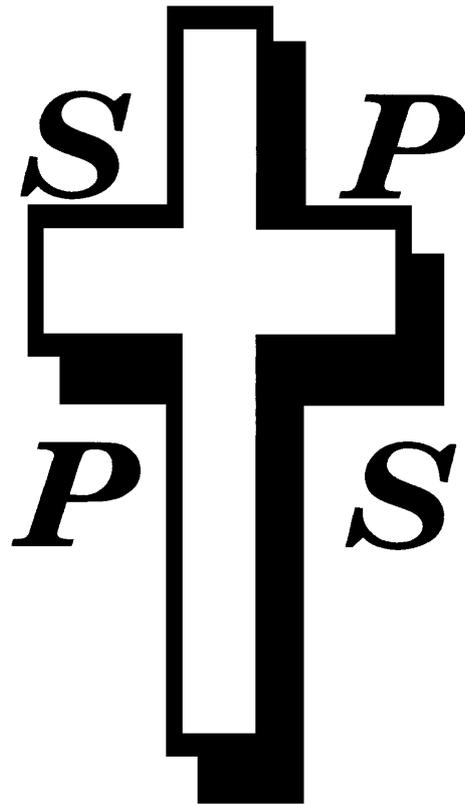


St Patrick's PS



Anti-Bullying Policy

Signature of Chair of Board of Governors: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

Review due: Oct 2022

Context

Article 19 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 amends Article 3 of the Education (NI) Order 1998 on schools' discipline policies to require that the prevention of bullying be specifically addressed and to ensure consultation with pupils.

In brief, the new requirements are that:

- the board of governors must consult with registered pupils on the general principles which will be reflected in the school's discipline policy; and
- the principal, when deciding on measures which will be used to encourage good behaviour in the school, must specifically include measures to prevent bullying among pupils; and
- the principal, before deciding on measures to encourage good behaviour, must consult with pupils registered at the school and their parents.

Mission Statement:

St. Patrick's P.S. is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. St. Patrick's P.S. actively promotes positive interpersonal relations between all members of the school community. This policy has been developed through consultation which involved all members of the school community – children/young people, parents/carers and all school staff (teachers, classroom assistants, lunchtime supervisors and the school secretary).

Links With Other School Policies:

The Anti-Bullying policy is linked to and enhanced by other policies, namely Pastoral Care; Child Protection; Positive Behaviour / Discipline; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Mobile Phone, Health and Safety, Reasonable Force and Safe Handling and Intimate Care.

Definition

Bullying is 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 groups of pupils.

When looking for a way to define bullying, it is also helpful to consider the following definitions;

A person is bullied when he or she is exposed regularly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons

(key point – **regularity, actions signify a physical nature to the bullying**)

An attitude rather than an act. It can be defined as bullying only by measuring the effects the acts have on the vulnerable child

(key points – **subtly, attitudinal**)

Bullying behaviour is defined as ***deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time***, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself

(key point – **intent, power imbalance exists, Strong v Weak**)

The Impact of Bullying,

Effects

- Being bullied can seriously affect a child's physical & mental health
- Being bullied may wreak havoc with children's self-esteem
- Bullying is a huge problem for children with a learning disability
- A bullied child may lack confidence
- Bullied children often feel guilty that they might have brought this upon themselves
- In some cases, the bullied child may even feel suicidal or engage in self-harm

Signs & Symptoms

Bullied children may exhibit some of the following behaviours;

- Spend time alone
- Lack of concentration
- Complain of physical symptoms
- Begin to bully others
- Aggressive, rude, disobedient
- Bedwetting, nightmares
- Eating irregularities
- Stammer

Forms of Bullying

- Physical violence, such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil;
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it;
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil;
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family;
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements;
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil;
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity;
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.

