

# ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

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| Approved By Governors | OCT17  |
| Date for Review       | OCT 19 |

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School

## **Anti- Bullying Policy**

### **Introduction**

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School is completely opposed to bullying behaviour and will not tolerate it. Bullying behaviour is entirely contrary to the values and principles that we work and live by. When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a restorative and solution focussed way to achieve the necessary change.

The welfare/well-being needs of all children are paramount and pupils' needs, whether pupil displaying bullying behaviour or targeted pupil, need to be separated from their behaviour. In our school we do not want to label pupils unfairly so we will use the term 'child who has been bullied', or 'target of bullying' instead of Victim. Also instead of bully we will use the term 'child who is displaying bullying behaviour'.

All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment free from intimidation and fear. They also have a responsibility to contribute in whatever way they can to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

As a school community We have sought to understand what bullying behaviour is and the different forms it can take, as the starting point for addressing bullying concerns effectively. Following consultation with staff, pupils and parents, the following definition of bullying has been agreed in our school.

#### ***NIABF Definition:***

***"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" Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (2005)***

### **School Mission Statement**

In St. Francis of Assisi Primary School Keady, we aim to educate our children in a safe, happy and stimulating school environment to enable them to fulfil their unique potential.

We aim to create opportunities for children to collaborate in the learning process, become lifelong learners, have mutual respect and contribute positively to their local and global societies for the good of all.

Christian values are placed at the centre of our daily life and underpin all the relationships we develop in a caring school community.

St Francis of Assisi Primary School is a Catholic School and values strong links between home, school and parish, and welcomes all children and their families.

## Reference to Legislation

*This policy has been developed consistent with **The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003** and*

**DE Circular 2003/13 - WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF PUPILS EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2003**

*Specific articles of the Legislation referring to the welfare and protection of pupils include the following:*

**ARTICLE 17 – DUTY TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF PUPILS**

**ARTICLE 18 – CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES**

**ARTICLE 19 – SCHOOL DISCIPLINE: MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING**

*‘Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour’ (2001)*

*‘Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection’ (1999)*

## Principles

- When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a non-punitive, restorative and solution focussed way to achieve the necessary behavioural change, ensuring the targeted pupil’s safety and repairing relationships.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported to accept responsibility for their behaviour, acknowledging the impact or harm done, agreeing to change their behaviour & repair relationships.
- Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention including skills training regarding implementing appropriate restorative strategies.
- Should a bullying concern arise, school staff will receive support from Senior Managers with Pastoral responsibility regarding their ‘Assessment of this Concern’ and interventions to be implemented.
- Parents will be consulted & made aware of how we engage & consult with pupil’s regarding our ‘School Positive Behaviour Expectations/Requirements’, the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour and how we will respond to bullying concerns informed by the ‘Effective Interventions’ Resource (NIABF 2013) using ‘restorative practice’ and ‘Solution Focused’ interventions.
- During the consultation process we emphasise and explain why, when addressing concerns involving their child, parents active support and appropriate level of participation in partnership with the school is essential.

## **The Process of Participation and consultation**

Under legislation The Board of Governors and Principal are required to consult with pupils, parents and staff regarding positive Behaviour and bullying prevention measures which must be in place. We have met this requirement in the following ways:

### **Awareness raising**

- Positive affirming classrooms. (Classroom Charter/ Code of conduct agreed by all pupils)
- Incentives and rewards for positive behaviour e.g Golden Time, School Council discussion/ presentations
- Assemblies
- Posters throughout the school
- Support for NIABF Anti- Bullying Week Annual Event
- Bee Safe programme,
- PDMU curriculum
- Questionnaires.
- Staff development days
- Parent Information sessions/ P/ T meetings
- Governor / parent consultation on policy review
- Information on school website.

## **Links with other School Policies**

Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care. Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is addressed through our other school policies such as Positive Behaviour / Discipline Policy, Pastoral Care; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding.

This policy links with the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies. Sometimes bullying behaviour and its impact on pupils may cause such distress and significant harm that a referral to the Safeguarding Team is necessary and this will be progressed following the normal Child Protection procedures.

It also links with the Positive Behaviour Policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the responses which will be used to change behaviour.

## **Preventative measures**

Relationships are at the core of everything we do in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School. We encourage pupils to respect themselves and each other.

We aim to be a 'caring', 'listening school' in which pupils are encouraged to become aware of their feelings and express their fears and concerns and to develop a sense of their responsibility and empathy for others. This process is facilitated through activities such as PDMU lessons in which children explore their needs, rights and feelings and how to deal with situations they may experience.

Within our curriculum, we provide children with the opportunity to develop a range of skills, including assertiveness and communication skills, in a wide variety of contexts, both inside and outside the classroom. The school Curriculum (PDMU/ RE) address prejudice, discrimination and Social/ Emotional Learning.

