and listened to and where each pupil can develop his/her full potential.
- To raise pupil’s awareness of bullying and how to deal with it.
- To develop strategies to deal with all aspects of bullying.
- To deal with bullying incidents quickly and effectively.

The cooperation of teachers, parents, pupils and non-teaching staff in the implementation of this policy is vital to ensure our school is a happy place for everyone, where bullying will not be tolerated.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

The aim of this policy is to ensure all those connected with the school are aware of our opposition to bullying and we make clear each person’s responsibilities with regard to trying to eradicate bullying in our school.

The staff of the school are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the child who has been bullied and to discipline you may wish to think about this word the child who displayed bullying behaviour.

A pupil that is being bullied in school may exhibit behavioural, physical and/or emotional changes. Therefore, we believe it is important to look out for changes in the behavioural patterns of our pupils in order to keep them safe and secure. We aim to raise pupils’ awareness of bullying and how to deal with it, to develop strategies to deal with all aspects of bullying and to deal with bullying incidents quickly and effectively.

Our school is a community made up of different people each of whom have a particular entitlement. These entitlements have associated with them particular responsibilities. We aim to make all those connected with St Patrick’s aware of our opposition to bullying.

Pupils:

Pupils are entitled to be educated in an environment that is safe and caring, which provides challenges and is non-threatening and which shows an awareness of individual needs.

In turn, pupils have a responsibility to treat all other pupils, teachers and other staff with respect, to behave properly at all times during the day, to follow the rules of the school, to refuse to engage in any bullying behaviour and to report any incidence of bullying behaviour.

Parents/ Guardians

Parents/ Guardians are entitled to expect that their child will be educated in an atmosphere which is safe and caring, that the school will take all reasonable steps to prevent bullying occurring and that any bullying incident which is reported will be investigated according to the school's guidelines.

In turn, parents/ guardians have a responsibility to actively encourage their child to become a positive member of the school community by ensuring that their child respects and co-operates with teachers, ancillary staff and other pupils, that their child upholds the rules of the school, that they support all aspects of the school ethos and that they contact the school to report concerns over bullying behaviour.

Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching):

All staff have the right to work in a positive environment where there is respect and fairness at all times, where there is co-operation from pupils and parents, where equal treatment for all staff and pupils pertains and where pupils are truthful and honest.

They have the right to advice and support from the Department of Education (statutory guidance), from CCMS and from the Education Authority.

In turn, *staff have a responsibility* to ensure that the children under their care feel secure, are treated impartially, that the best qualities of pupils are fostered and that the rules of the school are implemented consistently, fairly and reasonably.

Principal:

The Principal -Mrs N. Magee - has the right to work in a positive environment where there is respect and fairness at all times and where there is co-operation from pupils, parents and staff (teaching and non-teaching).

The Principal has the right to advice, guidance and support from the Board of Governors, the Department of Education (statutory guidance), from CCMS and from the Education Authority.

In turn, Mrs Magee Principal the responsibility to implement the school's anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the

school policy and how to deal with incidents of bullying. The principal reports to the Board of Governors about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy at each governors' meeting.

The Principal sets the climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly, welcoming and listening school, bullying is far less likely to be a part of their behaviour.

Governors:

The Board of Governors supports the principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the Board of Governors does not condone bullying of any form and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Measures taken by our school to prevent bullying behaviour

In order to prevent/minimise the opportunities for bullying behaviour we seek to develop a caring, supportive ethos within our school. We create a purposeful working environment to promote effective learning and teaching.

We develop the confidence and self-esteem of our pupils through our curricular, extra-curricular and after school activities and our participation in the Shared Education programme. We have a number of curricular initiatives in place which promote pupils' consideration and respect for others, enhance their self-respect, confidence and self-esteem and which help them to develop their protection skills.

