



# Anti - Bullying Policy



**November 2015**

## Definition

Ballydown Primary School accepts the definition of the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum which defines bullying as, "the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others." We therefore define bullying as a repeated action whereby a pupil wilfully and knowingly sets out to hurt, threaten or frighten another pupil.

## Rationale

At Ballydown Primary School we believe that our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied and where the potential of every child can be realised.

Ballydown Primary School is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and as such, recognises the rights of the school community regarding safety. (UNCRC Articles 19, 34 and 37) The Convention provides that children have the right to be protected from all violence (physical or mental); they must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them (Article 19) Moreover, they have a right to be called by their real name and not hurtful names (Article 7) and they have the right to be protected from discrimination and abuse (Articles 2, 23 and 30)

We therefore want every child in Ballydown to -

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution

We realise that, if unchecked, bullying can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and longer term, emotionally, physically or both, and can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop.

- Bullying is therefore seen as a form of anti-social behaviour. It is wrong and will not be tolerated
- Anti-bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly

## **The nature of Bullying behaviour**

"All bullying is aggression, either physical, verbal or psychological, (although not all aggression is necessarily bullying). Any behaviour which is the illegitimate use of power to hurt others is bullying" (ACRE)

These behaviours are summarised as follows although the list is not meant to be exhaustive.

### **Physical Bullying**

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pinching

### **Verbal Bullying**

- Name calling
- Making insulting or offensive remarks
- Making threats
- Spreading rumours
- Teasing

### **Emotional or Indirect Bullying**

- Spreading malicious rumours or nasty stories
- Leaving others out of social groups
- Sending nasty text messages and emails etc (cyber bullying)
- Hiding books, taking or deliberately damaging others belongings
- Exhortation
- Sarcasm
- Intimidation

### **Cyber Bullying**

- Sending nasty messages via texting, emails and other forms of social media

## **The signs and symptoms of bullying**

A child might:-

- Not want to go to school
- Begin truanting/go missing from home
- Often feel ill
- Suddenly becomes ill when it's time to go to school
- Be frightened to walk to and from school
- Underachievement/marks worsen/class place drops
- Isolation/no friends
- "Lose" possessions in school
- Cease to communicate with parents
- Change their behaviour - become more aggressive, withdrawn or anxious
- Lose their appetite
- Nightmares/bed wetting/ trouble sleeping
- Bully younger siblings
- Unexplained marks/bruising
- Self-harm or threaten to self-harm

## **Preventative Strategies**

### **Ethos and Pastoral Care**

We promote a caring environment as set out in our Pastoral Care and other related policies.

We seek to be a listening school in which children are encouraged to express their feeling, fears and concerns. This is facilitated through measures such as Circle Time and Worry Boxes. Children know they should speak to Mrs Baird or an adult in school they feel comfortable speaking to. Assemblies regularly deal with issues of behaviour, school rules and bullying. We promote and reward positive behaviour through the use of such strategies as reward charts and Golden Time. We have a well-disciplined, well organised school which reduces the risk of bullying

## **Tackling Bullying through the Curriculum**

- In line with PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) and Health and Safety areas of the curriculum such as Road Safety, Drugs Education and Relationships and Sexuality Education, we provide personal safety programmes for all children. These programmes help children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness and communication.
- Children design posters carrying anti-bullying slogans which are displayed around the school
- Classroom Charters are drawn up
- Children are encouraged to report any bullying incidents, speaking to the bully, and/or providing comfort to the child being bullied.
- Activities such as Circle Time are likely to improve awareness of bullying and improve relationships and self-esteem and hence reduce bullying
- Building individual self-esteem and positive working relationships are central to improving the academic curriculum rather than being peripheral to it. Setting up opportunities for group work and team work are important factors (Personal Capabilities and Thinking Skills)
- We use positive teaching strategies across the curriculum and reward positive behaviour
- We participate annually in the NIABF (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum) Anti-Bullying Week.
- The school operates a Playground Buddy System.

### **Areas of the Curriculum**

Art - Children often find it easier to express their feelings through art and this can often lead to discussions and resolutions

R.E - Look at and discuss the importance of relationships and the importance of tolerance of others and respect

P.E. - can contribute by helping children to gain physical confidence and greater self-control. It offers opportunities to work together to build up team spirit and support one another.

Drama - offers a wealth of opportunities including role-playing difficult situations, keeping feelings under control, resisting pressure and practising the expression of strong emotions. Situations can be developed with possible alternate

strategies or endings. Drama can be used to develop the language of resilience - "telling" and "shouting out"

Literacy - This allows the development of many skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing, presenting a case, taking part in debate, planning and evaluating a campaign, speaking and writing reports, newspaper articles and stories.

Literature is a core component of the curriculum, making it a good vehicle for exploring all kinds of behaviour including bullying.

Books found in certain classes include -

Broome A - Willy the Wimp

Bryars B - The Eighteenth Emergency

Coppart A. The Bully

Elliot M. Willow Street Kids

Godden R. The Diddakoi

Heutoff N. - This School is driving Me Crazy

Kemp G. Gowie Corby Plays Chicken

Walsh J.P Gaffer Samson's luck

Wilson R. Nine O'clock Bell (Poems)

### **Training**

We provide support and training for teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors in the promotion of positive play and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying..

### **Web-site**

A hard copy of this policy will be provided to every family and will be accessed on the school web-sit

### **Monitoring and Reviewing Policy**

The policy will be monitored on a regular basis and the policy reviewed by all stakeholders every 3 years as part of the process of school development planning.

## Dealing with Bullying Incidents – Procedures

- 1. Teacher records information** given to her by parent/guardian/child etc. **Phase 1 Report Form completed**
- 2. Teacher consults** with Mrs Baird and/or Mr McMullan ASAP and decides on the course of action to take. **Phase 2 Report Form completed.**
- 3. Information Gathering** - builds up evidence/speaks to child/other children, supervisors/teachers/etc. **Phase 3 Report Form completed.**
- 4. Assesses information and decide on course of action.**  
This may/may not be pursued under our Anti-Bullying Policy or Discipline Policy – it may/may not include sanctions – informing/not informing parent of child being accused of bullying. The victim/bully may require individual counselling/support. Also see 8b and 8c in matter is judged to be serious.  
**Phase 4 Report Form completed**
- 5. Report back** to parents of child being bullied ASAP but no later than within one working week of receiving the initial information.  
**Phase 5 Report Form completed**
- 6. Monitors situation** for relevant period.  
**Phase 6 Report Form completed**
- 7. Repeat steps 1 – 6** in event of reoccurrence
- 8. Long term implications**

### Summary Procedures

1. Fill in incident report form.
2. Brings completed form to Mrs Baird/Mr McMullan
3. Mrs Baird/class teacher talks to others and records information
4. Teacher/Principal and Mrs Baird agrees course of action and records decision
5. Fills in appropriate form summarizing means of communication and conversation held.
6. Other teachers, assistants etc monitor situation and reports outcomes.
7. Repeats steps 1 –6 in event of reoccurrence
- 8a Matter has been dealt with successfully
- 8b Or there may be a need to contact outside agencies/maintain further and regular contacts with parents.
- 8c Evoke the Education Authority's Suspension Policy depending on nature of bullying incidents