We also provide opportunities for developing Positive Peer relationships during Circle Time strategies and through our School Council, Eco Council, School Buddies and Digital champions.

Within our school community, we have agreed and communicated our school expectations for 'Positive Behaviour, summarised in the Golden Rules, during assemblies, displays of posters, Code of Conduct & Classroom Charters.

We promote positive behaviour reinforcing the School's Golden Rules & Code of Conduct. And at all times we reward and incentivise pupils with awards for their 'Golden Behaviour' in weekly 'Golden Time'

Should concerns regarding bullying arise, we aim to implement effective, appropriate interventions and a primary aim is to ensure the safety of the targeted pupil. To this end we can create *Safe Spaces* through changing seating arrangements and implementing *Peer Support* arrangements to befriend and support vulnerable pupils.

As appropriate we address issues and concerns restoratively with individuals who engage in bullying behaviour and within the wider group using a range of strategies and those as detailed in the Positive Behaviour Policy, consistent with the Anti- Bullying Forum' effective responses to Bullying Behaviour 'document. Other Preventative measures include:

- Formulation (involving all stakeholders) following negotiation & communication of 'agreed' school rules concerning 'Positive Behaviour' expectations (e.g classroom charters, posters, displays, incentives, pupil awards, school assemblies, workshops)
- School Curriculum addresses 'difference & prejudice', discrimination, Rights and Responsibilities and Social Emotional Learning through PDMU & RE
- School wide supervision and effective, assertive and consistent behaviour management by - staff
- Creating support networks and 'Safe Spaces' for vulnerable pupils in identified "hot spots" e.g through seating arrangements, safe movement between classes, peer support arrangements including 'Circle of Friends',

- opportunities for developing Positive Peer Relationships (Circle time strategies and training provided re. Peer Support/Buddy schemes and /School Council)

Should bullying behaviours persist, despite early interventions by class teacher, additional support to review their assessment, their actions and to implement further appropriate interventions will be made available from the DT/ DDT

## **Bullying Behaviours**

The following are unacceptable behaviours **BUT will only constitute bullying behaviours when they are: - recurrent/persistent and targeted with intent to hurt and where a power imbalance between pupils is evident.**

### ***Type of incident:***

1. **Physical** (*includes jostling, physical intimidation, punching/kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons*)
2. **Verbal** (*includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours*)
3. **Indirect Bullying Behaviour** (*includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, interfering with personal property*) and includes *Cyber-bullying: misusing mobile phones and internet programmes to humiliate, threaten and isolate another.*

Identity Based bullying may be targeted on the basis of race, religion, culture, gender and perceived or actual sexual orientation

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.

## **The Responsibilities of the Teaching Staff**

Our staff will:

- Foster in 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 Years 3-7 and good friendships with Reception, Years 1 and 2.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Discuss unkind & bullying behaviour with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is targeted and the pupil who engages in bullying behaviour.
- Emphasise the importance of telling a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed- signpost pupils to available support.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.

- Report suspected case of bullying to Designated Teacher
  - Agree what interventions are required to support the target and ensure that pupil displaying the bullying behaviour is helped and encouraged to change his/her behaviour. These will include details of who will be responsible for this work, timescales for monitoring and reporting back to parents.
  - Maintain records of all incidents, including discussions and contacts, any interventions agreed and person/s responsible, timescales for monitoring and reporting back and outcome of incident.
  - Follow up on any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
  - Deal with instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Complete a Bullying Incident form where appropriate

### **The Responsibilities of Ancillary Staff**

- 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.
- Be vigilant for signs of bullying
- Report any incidences of bullying or suspected bullying to the class teacher.

### **The Responsibilities of Pupils**

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is the target of bullying behaviour, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to any member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and to help 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**

- 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, Mrs McGarvey (Designated Teacher for Child Protection Acting) or Miss Hughes and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked for themselves and other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying.

- Being sympathetic and supportive toward their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying even if their children are not involved.
- Co-operating with the school if their child /ren is accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and to point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

### **Responding to Incidents of Bullying Behaviour**

Actions which will be taken:

- We will gather information- clarify facts and perceptions
- using the NIABF's Resource, Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour Assessment Form
- We will assess and determine the appropriate intervention with reference to the School's Positive Behaviour Policy and NIABF interventions Framework and Guidance Document.
- Through this assessment, roles and responsibilities will be defined for all staff in responding to an incident, ensuring that communication between all involved is maintained: pupils, parents and staff. Actions agreed and key named person will be noted. Time frames involved in responding will be noted and adhered to.
- If necessary the relevant professionals will be contacted e.g. PPDS officer, EWO, BMT, Educational Psychology, CASS etc.
- We will continue to monitor and support all pupils involved.

All staff have been involved in the review of the policy, including definition and levels of intervention.

We may identify relevant future training need within the School Development Planning Process.