

ST MALACHY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

BALLYMOYER



Anti-Bullying Policy

Ratified by Board of Governors

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Chair of Governors: _____

Principal: _____

Introduction

In St Malachy's Primary School, we aim to reflect the teachings of Christ by fostering an ethos of respect throughout our school community, so that our children feel secure and well cared for at all times. We believe it is important to foster an ethos of mutual respect amongst all stakeholders, so that our school continues to be an environment in which every person feels welcomed and cared for. We recognise that bullying is a concern for all of us, including pupils, teaching, non-teaching staff, parents/carers and governors. **The aims of this policy are to:**

- Prevent or reduce bullying in any form.
- Adopt a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying.
- Create an emotionally safe environment where positive relationships can develop.
- Ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success

Definitions of bullying

In St Malachy's P.S, bullying is defined as ... "Behaviour that **intentionally** and **persistently** causes distress to others."

Other relevant definitions:

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as:

"The repeated use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others" **NIABF (2005)**

The Department of Education defines bullying as:

"Deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim (target) to defend him/herself."

'Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour' (2001)

PRINCIPLES

- Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- When bullying concerns are identified, our school will work in a restorative and solution focused way to achieve the necessary change.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and encouraged to accept responsibility and to change their behaviour.
- Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention including effective, appropriate strategies for intervention.
- Staff will focus on the principles of **respond, resolve and restore** when dealing with alleged bullying incidents
- Parents will be made aware of our school's policies and procedures to prevent bullying and to respond to concerns through parent information meetings/letters, consultation processes/surveys, and where necessary, their active participation in partnership with the school to resolve concerns involving their child(ren).

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take many different forms and is *behaviour that **intentionally** and **persistently** causes distress to others.*

- **Gesture bullying:** Whereby a child is threatened by gestures from another/others.
- **Verbal bullying:** Calling a child names and mocking other members of his/her family.
- **Physical bullying:** Gaining power over another by punching, kicking etc.
- **Extortion bullying:** Demanding and taking from another child e.g. money, pens, or other personal belongings.
- **Exclusion bullying:** A group makes sure that a child is excluded.
- **Cyberbullying:** Inappropriate use of mobile phones and other digital technology including the internet (social networking).

Signs of stress in pupils which may indicate bullying

- Child's unwillingness to attend school / lateness /erratic attendance.
- Avoidance, hanging back from playground or staying late at school.
- Deterioration of work or mislaid books, money, equipment or belongings / under achievement.
- Spurious illness / non-specific pains, headaches, tummy upsets, withdrawn, loss of appetite.
- Nail biting / flinching / jumpiness / forgetfulness / distractibility.
- Impulsive hitting out / out of character temper, flare up or restlessness / sudden aggressiveness.
- Stresses manifested at home – bed wetting / insomnia / nightmares / restlessness and irritability.
- Reluctance to sit beside or near certain pupils / hesitant to walk home.

(N.B. whilst these behaviours may be symptomatic of other issues – bullying may be one reason)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Members of Staff will:

- Foster in our pupils: self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of 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 child displaying bullying behaviour, and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been the target of bullying, take what they say seriously and take action to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to our Designated Teacher for Child Protection or Principal.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, 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 (based on the principles of **Respond, Resolve and Restore**).

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from involvement in any kind of bullying
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is the target of bullying, 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 of bullying.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullying should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to his/her own suffering and that of other potential target.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our 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, Designated Teacher or Principal 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 forms 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 child is not involved.
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is accused of displaying bullying behaviour.

The Responsibilities of all

Everyone should: Work together to promote our school ethos, to combat and hopefully eradicate bullying.

Preventative Strategies

Bullying can happen at any time of the school day. To prevent it, all adults will employ a range of strategies which will include:

- Encouraging genuine involvement of all pupils in classroom activity by recognising their different abilities so that pupils regularly achieve success.
- The recognition and encouragement of children's individuality and the importance of self-esteem.
- Using positive rather than negative language to communicate expectations and feedback to pupils.
- Giving regular praise and encouragement to pupils when acceptable behaviour is observed so as to affirm and promote the consistent use of such behaviours.
- Delivering the PDMU; Alive O & Grow in Love Religious programmes,
- Involvement in Initiatives such as: Anti-Bullying week, Internet Safety Workshops and Circle time which allow pupils to have their voice heard;
- Ensuring pupils are aware of and understand school rules and expectations;
- Making sure that children are adequately supervised at all times.

Reactive Strategies / Procedures

The following steps will be taken 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 the situation quickly.
- Reports will be taken seriously.
- Steps will be taken to ensure the child feels safe and secure.

Significant incidents will involve further clarifying and recording.

- A clear account will be reported to the appropriate members of staff i.e. class teacher / Principal / Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- If Significant or repeated incidents occur parents will be informed.
- Disciplinary measures / sanctions, which are proportionate and clearly set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy, will be explained and used.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

The 2003 Statutory Requirements (Education & Libraries NI Order) requires schools to “*encourage good behaviour and respect for others*” and in particular prevent all forms of bullying.

When dealing with bullying behaviour the school will aim to:

1. Protect and support the child who has been bullied (**Respond**).
2. Stop the bullying behaviour (**Resolve**).
3. Change the attitude and behaviour of the child displaying bullying behaviour (**Restore**).

Every child can make mistakes and can behave in ways that are hurtful to others. In most cases a quiet word and an explanation of how others feel is sufficient to make a difference. Children can and do learn over time how to care for themselves and for others. We believe that learning from mistakes and being genuinely sorry for them is part of learning and growing up. We also believe that much can be achieved by talking with the child who has displayed bullying behaviour and with the child who has been bullied to achieve a resolution and reconciliation. In some cases, however, talking things through will not make enough of a difference and in these cases we reserve the right to apply a variety of sanctions.

