

# Portadown Integrated Primary and Nursery School Anti Bullying Policy

## Article 12

Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

## Article 19

Governments must do all they can to ensure children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect.

## Article 37

No child shall suffer cruel treatment or punishment.

## 1. Mission Statement.

It is a primary aim at Portadown Integrated Primary and Nursery School that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

Portadown Integrated Primary and Nursery School is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and as such recognises the rights of the school community regarding safety. (UNCRC Articles 12, 19, 34 and 37)

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

## 2. Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.

- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PDMU [Personal, Development & Mutual Understanding] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

Children who have been bullied should be confident that they will be supported and that action will be taken against those accused of bullying. It is therefore the responsibility of every member of the school community to combat bullying by being prepared to report any incident as soon as it occurs. Parents are encouraged to report any incidents to the school.

### **3. Evidence of Consultation**

We believe that all people in the school community should be consulted whilst creating this policy. As part of the consultation a school questionnaire was created and distributed to parents, children and all staff. This allowed everyone to have their say and further developed respect and community spirit with all in the school.

### **4. Agreed Definition of Bullying**

The children were all asked to revisit the collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying and the new statement is:

**Bullying is hurting someone on the inside and outside, again and again and on purpose. You can stop bullying by telling someone.**

### **5. Forms of Bullying**

Bullying takes on many different forms.

- 1. Physical Attack:** These would include pushing, hitting, hair pulling, taking belongings, spitting, tripping and fighting.
- 2. Verbal Abuse:** This would include name-calling, commenting on clothing, commenting on parents and family life, shouting insults, daring pupils or making threats etc.
- 3. Looks:** These would include threatening or menacing looks, daring looks.
- 4. Exclusion:** This would include the isolation of a pupil, turning others against a pupil or group of pupils, telling stories to effect relationships and spreading rumours.

**Extortion:** This includes terrorising by demanding money, food etc

## **5. E- Bullying:**

This includes nasty text messages and e-mails.

If unchecked, it can be profoundly damaging to the child who has been bullied in both the short and longer term, emotionally or physically or both and can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop. Symptoms may include behaviour change such as withdrawal, lack of concentration, marked deterioration in schoolwork or absenteeism.

## **6. Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/in the taxi
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

## **7. Bullying is not**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose . Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

## **8. Where does bullying happen?**

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground, outdoor play areas, the forest area. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Principal is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

## **9. What can you do if you are being bullied?**

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you. The children were all asked this question and we have included some of their strategies in the list below;

Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.

- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive - stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a classroom assistant, a lunch time supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone (see Appendix 1).
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.

- Call a helpline – number in the assembly hall

## **10. What can you do if you see someone else being bullied?**

### **(The role of the bystander)**

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. The children have also discussed this question in class and some of the strategies they suggested are listed below:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
- Shout for help.
- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
- Call a helpline for some advice- numbers in school assembly hall

## **11. Preventative strategies**

As a school, we have a responsibility to keep pupils safe from harm and provide a secure learning environment. It is vital that we should act promptly and firmly to combat bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. We believe the implementation of preventative measure will help reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour. We will take the following steps:

## **12. Ethos and Pastoral Care**

We are a "listening school", in which children are encouraged to express their feelings, fears and concerns to someone they trust. This is facilitated and developed through "Circle Time". Children are encouraged to:

Primary school

- Tell someone if they are being bullied, no one deserves to be bullied.
- Stay with a group of friends at break and dinnertime.
- If they don't have anyone to play with children can go to a "Buddy Circle" and a Buddy will look after them.

- If something occurs on the playground they should confidently walk away and tell either a supervisory assistant or a teacher immediately or use the Peer mediation program.
  - Children can raise issues of concern either through the Student council or by leaving a message in the “You say we care box” in the main corridor or “Worry box” in their own classroom.
  - Agree to Classroom and playground Code of Conducts.
  - Tell someone if they are being bullied, no one deserves to be bullied.
  - Agree to Classroom and playground Code of Conducts.
- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy

It is integral in our school policy that both pupils and parents should be made aware of how they bring their concerns about bullying to the attention of the staff in complete confidence.

Each incident will be taken seriously, carefully investigated and, if substantiated, acted upon.

The designated teacher/Principal should always report back to parents on the steps taken by the school in response to an expressed concern about bullying.

### **13. Curriculum**

The Curriculum can be used to raise awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy. It is essential that there is an increased understanding for children who have been bullied and all staff will help to build an anti-bullying ethos within the school environment. It is important that pupils are encouraged to cooperate and constructively manage their relationships with others in PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) and other curricular activities, particularly in the upper primary. Within the Nursery children work in small groups and circle time to discuss issues.

Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying

- Children being read stories about bullying, circle time
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.

