

St Bernard's
Primary School and Nursery
Unit

Anti-Bullying Policy



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Mission Statement

St. Bernard's Primary School and Nursery Unit is a welcoming school with strong links with parents, church and community. Our Catholic values are at the heart of all relationships. Our ethos of trust, tolerance and inclusion enables each individual to be happy, secure and respected.

We strive to ensure that everyone can achieve their full potential and gain the necessary skills and knowledge to have a positive role in their home, school and society.

Rationale

St. Bernard's Primary School is committed to providing a safe, positive, inclusive and respectful learning environment for all members of the school community. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment without the fear of being bullied. We also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way we can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

The school community at St. Bernard's is completely opposed to bullying in all its forms. Bullying will not be tolerated. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. St Bernard's actively promotes positive interpersonal relationships between all members of the school community. An anti-bullying climate will be created through openness and consultation, where the views of all members of the school community are encouraged and considered.

The policy forms part of the overall pastoral care provision in school and therefore links and works with the:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- RSE Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- ICT Policy, E-Safety and Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Reasonable Force and Safe Handling Policy

This policy has been drawn up following DENI guidelines- "Pastoral Care in schools," "Focus on Bullying"- Save the Children 2002 and The Northern Ireland Anti- Bullying Forum.

Aims

Through the effective implementation of this policy, the staff of St. Bernard's Primary School aim to:

- Promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure all school community, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is, and what they should do if bullying arises.

- Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour by being a “Listening School.”
- Show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying is reported and that incidents will be thoroughly investigated.
- Assist in the provision of a positive and supportive atmosphere - for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To develop procedures for recording and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

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.” (DE, 1999, p41)

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as “ the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others.”

Although there are a number of definitions of bullying, these definitions would include the following characteristics:

- It is repetitive
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It is deliberate
- It may be verbal, emotional, physical or psychological
- Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim

In the New Act Nov 2015 brought forward by Minister John O Dowd

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 we are told the that In this Act “bullying” includes -

The repeated use of a verbal, written or electronic communication or a Physical act (or a combination of those),
 By a pupil or a group of pupils,
 Against another pupil or group of pupils,
 With the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can be:

Physical Bullying: hitting, pushing, kicking, tripping, spitting, hair pulling, throwing things, interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging, intruding upon it; extortion, threatening demands for money or other items, writing or drawing offensive notes, graffiti about another.

Verbal Bullying: name calling, insulting or offensive remarks, sexual abusive comments, accusing, taunting, put downs, ridiculing another's appearance, way of speaking, disability, personal mannerisms, race, colour, religion, humiliating another publicly, spreading malicious or nasty rumours, threatening, intimidation, mocking, sarcasm.

Emotional Bullying: excluding, shunning others from group activity, social-setting or play, belittling another's abilities or achievements, mobbing the individual, menacing looks, stares, rude signs or gestures, discussing plans as a group, negative body language.

Cyber Bullying: misuse of e-mails, images, text, blogs, tweets, forums, chat rooms and any other forms of social media. This includes posting mages and engaging in any behaviour which is deemed to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another either done in fun between friends or using perceived anonymity. Misuse of mobile phones by text messaging, calls or images.

Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera, video facilities.

(This is not an exclusive list)

The Responsibility 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 the Principal, the Vice Principal, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, the Deputy Designated Teacher, the Head of Pastoral Care or class teacher;
- 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.
- Keep a record of all incidents.
- Carry out regular Circle Time activities and stress the importance of anti-bullying regularly.

Engage in activities during Anti-Bullying week in November every year

- specific reference should be made to homophobic bullying, transgender bullying and cyber bullying

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.
- Follow the school policy.

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 class teacher or any other member of staff 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 any member of school staff 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;
- Keep home conflict out of school.
- Follow the school policy on the use of mobile phones and social media including ensuring their children are not using any social media site which is targeted at over 14 year olds.

Parents of the victims of bullying behaviour should follow school procedures in dealing with a suspected bully by reporting bullying to school and allowing the school to deal with it. If you are unhappy at the outcome of the school's procedures you can write, under the

complaints procedures, to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors at the school address, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools or the Education Authority.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

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

Preventing Bullying

We at St. Bernard's believe that preventative strategies have a high priority in minimizing bullying. Through the following preventative strategies and planned curricular opportunities, we hope to lay the foundations of positive behaviour and to eliminate bullying before it becomes an issue. These include:

- Building a caring, listening ethos in the school,
- Having a clear Anti-Bullying policy which all members of the school are aware of,
- Training programmes for all staff regularly,
- Positive role models reflected through staff behaviour,
- Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities,
- Awareness raising through Anti-Bullying week, assemblies or lessons,
- Anti-Bullying message embedded throughout the curriculum and through Anti bullying week in November each year,
- Vigilant supervision,
- Merit Book,
- Reward system for positive behaviour,
- Use of Alive O and RSE programme,
- Use of PDMU programme,
- Circle Time – opportunities for children to discuss sensitive issues in a safe environment,
- Worry box – placed in an agreed place within the school that all children can access in a discrete way,
- Buddy system,
- CAPS Programme,
- Pupil, parent and staff consultation – through questionnaires,
- Pastoral Care Team of teachers who speak regularly at assemblies,
- Pastoral Care pictures displayed.

