

Anti-Bullying Policy



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BALLOUGRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Everyone at Ballougry Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. We see bullying as a very serious issue. It affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch. All forms of bullying can be damaging to the development of both the person being bullied and the person bullying.

Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should be subjected to bullying behaviour.

Principles - the principles underpinning this policy are:

- All Pupils have the right to learn free from intimidation and fear.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- The school, its stakeholders and the wider school community will not tolerate any form of bullying behaviour.
- Bullied pupils will be listened to.
- Reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Aims and Objectives

We at Ballougry Primary School, aim to create an environment where all members of the school community feel safe, respected and valued and where bullying will not be tolerated. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and to respond in accordance with the school policy. We aim to ensure that:

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- All Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents 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 what they can and should do if bullying occurs
- Any member of the school community or parent will be supported if bullying is reported
- Pupils and staff have the opportunity to work in an environment where they are free from intimidation and fear
- The needs of the victim are paramount
- All reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated

What is Bullying?

NI Anti Bullying Forum defines bullying as 'the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.'

There are many definitions of bullying but most have four things in common:

- It can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional.
- It is hurtful.
- It is repeated.
- It is difficult for the victim to defend himself/ herself against bullying.

Bullying can take several forms:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, biting, spitting, taking or hiding someone's belongings
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding a child from games/play/discussion, teasing and taunting, ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, taunting and teasing, making rude comments
- Racist - racial taunts, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Online/cyber - sending hurtful/malicious text messages or emails, abusive or annoying mobile phone calls, use of chat rooms/ web sites for bullying
- Sexual - sexually abusive comments, sexist comments
- Homophobic- because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality

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- Any hurtful, negative comments or actions made relating to a disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

Bullying is not the 'one off' occasion of falling out with friends, name-calling, arguments or when a 'one off' trick or joke is played on someone. Children sometimes have disagreements or say things because they are upset. Incidents of this nature will be dealt with in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Links with other school Policies

Other school policies which link into the Anti-bullying policy are Pastoral Care; Child Protection; Positive Behaviour; Acceptable use of the Internet; Mobile Phone Policy

Anti-Bullying Programmes/Strategies used in school

- A classroom ethos which promotes respect for the individual
- Adults setting an example by practising basic good manners
- Classroom rules which forbid anti-social behaviour
- Issues will be addressed through Circle time, role play, PDMU topics, individual class projects, questionnaires, School Council meetings etc. The following are examples of themes that may be addressed:
 - Stealing
 - Bullying
 - Acting Hastily
 - Doing what is right
 - Controlling your tongue
 - Dealing with issues such as death, disfigurement, divorce etc
- Each classroom has its own 'Worry Box.'

A Positive Anti-Bullying Approach

We believe that the only effective way of dealing with bullying is for the whole school community (teachers, pupils, parents, ancillary staff, Board of Governors) to confront the issue and work together in a concerted way to establish a safe emotional and physical environment where bullying cannot flourish.

The main elements of our approach will be:

- A shared understanding of bullying as a problem
- A shared understanding of the different forms of bullying
- A shared resolve to eliminate bullying
- Identification of bullying problems in the school
- The creation of an environment where it is safe to tell and the use of a range of interventions to address incidents when they happen
- Recognition by teachers of their role in creating an anti-bullying ethos, including their own interactions with children, other staff, parents and the community
- Classrooms that are safe and supportive
- Specialist help and training as necessary
- All community members examine their own behaviour including teachers, ancillary staff and parents
- A classroom anti-bullying curriculum programme in all classes
- Clear policies set out on use of mobile phones at school and at other times when children are under the school's authority (see mobile phone policy).
- Internet blocking technologies will be kept updated and harmful sites blocked
- Security systems will be in place to ensure that images and information about pupils and staff cannot be accessed improperly from outside school
- Ensure that parents are kept informed of the school standards and policies and know that the school has the right to monitor their child's e-communications in school.

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We will make our school, as far as possible, a better place for all – pupils and staff:

- We will take action when bullying is reported
- We will encourage in school, an ethos that promotes respect for the individual
- We will make it clear that bullying is an anti-social behaviour that will not be tolerated

Reporting Bullying

Every child needs to know who to contact if they are bullied:

- The child's classroom teacher
- Any teacher
- Any ancillary staff
- The Principal
- Parents
- A friend - who also knows that the incident must be reported.
- Make use of a classroom 'Comments box'

Procedure on Receiving a Report of Bullying

- Listen to and reassure the victim that the school will do everything to help them.
- Believe them and give them the confidence to tell you exactly what has happened.
- Aim to be non-threatening, the victim should never feel it is their fault.
- Try to ascertain the truth. Listen to the victim or victims separately and have them write down what happened. For younger children write down what they say. Log this in the Class Incident Book.
- Meet with the 'bully' or 'bullies' and have them write down what happened or write this down for younger children. Log this in the Class Incident Book.