Primary 7 children have the opportunity to avail of the Citizenship and Safety Education (CASE) Programme.

- Cyber Bullying talks from the PSNI.
- Assemblies will be used to reinforce the anti-bullying theme and outside agencies and support services may be invited to participate.
- The school will register and take part in Anti –Bullying Week organised by Northern Ireland Anti- Bullying Forum and make this a high profile event in the school calendar.

- The school environment will help promote anti –bullying messages in the form of colourful posters prominently displayed.

## **14. Playtime provision**

Teaching and Non – teaching staff promote positive play during break and dinnertime. Playground toys and equipment are provided. A playground “Buddy” system is established, and any child who feels lonely or isolated can go to a “Buddy Circle” and a Buddy will come and help them. Children can also avail of “Peer Mediation” where incidence can be discussed and sorted out with peer mediators instantly or at an agreed time.

All members of staff are fully aware of the strategies that are in place for dealing with incidents of bullying.

## **15. Code of Conduct**

### **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.

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

### **Parents/Guardians**

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

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child co-operates with teachers, other staff and other children. Parents have a responsibility to inform the school of any incidents of bullying which they are aware of. Every report will be dealt with individually, sensitively and in confidence. The school will take appropriate action in line with school policy.

Where bullying is suspected, parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school and keep in regular contact regarding their child’s welfare.

### **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 the pupils.

All adults will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school. Every complaint will be dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.

All adults will maintain a firm but fair discipline structure with rules that are few, simple and easy to understand. Children will be encouraged to treat everyone with respect.

## **16. Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents**

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Portadown Integrated Primary and Nursery School. We will follow the material and guidance from Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum – Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour. This will allow school staff to intervene to meet the support needs of both the pupil who has been bullied and the pupil who displays bullying behaviour. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report of an incidents to staff and they will gather and clarify the facts.
2. Check
  - ❖ The bullying constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in our policy.
  - ❖ Records of any previous incidents.
3. Complete the Bullying Concern Assessment form.
4. On the basis of this initial assessment
  - ❖ Choose an appropriate intervention/s from the Intervention Levels
  - ❖ Ensure effective communication amongst all parties.
  - ❖ In addition consider the possible need for - parental involvement, SENCo involvement, and External agency involvement.
5. Carry out the chosen interventions.
6. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of your chosen intervention/strategy.
7. Record actions taken and actions achieved.
8. Review the outcomes to determine whether further action is required.

## **17. Disciplinary Steps.**



1. Children who display bullying behaviour will be warned officially to stop offending by the designated teacher, class teacher, supervisory assistant or principal and notified that a record has been made of the incident in the log book.
2. The parents/guardians of children who display bullying behaviour will be informed if it is a persistent or serious matter.
3. If the problem persists, children who display bullying behaviour may be withdrawn from peer contact during class sessions, at break/lunch time and may be placed under the supervision of a senior supervision, teacher, Vice –Principal or the principal or given some thinking time(Nursery).
4. Disciplinary procedures outlined in the Discipline Policy will be followed and may ultimately result in the suspension of the children who display bullying behaviour.
5. The Board of Governors will be informed and may consider more serious sanctions such as expulsion.

Advice and support may be sought at anytime from outside agencies, including the Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, the Educational Psychology Service and Education Officer. In most cases, the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources.

When a pupil's bullying behaviour is persistent and defies attempts by the school to address by behaviour management strategies or disciplinary methods within a reasonable time, the child protection procedures should be instigated. The child who has been bullied, needs, should always be paramount.

## **18. Responses and Sanction**

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

All staff have agreed the following steps

- Individual teachers record incidences of concern in Anti- bullying file
- Teacher raise any issues of concern to the Pastoral Care team e.g if a pattern of behaviour is developing.
- Serious incidences will be referred to the principal and the designated teacher immediately.
- If parents raise a concern about bullying the class teacher will deal with it unless they feel it is Level 3 Intervention- Complex Bullying Behaviour, where they will refer the matter to the principal and the designated teacher who will investigate further. Parents will be given a time and date when they can discuss matter with principal.

- Sanctions will be in line with school Discipline policy. In the event of a serious incident sanctions, which are deemed, appropriate, will be applied immediately.

## **19. Links with other policies.**

This policy has close links to the school Behaviour Policy, Child Protection policy and Internet Safety Policy.

## **20. Monitoring and review of policy.**

Implementation of the policy will be monitored by the principal and the designated teacher for child protection. This policy will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness – the policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school community.

Reviewed – November 2016

Next review date: November 2018

## **Appendix**

Education and Libraries Order 2003

DE Circular 2003/04

Cooperation to Safeguard Children 2003

NIABF- Effective responses to bullying behaviour 2012