Responding to Bullying

Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned. The following steps will be followed.

Reporting of an incident

When a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the following people:

- The teacher of any child involved
- The Vice Principal/ Principal
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Investigation of an Incident

- This will normally be carried out by the Vice Principal, in co-operation with any class teachers concerned.
- Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's incident report form. (Appendix 5)
- Parents of all pupils involved will be informed of the school's action up to this point and will be kept informed of subsequent action.

Agreeing a plan for resolution

Working with the pupils, parents, Teachers, CA and outside agencies if appropriate concerned, the Vice Principal/Pastoral Care Team will devise a plan for resolution of the conflict. This plan will include targets for acceptable behaviour and will set out support measures which will be provided for the pupils concerned. Everyone who works with the child will be advised of the plan for moving forward.

Any disciplinary action required will use the system of sanctions which is set out in the school's discipline policy.

- Loss of merits
- Loss of privileges at discretion of VP/Pastoral Care Team and Principal only
- Pupil on Report
- Suspension in accordance with Education Authority procedures
- Expulsion in accordance with Education Authority Procedures

Reviewing the situation

The situation will be monitored and reviewed to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Involvement of other agencies in provision of support

If, after the use of positive behaviour strategies and sanctions, the bullying behaviour continues, then the Child Protection strategies (See Child Protection Procedures) will be implemented.

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including Counselling Services, Education Welfare Officer, Childline, NSPCC, Behaviour Management

Team and the Educational Psychology Service. In most instances, the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources.

Positive Behaviour Management

In keeping with the school's commitment to Positive Behaviour Policy, the intended outcome after an incident of bullying is:

- to protect the victim and stop the bullying
- to change the behaviour of the bully

The intervention of a teacher will aim at acknowledging the distress of the victim, reassure and support the victim and increase their self-esteem.

All incidents of bullying must be recorded. One copy retained by the Vice Principal and a copy retained in the Class Pastoral Book.

Anti-Bullying Complaints

If parents are unhappy about the way that an alleged bullying incident has been handled they should in the first instance speak with the principal. There is a School Complaints procedure if parents are still concerned.

Parents will be advised of this procedure by the Principal and a copy will be made available from the school office.

Monitoring and Review of Anti-Bullying Policy

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal, Vice Principal and Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A report on implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on Pastoral Care provision. Its effectiveness will be monitored through parent, pupil and staff questionnaires and reported incidents.

The policy will be reviewed with the SLT and School Governors, every 2 years.

The whole staff and an audit of parents and pupils every 3 years.

Appendix 1

Anti Bullying P1 –3 Pupil Questionnaire

Class _____

Date: _____

Please tick only one box for each question		Yes	No
1	I feel happy in my school.		
2	I feel safe in school.		
3	I know what to do if I feel sad.		
4	I tell the teacher or someone in charge if someone hurts me or makes me sad.		
5	I like going outside to play.		
6	I tell someone at home if someone hurts me or makes me sad at school.		
7	I try my best at school.		
8	When we do well in school we are given stickers/rewards in class or at assembly.		
9	I can talk to my teacher about my feelings.		
10	The boys and girls in my school are very good and kind.		

Appendix 2

Anti Bullying P4-7 Pupil Questionnaire

Class _____ Date: _____

	What do you think? Please tick only one box for each question	True	Mostly True	Not True
1	I always feel happy in my school.			
2	Pupils in our school are well behaved.			
3	Our teachers deal with incidents fairly.			
4	If I tell a teacher/adult that I'm being bullied I know that she/he will listen and do something to help.			
5	In school we have talked about what is meant by bullying behaviour and about ways of dealing with it.			
6	If I am bullied in school I am happy to go and talk to an adult, a teacher or a supervisor			
7	Teachers and supervisors help me to feel safe in the school			
8	I get on well with other pupils in my class.			
9	In class we are given opportunities to learn to respect one another, to think of others and treat everyone the same.			
10	When we do well in school we are praised in class or assembly.			
11	I feel safe from all forms of bullying behaviour in the playground.			
12	I feel safe from all forms of bullying behaviour in the toilets and corridors.			
13	I know what to do if I feel I am bullied.			
14	I understand that I must tell an adult if I know that someone is being bullied.			
15	We learn about the feelings of bullying through Assemblies, Circle Time, Stories, Discussion, Poems, Drama or Songs.			
16	If I feel bullied in school I would tell someone at home.			

