

CREGAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

A Family of Learning at the Heart of Our Community



ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

Articles 3, 12 & 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child informs our school's approach to the issue of bullying:

"The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children"

"Every child has the right to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law"

"Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment"

CREGAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This anti-bullying policy reflects the School Aims where we seek to provide for all staff and pupils a happy, caring and secure environment.

The Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the School Aims with a view to maintaining a safe secure and happy environment for all children and staff. The School aims to encourage a whole school approach to bullying to ensure effective learning and teaching takes place for all. We aim to prevent bullying in any form and to have a consistent approach for dealing with incidents of bullying, quickly and effectively.

Aims

-  to prevent bullying of any form - all bullying is unacceptable
-  to have a consistent approach for dealing with incidents of bullying
-  to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of this policy
-  to deal with bullying when it happens or is reported
-  to ensure that victims and perpetrators will be treated in a supportive manner

“Bullying, like other behavioural problems, is better prevented than cured.”

Definition

Bullying is consistent and intentional behaviour that causes distress to others. It may be physical, verbal, social or psychological.

Examples of bullying are:

- PHYSICAL hitting, kicking, pushing
- VERBAL name calling, persistent teasing, spreading rumours, threatening
- SOCIAL exclusion from group
- PSYCHOLOGICAL causing someone to lose self-esteem

Indicators of Bullying

Behavioural

- unwilling to come to school
- avoiding particular days or lessons
- being late for school
- avoiding friends and others at school
- doing poorly at their work
- mislaying books or equipment
- continually losing money
- refusing to tell what's wrong

Physical

- have mystery illness
- feel sick frequently in class
- have possessions go missing
- have damaged clothing or belongings

Emotional

- become withdrawn, restrict activities
- become easily startled, irritable and aggressive
- lose confidence
- burst into tears in class

Strategies for dealing with bullying

When bullying situations occur, circumstances and personalities will vary. The school will attempt to deal with problems accordingly, both supporting the victim and using strategies to help the bully change his/her attitude and engage in more acceptable behaviours. Having been made aware of a problem, staff should keep an open mind when trying to identify the bully as there is no stereotype or typical bully. Within the different categories of bullying the bullying behaviours will vary. The school will take the issue seriously and deal with any parents or pupils concerns. All matters will be dealt with in the strictest confidence within the realms of the school's Child Protection Policy.

Through the implementation of the school's positive behaviour policy there will be constant reinforcement of caring, desirable behaviour. This will help foster positive relationships throughout the school community. Bullying incidents will be dealt with using a range of strategies depending on the nature and severity of the incidents. When possible the school will favour the no-blame approach (see appendix). 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 growing up to be a socially well-adjusted person. We believe much can be achieved by talking with the perpetrator and the victim 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 range of sanctions in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

Responsibilities

The issue of bullying is a matter of partnership including all pupils, staff and parents. It is important that all individuals recognise the difficulties which may be encountered in implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy. In this regard:

Board of Governors/Senior Management

-  Provide a safe environment for all children
-  Promote ethos of respect for the individual
-  Encourage pupils to TELL

Staff Responsibilities

-  encourage pupils to TELL if being bullied or if another pupil is being bullied
-  when first reported, the staff will listen to all pupils' concerns and take all reports of bullying seriously
-  staff will communicate with all concerned in line with procedures and responsibilities
-  staff will be sensitive to a child's need for privacy and respect
-  staff will record incidents as appropriate
-  participate in training
-  acknowledge appropriate behaviour/celebrate good behaviour
-  inform Designated Teacher and/or Principal
-  inform parents and ask for their support as necessary
-  monitor and review the situation

-  while the bullying behaviour will be viewed separately from the child (always stress that it is the behaviour and not the child), the child will be encouraged to 'own' their behaviours and take responsibility for them
-  suggest acceptable forms of behaviour to the pupils involved
-  staff will reward positive behaviour where appropriate

Pupil Responsibilities

Pupils will be encouraged to recognise each other's right to;