Some examples of what we do:

- Choir, football (Gaelic and Soccer), creative crafts, Paired Reading,
- Participation in festivals, competitions and community events
- Children engage in "Circle Time"
- We have awards for Star of the Month and Attendance
- Our assemblies frequently discuss and focus on 'inclusion'
- Our RE programme promotes respect for others
- Information posters
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities each November
- School Council
- PDMU curriculum
- RSE programme
- External speakers eg NSPCC, REIM, PSNI
- School rules / Class rules / Playground rules

Other strategies include:

- Stars/stickers/stamps
- Praise
- Positive comments
- Acknowledgement of good behaviour

- Telling other adults
- Sent to Principal
- Acknowledgement on website/School App
- Photographs

An important element in dealing with bullying is persuading pupils that it is alright to tell and help them overcome their reluctance to tell for fear of retribution.

It is the responsibility of all staff in school to listen to the children and to respond to what they say.

At the beginning of each term teachers will remind the children what is meant by bullying and what the school will do if bullying occurs.

Dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour

It is our intention that both pupils and parents are aware of how they can draw their concerns about bullying to the attention of the staff in confidence. We also make it clear that any such concerns will be investigated and, if substantiated, taken seriously and acted upon. A senior member of staff or teacher will report back to parents, depending on the incident, on the steps taken by the school in response to an expressed concern about bullying.

- Meet with pupils – talk to the child who has been bullied and the children who displayed bullying behaviour – by teacher / initially separately and if appropriate, together – two adults will be present
- Every incident will be responded to and recorded (a written record completed)
- The situation will be discussed calmly and pupils will be encouraged to find a solution to the problem which is acceptable to both parties
- Support will be provided for the child who has been bullied and the child who displayed bullying behaviour

The response to and the sanctions imposed will depend on the seriousness of the case but behaviour will be monitored until staff are satisfied that the bullying has stopped.

In the case of a more serious incident it may be necessary to involve other members of staff so that they can be vigilant on e.g. playground/dining room duty.

Both sets of parents will be informed of the school's action. Regular contact with parents will be encouraged.

A record is kept of all bullying incidents and the Board of Governors kept informed.

Teachers (all staff) are responsible at all times for the behaviour within sight or sound of them.

Guidelines for Children

- Report the matter immediately to a teacher, parent or supervisor.
- Explain the facts carefully and truthfully.

- Tell the “bully” you are going to tell.
- Walk away if you can. Do not argue.
- Keep with others- do not become isolated.
- Keep away from “danger” areas.
- Ask your parents to contact the school re this matter.
- If you see bullying report this immediately to a teacher.

Guidelines for Parents

- Take an active interest in your child’s social life.
- If you think your child is being bullied, contact the school immediately to discuss a plan of action to help your child.
- Make a written note of what has been said (Who, What, Where, When, How often?) Reassure your child he/she is doing the correct thing.
- In consultation with the school devise strategies to help your child.
- Discourage aggressive behaviour.
- Keep in regular contact with the school.
- If you think your child may be bullying contact the school to discuss a plan of action to help your child.

Sanctions:

- Immediate verbal checking of behaviour
- An apology
- Reassuring the child who has been bullied (school will endeavour to ensure there will be no repetition)
- Rules of school sent home with the pupil to the parents to be signed
- Loss of free time e.g. breaktime/lunchtime (subject to the proviso that the child is given sufficient time for eating his/her meal and for toileting)
- Monitoring of pupil
- Referral to a senior teacher/Principal
- Parents will be contacted for a meeting
- Code of Conduct Contract may be agreed
- Withdrawal of privileges e.g. attendance at after school activities
- Parents will be asked to collect their child from the school door over an agreed period of time
- Suspension and expulsion may be implemented following CCMS guidelines

At all times sanctions will be applied with sensitivity, flexibility and discretion and will be related to the misdemeanour.

In drawing up our policy we have taken account of relevant circulars and guidance produced by DENI and other appropriate documentation.

Other resources include:

- Circle Time Resources
- Positive Behaviour Posters

Contact will be made with the appropriate agencies for assistance, when necessary:

- CCMS
- Educational Welfare Officer
- EA
- Behaviour Support Team
- Educational Psychologist
- Pupil Personal Development Service

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Principal, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually.

A copy of the policy is available on the school website or on request, in writing, from the Principal.