In St Malachy’s Primary School, if any type of bullying is highlighted, the following strategies will be implemented by staff in two stages (with the support of the Principal / Designated teachers).

STAGE 1: - For Dealing with and Recording Initial Allegations of Bullying

All Staff Members Should:

1. **Listen to pupils’ concerns** when reported.
2. **Inform the pupils’ class teacher or Mrs Smith / Mr Toner.**
3. **Make a written/dated entry** into the Class Teacher’s Behaviour Incidents Book/File. Make sure to include *(Date/Time/Location/Pupils involved/Record any details of the incident as reported to you.*
4. **Give each pupil the opportunity to talk.**
5. **Help pupils to discuss possible solutions** and agree actions for restoration going forward.
6. **Inform other staff members** (to improve vigilance during future playground supervision).
7. **Class Teacher/Principal should arrange a follow up meeting** with the relevant pupils (*within 2 weeks*) to determine whether or not the proposed actions for restoration have been effective or not.

STAGE 2 – For Serious / Persistent Allegations of Bullying - USE APPENDIX A to record

Teaching Staff will:

1. **Implement Sanctions procedures as deemed appropriate by the Positive Behaviour Policy.** (These may include: Verbal Rebuke, Loss of Break; or written exercise / lines; Detention; Segregation from victim;
2. **Continue to monitor the situation and follow procedures as agreed.**
3. **Seek advice from** the Designated Teachers for Child Protection (Mrs Smith) or Principal (Mr Toner) prior to completing an Alleged Bullying Incident Form.
4. **Record details as appropriate** (See Appendix A – ***Alleged Bullying Incident Form*** for significant / repeated / or serious one-off incidents).
5. **Contact parents if necessary at any stage of the procedures**, depending on the seriousness of the bullying e.g. phone call, letter or request for interview by class teacher and Principal.
6. **Contact outside networks of support** at any stage of the procedures e.g. Education Welfare Officer, Education Psychology, Behaviour Support Team, Social Services and PSNI.

TEACHING ABOUT BULLYING

This will be delivered and reinforced through various areas of the curriculum:

In Foundation and Key Stage 1 classes (P1-P4) children will be taught to be aware of different forms of bullying and how to develop personal strategies to resist unwanted behaviour.

This message will be reinforced in Key Stage 2 classes (P5-P7) when children will be encouraged to recognise, discuss and understand the nature of bullying and the harm that can result from it.

RESOURCES / STRATEGIES USED FOR ANTI-BULLYING

We encourage a 'whole-school approach' in which children and adults work together to create an environment where everybody gets a clear message that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated, and that bullying behaviour of all kinds must be challenged.

- All school staff members receive a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy and are made aware of the appropriate procedures for dealing with reports of bullying.
- Mobile phones / cameras are not permitted in school.
- Anti-Bullying Awareness posters are displayed throughout the school and on notice boards.
- Relevant leaflets and literature will be provided for the children.
- Children will be made aware of strategies which they can use to prevent and respond to bullying (using videos, role-play and stories).
- Parents will be aware of the schools procedures for preventing and addressing bullying and what they can do to raise a concern if their child is being bullied / feels unsafe.
- Pupils will assume the role of *Playground Buddies* during Playtimes to improve vigilance against undesirable / Bullying behaviours.
- Suggestion/Worry Boxes are provided in two locations, so pupils can communicate any worries/concerns that they have directly with the Designated Teachers for Child Protection.

Links with other school policies

Our Anti-Bullying policy has links with our Pastoral Care, Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, and Positive Behaviour Policy.

Participation and consultation process

Pupils, parents and other stakeholders will be consulted using:

- Surveys / Questionnaires relating to Anti-Bullying
- School Council members will have opportunities to voice concerns / ideas
- Circle time discussions with class teachers / Designated Teachers.
- Monitoring, evaluation and review.

Continuous Professional development of staff

All staff will be trained annually through our Pastoral Care and Safeguarding programme including Child Protection and Positive Behaviour as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed within the Pastoral review cycle or as necessary.

Signed _____
Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal

Date _____

Signed _____
Chairperson of Governors

Date _____



Alleged Bullying Incident Form

	Name	Year
Person reporting concern		
Name of targeted pupil(s)		
Name of alleged Bully or bullies		

Details of Incident as Reported (To be completed by Staff member who has been informed). Then pass these details onto Principal / Designated Teacher	
<p>Questions:</p> <p><i>Date & Time</i></p> <p><i>Location:</i></p> <p><i>Witnesses:</i></p> <p><i>Who was involved?</i></p> <p><i>What may have started or caused incident?</i></p> <p><i>What was said? (Names called?) Any Cyber element?</i></p> <p><i>How long has this been going on?</i></p> <p><i>Any violence, hitting?</i></p> <p><i>Being left out of games/ isolated?</i></p>	
<p><i>Names of other pupils who need to be interviewed</i></p>	

ACTIONS TO RESOLVE SITUATION: (Principal / Designated Teachers complete)

Possible actions

Details of Actions / Discussions

- *Details of Phone calls*
- *Discussions with parents*
- *Talks with peers / class*
- *Discussions with victim*
- *Discussion with bully*
- *Sanctions for Bully*
- *Forms of Support for victim*
- *Referral to other agencies*
- *Other (please specify)*

ACTIONS TO RESTORE OR IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS:

- *Dates and Details of Meetings with pupils to discuss solutions*
- *Support to be provided for pupils involved?*
- *Outside agencies needed?*
- *How will victims safety be monitored and ensured in future?*
- *Any Reporting back to Parents?*
- *Next Steps?*

DETAILS OF OUTCOMES

Principal / Designated Teacher: _____

Sign & Date

Others: _____