-  be physically safe
-  keep personal possessions or money
-  be free from insult, derogatory names and teasing
-  be able to play and work with other children

Pupils should understand:

-  why they have rules in school and in the playground
-  how to report bullying and get help
-  that conflict can be caused by words, gestures or actions
-  ways in which conflict can be avoided or resolved
-  the responsibilities they have to others and the choices they can make

Parent Responsibilities - Parents should:

-  report any concerns to the school
-  stress to children the importance of good social behaviour
-  actively support the schools Anti-Bullying Policy and allow the school time to follow procedures in place
-  stress to children that retaliation is not helpful

The issue of bullying is a matter for partnership including all pupils, staff and parents. Governors need to be kept informed.

Cyber-bullying

We promote the positive use of technology to support engaging and effective learning and all children are monitored and guided when using this technology in school. Unfortunately as mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Current research in this area indicates that cyber-bullying is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber-bullying can be a serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence in UK law. Tackling cyber-bullying will be an ongoing process as technology continues to develop. The whole school community has a part to play in addressing cyber-safety.

-  We shall issue 'Key Safety Advice' leaflets about cyber-bullying to Key Stage 2 (P5 to P7) children at the beginning of each school year.
-  Parents should inform the school if they know of any cyber-bullying incidents involving a child or children in the school.
-  A Parents Guide will be made available listing key advice on how best parents can support their child if she/he is caught up in cyber-bullying.

Prevention

Because the school is committed to building positive relationships, it will have a supportive attitude towards both victims and bullies. Since victims often remain silent, behavioural signs may indicate that there is a problem. Victims may be suffering isolation and anxiety as a result of bullying. Children should be encouraged to inform the class teacher of bullying. Staff will constantly make parents/children aware of this by using opportunities such as Curriculum Evenings, P 1 Induction

Talk, Prospective Pupils' meeting, beginning of year teacher and children talk (rule agreeing etc), assembly talk, PDMU, Circle Time and "No Blame Approach". Staff will use positive classroom management strategies which aim to build good relationships between pupils. They will also use opportunities within the curriculum to discuss bullying issues.
(See Appendix A for Circle Time and No Blame Approach)

- create an open and telling environment where everyone in the school community gets a clear message that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated, that bullying behaviour of all kinds must be challenged.
- all school staff, teaching and non-teaching will be familiar with the Anti- Bullying Policy and procedures for dealing with reports of bullying
- raise the awareness of all members of the school community to the signs of bullying
- the anti-bullying policy will be communicated to the whole school community (ie pupils, parents, staff - teaching and non-teaching) every two years.
- Awareness raising posters are displayed in classrooms / corridors / Child Protection notice boards
- through the Positive School Discipline Policy, pupils, staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities
- periodically review school procedures and practices (eg playground supervision) in order to reduce the risk of bullying behaviour occurring
- periodically review training needs of all staff

Procedures

- children should be encouraged to report "bullying behaviour" to a teacher or supervisor. A supervisor should report to the duty teacher of the SLT.
- each case of bullying reported should be immediately recorded and investigated, and appropriate action taken. Staff will always try to assess the true nature of an incident before applying any strategy. Individual discussions will take place with the perpetrator and the victim, taking into consideration that both may need help.
- if a child persists in bullying he/she should be sent to the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Victim

- the child will be encouraged to tell if bullying has taken place.
- the child will be encouraged to say "No!" to the behaviour he/she finds unacceptable.
- the child will be given time to talk in private to the teacher who will reassure and support.
- parents will be informed of any serious incident if they are not already aware of the situation.
- the child might require several sessions of individual "talking time" and the teacher will follow up checking that the child settles happily again.

Strategies for coping

- all children in our school are encouraged to tell their teacher as soon as possible after bullying has taken place.
- it will be stressed that personal safety must always come first.
- friendships - the child will be helped and encouraged to build friendships within her/his peer group.
- children will be encouraged to say "No!" to any behaviours with which they do not feel happy, to stay calm and look confident; to walk away from the situation.
- children will be familiar with the school support network of staff for Pastoral Care
- Bullying will be addressed individually and as a whole class topic so that individuals are not embarrassed.