The School's View

This school is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were returned by pupils from P5, P6 & P7. Responses to the questions asked were extremely positive, with the vast majority of answers being, 'True' or 'Mostly True'.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

St. Patrick's P.S. promotes positive behaviour as part of the preventative measures employed for anti-bullying. We recognise that some pupils come to school with behavioural/emotional difficulties due to circumstances beyond their control. We also recognise that such pupils need increased praise and further scaffolding to enable learning to occur. These strategies will be taught in PDMU and Circle Time and for such pupils, provision will be made to teach them strategies to manage their anger. Teachers, in such cases, are agents of change for pupils who present with emotional difficulties. The school curriculum will be utilised as a vehicle to address prejudice, discrimination and Social/Emotional learning. School-wide supervision and effective, consistent behaviour- management by all staff will also be used as a preventative measure.

1. Good behaviour will be encouraged and praised:
 2. A written comment on pupils' work
 3. A congratulatory sticker
 4. A visit to another teacher for commendation
 5. Headmaster's award certificate
 6. Publication in local newspaper
 7. Public word of praise in Assembly
 8. Certificates celebrating achievement e.g. Feis,
 9. Lunchtime Supervisors' award
 10. Award winners displayed on foyer TV screen
 11. School reports commenting favourably on behaviour
 12. Letter or note home (in homework diary) informing parent of achievement
 13. Using local newspapers/parish bulletins to highlight cultural, academic and sporting achievements e.g. Choir winners
 14. Pastoral provision will take the form of Circle Time and PDMU activities, feedback from the School Council, role play.
 15. Classroom management: where possible, pupils will have the opportunity to avail of various seating arrangements throughout the year – paired, groups of varying sizes – and this should promote healthy working relationships.
 16. PATHS Programme
- Sanctions will also be used as a measure:
 - 1) Time-out bench at break and lunch
 - 2) removal to a separate table in class

- 3) restriction of access to extra-curricular activities either during or after school
- 4) completion of additional work to complement current studies – normally over Breaktime
- 5) spending morning/lunch break in the Principal's office for misdemeanours which occur during breaks
- 6) referral to senior member of staff for reprimand or detention
- 7) temporary removal of a pupil from his/her peers into another class
- 8) detention after school – parents are notified in advance and pupils will be detained for up to 30 minutes after other pupils have left
- 9) in extreme cases suspension, or expulsion after suspension

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our 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 our 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 bully, 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 bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to [Mr. Torney, Principal, designated teacher for child protection, Mrs Caterson or Mrs Sheridan];
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and 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.

In summary, we will take all necessary steps to identify those responsible, deploy appropriate sanctions and give them help to change their behaviour.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, 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.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

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

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 the class teacher or Headteacher, 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 form 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 children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

- Steps will be taken to support and respond to the needs of both the bullied and bullying pupils.
- Records will be kept via SIMS.
- Action which may be taken can include:
 - a) Contacting parents/carers of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident.
 - b) Investigation.
 - c) Feedback to those concerned.
 - d) Sanctions.
 - e) Contacting relevant professionals eg. Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, Education Psychologists.
 - f) Teachers have a 'Pastoral Care Record' book that is given to children who feel they are being bullied. The book is completed or signed daily by the victim and the class teacher so that an accurate record of events can be maintained and so that incidents do not go unnoticed. The book is maintained until such time as the bullying stops or the teacher feels it is no longer required.

- g) Classroom Assistants and dinner supervisors are informed of individuals to watch out for and also have an observation sheet that is completed in the event of unwanted or bullying behaviours.

Continuous Professional Development Of Staff

St. Patrick's P.S. will offer all teaching staff the opportunity to attend courses and/or training in the area of antibullying.

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be monitored via feedback from staff with regards to any bullying issues which are brought to their attention during Circle Time, whilst on break or lunch duty or via complaints from parents. Parental concerns raised during Parent Teacher meetings or Information evenings will be duly noted and investigated. Pupils' opinions will also be sought termly through the medium of Circle Time, the Student Council and all pupils will be made aware of the red concerns box in the foyer as a vessel to voice any issues they may have. The policy will be reviewed every two years.