



***ANTI- BULLYING
POLICY***

INTRODUCTION

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch and less aggressive pupils who can be drawn in by peer pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life nor a necessary part of growing up and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating / threatening behaviours, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group whether teacher or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at Killyman Primary School

Why is an anti - bullying Policy necessary?

Our school believes that pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. Killyman Primary School has a clear policy on the promotion of good behaviour, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is wrong and will not be tolerated. It should also be noted that much bullying often occurs as a result of one pupil annoying another. This is also wrong and will not be tolerated. It is essential that each pupil is totally responsible for his or her own behaviour both in the classroom and the playground. It is important that pupils and parents/ guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

In Killyman Primary School we aim to provide a stimulating, secure and caring environment in which each child may strive to achieve his/her potential through a variety of quality experiences, supported by dedicated staff, Board of Governors and parents.

These values underpin and shape all our school policies.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- We believe that all children have the right to learn in an environment, which is free from intimidation and fear.
- Accordingly, we will work to create an environment within which positive relationships will be fostered and violent behaviour of any sort will be unacceptable.
- Within such an environment, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Should bullying occur, the needs of victims of bullying will be paramount, and the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the situation is resolved and will not re-occur.
- The school will seek to involve and inform parents in all areas of its anti-bullying work.

LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care Policy.

It links with the child protection policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies.

It links with the discipline policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the sanctions which will be used as part of the disciplinary process.

AGREED DEFINITION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Following consultation the following definition of bullying behaviour has been agreed:

Bullying is a form of aggressive, hurtful behaviour, which is persistent and unprovoked. It involves an abuse of power. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal and emotional. Examples of bullying behaviour include:-

Behaviour:

Physical: Physical bullying takes place when a child is punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc.

Verbal: Here the voice is used as a weapon - name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours. It may be directed towards, for example, gender, physical/ social disability or personality.

Gesture: Gesture bullying can take the form of hand signals, clenched fists or other threatening movements.

Extortion: Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupils hand over property to them.

Exclusion: A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/ activities, with those they believe to be their friends. Children are sometimes excluded because they are always complaining about other children. It is essential that children interact socially and play with each other before they come to school.

Gesture: Gesture bullying can take the form of hand signals, clenched fists or other threatening movements.

Emotional: here the bully uses aggressive body language or behaviours, in some cases personal property is involved - excluding from play, threatening, pulling faces, damaged belongings.

Cyber: using mobile phones/text messages, chat rooms, etc

PREVENTIVE STRATEGIES

We believe that the implementation of preventive measures will help to reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour.

We will take the following steps:

Ethos and Pastoral Care:

We will seek to be a "listening school", in which pupils are encouraged to express their feelings, fears and concerns. We will promote and reward positive behaviour through measures such as awards for caring and friendliness. Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect. Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people; this includes a review of what friendship really is.

Curriculum:

We will provide personal safety teaching from P1 - P7. This will help children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness and communication skills. Resources include Circle Time and elements of the RE Programme. Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other.

Playtime Supervision:

Organise the school in order to minimise opportunities of bullying. We will provide training for teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors in the promotion of positive play and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying.

AGREED CODE FOR CONDUCT FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Children:

Children have an entitlement to be educated in an environment, which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.

Children have a responsibility to treat all other children, teachers and other staff with respect. They have a responsibility to refrain from engaging in bullying behaviour and to report it if they are aware of it occurring.

Parents:

Parents have an entitlement to expect that their child will be educated in an environment, which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.

Teachers and Other Staff:

Teachers and other adults in the school community have an entitlement to work in an environment, which is characterised by respect and caring for all.

Teachers and other adults in the school community have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of such an environment and to work for the well being of all pupils.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

- Don't keep quiet about being bullied.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong!
- Be proud of who you are.
- Try not to show that you are upset; a bully likes to see you are frightened.
- Stay with a group of friends/ people - there is safety in numbers.
- Be firm; shout No, walk confidently away; go straight to a teacher to member of staff.
- Do not fight back - it may make things worse.
- Always try to tell an adult you trust - **you will get support.**

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in way which is hoped will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

If you know someone is being bullied....

- **TAKE ACTION!** - watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully and makes the victim more unhappy and on their own.
- **TELL AN ADULT IMMEDIATELY** if you tell you cannot get involved; teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A PARENT?

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children: they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.

- Take an active role in your child's education; enquire how their day has gone, who they spent their time with, how lunch time was spent.
- **If you think that your child is being bullied:**
- Discuss the situation with you son/ daughter

Be calm
Show sensitivity
Show concern

- If your son/ daughter is reluctant to tell you try to make him/ her understand that the situation will never improve until action is taken / you tell someone.
- Always inform someone at school and / or encourage your son/ daughter to tell a member of staff. If your son/ daughter will not give any details to you, please still inform us of your concern.

Every report will be dealt with individually, sensitively and in confidence.

The school will take appropriate action in line with the school policy.

- Where bullying is suspected parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school and keep in daily weekly contact regarding their child's welfare.

WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO?

- Treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.
- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities of bullying e.g. playground assistants on duty.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. R.E Assembly, story time.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving the parents of the victim (class teacher)
- Maintain a firm but fair discipline structure with rules that are few, simple and easy to understand.

- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people; this includes a review of what friendship really is.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

WHAT ACTION IS TAKEN BY THE SCHOOL WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED?

If bullying is suspected we use the 'no blame approach' and talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

A record will be made in teachers personal report book.

Help, support and counselling will be given as appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the victims in the following ways:

- By providing a daily opportunity for the child to report any further incidents. This will be a discreet meeting between teacher or principal and pupil.
- By providing a 'special friend' for the victim - someone who will accompany the child and tell staff of any difficulties.
- By offering them an opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher or assistant on duty if they choose, and the principal. Circle time will be used within the school.
- By informing the victim's parents/ guardians if considered a serious incident.
- By offering continued support, reassuring the child on the need to report any further incidents.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

Whilst bullies will be disciplined we also try to help them in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, in order to find out the truth.
- Informing the bullies' parents/ guardians- only if it is a serious case and it is persistent.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS

1. Bullies will be warned officially to stop offending by the class teacher, supervisory assistant or principal and notified that a record has been made of the incident in their report book.
2. The parents/ guardians of bullies will be informed if it is a persistent or serious matter.
3. Governors will be made aware of any bullying cases.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR, INCLUDING CONTACT WITH PARENTS AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the children concerned.

The following steps will be followed:

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 - Mrs Mitchell

The designated teacher for child protection - Mrs Mitchell

2. Investigation of an Incident:

The designated teacher for child protection, in co-operation with any class teachers concerned will normally carry this out.

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 subsequent action.

3. Agreeing a Plan for Resolution:

Working with the children 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 children concerned. Any disciplinary action required would use the system of sanctions, which is set out in the school's Discipline Policy.

4. Reviewing the Situation:

The situation will be monitored and formally reviewed within one month of the initial report. The designated teacher, in co-operation with the other teachers, children and parents concerned, will do this.

5. Involvement of Other Agencies in Provision of Support

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team and the Educational Psychology Service. In most instances, 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.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Principal and designated teacher for child protection will monitor implementation of this policy. A report on implementation will be provided to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on pastoral care provision.

The policy and procedures are kept under review and updated in consultation with staff, parents and children in line with best practice as disseminated by DENI and SELB