Appendix 3

Promoting an Anti-Bullying Culture

GUIDANCE TO PARENTS/CARERS ON COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are seeking the views of pupils and parent / carers to help us find out how effective our school has been in creating an Anti-Bullying culture and to review the effectiveness of our Anti-Bullying procedures. Your views would be very welcome and your responses will be treated in complete confidence.

There are 15 statements on the attached questionnaire, which will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. If you have more than one child at the school, please respond with only one child in mind and indicate that child's Class on the questionnaire.

When the data from all questionnaires has been collected and analysed, you will be given feedback.

The questionnaire will be used again at a later date in order to ascertain the changes that have taken place as a result of action taken. This will form part of our evaluation strategy. Again, you will be kept informed of our progress.

I would be grateful if you would return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by _____ (date)

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 4

Promoting an Anti-Bullying Culture Questionnaire for Parent / Carers

My Child's Class _____ Today's date: _____

	What do you think? Please tick only one box for each question.	True	Mostly True	Not True
1	The school is fully committed to creating an environment of care and trust of all pupils.			
2	High standards of behaviour are expected and are evident in the school.			
3	The staff are fair, firm, consistent and compassionate in their approach to keeping good order in the school.			
4	Pupils feel able to express concerns about bullying to any member of staff, knowing that these will be received sympathetically and that appropriate action will be taken.			
5	Teachers and supervisors help my child to feel safe in the playground.			
6	Good relationships between teachers, learning support and supervisors and pupils exist in and out of the classroom.			
7	Pupils are encouraged to value one another and to express their own views while appreciating the views of others.			
8	My child feels secure and free from emotional and physical harm in school.			
9	The achievements of all pupils are recognised, valued and celebrated so that pupils' self- esteem is enhanced.			
10	In school, pupils learn to respect and appreciate differences.			
11	In school, pupils are given opportunities to express their feelings in ways which are not aggressive.			
12	My child feels safe from bullying in school at all times.			
13	I agree with the school's anti bullying policy as issued on website and at the beginning of the school year.			
14	I am aware of clearly defined procedures for reporting and recording bullying incidents in school.			
15	I am confident if I have a concern about bullying that the school will deal with it quickly and effectively.			

Appendix 5

Alleged Bullying Incident Form

Child's Name:	Date:
Class & Teacher:	Staff Reporting Incident:
When and where did the incident occur?	
Behaviour Displayed	
Bullying	Being bullied
Physical bullying	Verbal bullying
Emotional bullying	Cyber bullying
<u>Details of Incident</u>	

Action taken after the Incident

Name of action/support for child(s) **who has been bullied**: (please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined on-going support / monitoring from staff
- Parental involvement
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies
- Other (Please Specify)

Additional Information:

Name of action/support for child(s) who has been **displaying bullying behaviour**: (please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined on-going support/monitoring from staff
- Parental involvement
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies
- Fixed exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Other

Additional Information:

Name and role of the teacher completing this form:

Name: _____ Role: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6

WEB SITES AND PHONE HELP LINES

Websites

- Anti-Bullying alliance – www.Anti-Bullyingalliance.org.uk –information, resources and advice relating to bullying
- Beatbullying – www.beatbullying.org – resources and lesson plans looking at the issue of bullying for primary and secondary aged pupils
- Cybermentors – www.cybermentors.org.uk - a safe social networking site providing information and support for young people affected by bullying
- Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk - Bullying advice, helpline, information, Anti-Bullying resources and training
- Need2Know – www.need2know.co.uk – youth friendly site featuring tips on how to stop bullying, what to do if you bully others etc
- NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk - advice on what to do if you are being bullied or see someone who is
- Think U Know – www.thinkuknow.co.uk - Website for cyber-bullying and e-safety information. Has separate areas for parent/carers, staff and children aged 5-7, 8-10 and 11-16
- Northern Ireland Anti- bullying Forum- www.niabf.org.uk

Phone numbers

- Childline – 0800 1111 – A free, confidential helpline for children and young people offering advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day
- NSPCC (FULLSTOP) Campaign – to help those who have suffered child abuse/ bullying / advise children about bullying (0808 800 5000)