

Anti-Bullying POLICY



Tír na nÓg Primary School

August 2016

TIR NA NOG PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been drawn up to meet the requirements of the Education Order (NI) 2003. It is based on the training provided by NEELB Counselling and Advice Services and on the guidance issued by the Children's Law Centre.

In drawing up our anti-bullying policy for Tir na nOg, we seek to establish an agreed definition of bullying.

Bullying is deliberately, hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself.

(Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection DE 1999)

AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aims of our anti-bullying policy are:

- To create a learning environment where children feel safe and are protected from bullying
- To educate our pupils in self-protection and anti-bullying strategies
- To have procedures in place on how complaints of bullying are dealt with

Bullying takes many forms, some of which young children find difficult to identify as such.

- Physical: hitting, kicking, nipping, tripping, damage to property, taking/hiding belongings, giving threatening looks, staring
- Verbal: Name calling, personal derogatory remarks, threats, insults, either directly to, or in the presence of the victim
- Indirect: Rumours, talking behind backs, exclusion from groups, not including in play or conversations

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. Staff members are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to counsel and discipline the bully. Parents of both the victim and the bully are personally contacted, when bullying behaviour is identified, on more than one occasion by a pupil or a group of pupils.

ETHOS

Central to our school ethos are the values of self-respect, respect for others, tolerance, co-operation, forgiveness and sharing which we hope contribute to reducing the incidents of bullying in the school.

CURRICULUM AND THE ROLE OF STAFF MEMBERS

Our approach to anti-bullying education is pro-active. It is delivered as a taught pastoral care theme in each class, with conflict resolution forming part of the pastoral provision in Key Stage 2.

Our pupils are taught in well-ordered classrooms with positive climates. Paired and group work contribute to the development of co-operative skills. Pupils' self-esteem is developed by experiencing success in their work through positive reinforcement and constructive assessment strategies.

As part of our anti-bullying education in every class in Tir na nOg, we

- foster attitudes and values of respect and care for one another
- employ teaching strategies that build pupils' self esteem and promote positive behaviour
- help children understand why some children are bullied
- help children understand that everyone is different and that differences must be respected
- educate pupils in the different forms of bullying
- help children realise that anyone can be a bully or a victim
- educate pupils in what to do if they are bullied
- provide Circle Time on a weekly basis to explore issues relating to rights and responsibilities towards self and others, pupils' anti-bullying strategies, keeping safe and helping keep others safe
- promote positive thinking, language and behaviours in ourselves and in our pupils
- encourage victims and bullies to help find a solution to issues
- emphasise and revise the "Run, yell or tell" rule

In addition to the above, anti-bullying assemblies highlight the different forms of bullying and focus on self-protection strategies for children. At various times the theme of bullying is selected as a whole-school theme for corridor displays and on occasions, Key Stage 2 anti-bullying workshops are delivered with the support of External Agencies

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In our efforts to make our school a safe, non-threatening environment for our pupils we regularly monitor reported incidents to identify potential "risk areas" and the type/s of bullying associated with them. When such an area is identified the principal will discuss the matter and draw up plans to seek improvements.

ROLE OF PARENTS

To support the school in dealing with bullying parents should

- inform the school if they hear or suspect incidents of bullying (as defined above) giving as much information as possible
- support the school if their child has been found to be bullying another child

PROCEDURES WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED

Any complaint by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied must be reported to the principal and will be fully investigated by him.

A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the principal within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation, which has been carried out, and the action being taken. A further follow-up contact call two weeks later will be made to ensure that the bullying has stopped.

INVESTIGATING A COMPLAINT OF BULLYING

When the principal is investigating a complaint of bullying, the following guidelines apply:

- 1) Two sides of the story will be listened to.
- 2) As much information as possible is gained from sources other than the victim and bully.
- 3) The victim/s and the bully/ies are given support to find solutions to the problem.

ROLE OF OUR PUPILS

For bullying not to be a problem it requires the support of our pupils. They are encouraged to share in the management of bullying. Pupils have the responsibility to

- show respect and friendliness towards other pupils at all times
- tell a responsible adult if they are being bullied
- inform school staff if they know someone else is being bullied
- co-operate with the school staff and other pupils to reach agreed solutions to the problem

SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Team action is taken to protect the victim. This usually includes another pupil or a small group of children befriending and supporting the child who is being bullied. If there is a report of bullying to a child, or group of children, the situation is monitored on an on-going daily basis, by a combination of the following strategies:

- 1) the child/children reporting to the principal on a daily basis
- 2) daily checks made by the principal with other pupils
- 3) lunchtime observation visits to the playground by the principal
- 4) daily checks made by the principal with playground staff and class teachers

N.B Any report of bullying regardless of the source and regardless of who receives the report must be referred to the principal and will be dealt with by him.

The principal has responsibility for record keeping relating to bullying incidents.

This policy is implemented in conjunction with our school's conduct policy.