The Perpetrator

- The child will be given time to talk in private to a teacher who will try to determine if there are circumstances which may have contributed to or caused the behaviour, for example: modelling behaviour experienced elsewhere / a crisis in the child's life.
- The child will be asked how he/she thinks the situation could be resolved.
- Parents will be informed of any repeated or serious incident.
- Details of these incidents and follow-up discussions will be recorded and kept in the child's file

Action by SLT

- Firstly the SLT would deal with the child(ren) concerned in bullying with appropriate punishment / action being taken.
- If the child persists in misbehaviour the parent should be sent for and the parent, with the child present, informed of the child's record of bullying, and sanctions taken, that have failed to bring about a change in behaviour.
- Working with the parent, a plan of action will be drawn up as to the next steps to help the child to conform to the standard of behaviour acceptable in school.
- Among sanctions at this stage could be daily / weekly report; withdrawal of "play" time at break and / or lunchtimes, removal of privileges such as representing school teams, attending extra curricular activities, taking part in class or school trips.

Sanctions

Depending on the seriousness of the bullying incident(s), the following sanctions will apply:-

- P1-P3 a verbal apology from the perpetrator to the victim / P4-P7 a written apology from the perpetrator to the victim
- time out
- withdrawal from playtime
- break-time detention
- exclusion from a range of school activities including after-school clubs, class visits and other educational visits (P5-P7)
- exclusion at lunchtime
- suspension from school

Parents are requested to refer to the school's Positive Behaviour Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Links with other policies

- Positive Behaviour
- Pastoral Care
- Child Protection

Evaluation

In order to assess the effectiveness of this policy the school will:-

- closely monitor any reported incidents over a given period
- purposefully include the topic in Assembly/Class
- ensure staff awareness and training so that all are competent in the promotion of the policy

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated.

APPENDIX A

ANTI-BULLYING

Use of Circle Time [preventative]

Circle Time develops and encourages:

- positive self esteem
- communication and co-operation
- good relationships
- empathy
- conflict management skills
- discussion skills
- self-discipline
- responsibility and awareness of needs

See EA (SE Region) Behaviour Support Team Handbook on Circle Time

No-Blame Approach [corrective]

The No Blame Approach is:

- a non-punitive response
- a way of raising empathy

7 Step Approach

1. Bullied pupil is interviewed by teacher - do not question victim about incidents - ask who was involved and concentrate on victim's feelings. It may be useful to ask child to draw picture or write a letter to themselves expressing their feelings.
2. Talk to a group of peers which includes the bully / bullies.
3. Explain the problem - no accusations, no details about incident, don't allocate blame. Emphasise the feelings of the victim - read poem etc
4. Do not blame anyone but group has a responsibility
5. Ask group for suggestions and positive responses
6. Each pupil suggests a way to change his/her own behaviour in the future
7. See group again and individual in eg a week's time to see how things are going

APPENDIX B

What sort of children are bullies?

- physically bigger and stronger than their victims
- victims of bullying themselves
- children who are anxious

Why do children bully?

lack of confidence	unhappiness
jealousy	being bullied themselves
show superiority/power	make the group feel closer
gain attention or material things	get rid of their anger
compensate	thrill/excitement
parents low in empathy	parents cynical attitude to relationships
the child is dominated	parents admire assertiveness

Victim - Who gets picked? Anyone can be bullied

- Vulnerable
- Passive
- Different
- Racism, name calling
- On their own
- Provocative victims

How does a victim feel ?

- Ashamed
- Guilty
- Loss of identity
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of hope
- Displaced emotions
- Abused

Why do pupils not tell ?

Adults cannot do anything about it
Adults expect you to stand up for yourself
Ashamed
Deserve it
Hope it will go away

Adults do not understand
It will only make things worse
Guilty
Frightened
Part of life