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- Make the bully aware that their behaviour is unacceptable and explain clearly what behaviour is causing distress to the victim.
- Discuss with the children how the rules have been broken and the hurt that has been caused to some children.
- Tell the children that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander. All must help to prevent bullying.
- If physical hurt has been caused, report the matter to the Principal at once.
- If there is a repeated occurrence, report the incident to the Principal and fill out the report form kept in principal's office.
- The parents of the children concerned will be asked to come to school to discuss the matter and will be shown what the children have said.
- A file will be kept in the principal's office with all allegations of bullying which comply with the NI Anti Bullying's definition of bullying as detailed in this policy will be logged and dated by the person reporting the incident. This will be signed by the principal. (See Appendix One).
- All staff will be made aware of any incident where there has been a report of bullying, so that all staff can monitor the situation around the school; especially in the following areas:
 - Corridors
 - Toilets
 - Playground or playing field
 - Dinner hall
- Contact external services for support (e.g. WEST, Action for Children)
- If a bullying issue is identified, the child involved will be supported in keeping a bullying diary (see Appendix 2).

Responsibilities of all Stakeholders

Teachers'/Classroom Assistants Responsibilities

- Be alert for signs of bullying, both obvious and less obvious e.g. changes in children's behaviour.

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- Ensure that children know that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Regularly remind children that it is imperative that they tell someone about being bullied and emphasise that this is **not** telling tales.
- Implement the programme/ strategies outlined above.
- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Keep up-to-date with relevant courses and information as part of CPD, use of SDDs or staff meeting time.
- Make use of information gained from school surveys
- Monitor all situations quietly and assess the situation.
- Check with other staff for any relevant information when dealing with particular incidents.
- On receiving a report of bullying adopt a positive approach. Listen to the child and follow the procedure mentioned earlier.
- Be role models in anti-bullying:
 - Show respect for every child as an individual
 - Be aware of vulnerable children
 - Criticise the behaviour and not the child
 - Avoid having 'favourites'
 - Be seen to be fair
 - Avoid labelling
 - Have high expectations of pupils

- Never give children ammunition to use against each other

Lunchtime Supervisors

- Lunchtime Supervisors will be made aware that they have a role in monitoring children's behaviour.
- Lunchtime Supervisors must report any bullying incidents to the teacher on duty or the class teacher of the child/children involved.

Parents' responsibilities

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- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying.
- Take bullying seriously and find out the facts when told about an incident of bullying.
- Advise children to report suspected cases of bullying to the Principal or any teacher.
- Talk with the teacher or Principal in a co-operative manner.
- Ensure that their children understand the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Arrange to accompany the child, if the bullying is happening on the way to or from home.
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying.
- Read 'Top Tips' for stopping Bullying (see Appendix 3 and discuss with your child).

Children's Responsibilities

- Tell someone at school and tell your parents what is happening. This is not telling tales.
- Try walking away from the bully/ bullies and ignoring what they are saying. Tell an adult.
- Do not fight back. You might end up hurting them and getting into trouble.
- Stay in a group and try not to be caught on your own.
- Try to hide the fact that you are upset.
- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of becoming unpopular.

Children will always be encouraged to talk to their teacher, if someone is bothering them. This applies to bullying outside school as well as within. Talking is the only way to stop bullying.

Children who are being bullied feel powerless to stop it happening. It is a teacher's job to empower them to deal with this problem.

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**EVERYONE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO COMBAT AND EVENTUALLY
ERADICATE BULLYING**

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

_____ Principal _____ Date

_____ Chairman of B.O.G _____ Date

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Appendix One: Report to be used when reporting an Incident of Bullying.

Date:	Time:	Place of Incident	Reported By:

The Alleged Incident

		Age	Year	Gender	Ethnic Origin (if relevant to incident)	Religion (if relevant to incident)
Name of child experiencing alleged bullying/discriminatory behaviour						
Name of child displaying alleged bullying/discriminatory behaviour						

Type/Nature of alleged incident (please tick)

- ☐ **Written** (*graffiti, writing on jotters, written threats, drawings*)
- ☐ **Damage to Property** (*theft of bags, clothes or money, damaging clothes, ripping books*)
- ☐ **Verbal** (*name calling, threats, sarcasm, ridicule, discriminatory comments during lessons, discriminatory jokes, mimicking*)
- ☐ **Isolation** (*shunned, rejected, left out of activities/groups, refusal to co-operate with*)
- ☐ **Physical** (*pushing, shoving, tripping up*)
- ☐ **Incitement** (*encouraging others to display bullying behaviour, behave in a discriminatory manner, wearing discriminatory insignia, distributing discriminatory literature*)
- ☐ **ICT** (*use of mobile phone, internet or other technology to threaten or embarrass*)
- ☐

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Other Please Specify -

Action Taken

Please indicate the investigative procedures carried out including interviews with any witnesses or bystanders.

Was there sufficient evidence to support the allegation? ☐ Yes

☐

No

If the allegation was substantiated please indicate action taken (note that unsubstantiated allegations may still require support/action and recording).

Young Person displaying bullying behaviour

- ☐ Counselling
- ☐ Peer Support
- ☐ External Agency Involvement
- ☐ School's Discipline Procedures
- ☐ Restorative Practices
- ☐ Other

Young Person experiencing bullying

- ☐ Counselling
- ☐ Peer Support
- ☐ External Agency Involvement
- ☐ Restorative Practices
- ☐ Other

Please indicate the level of parental involvement

☐ Parents/Carers not informed of incident discussions

☐ Parents/Carers Informed by Letter

☐ Parents/Carers involved actively in

☐ Other (Please Specify)

Planned Monitoring/Review of situation

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☐

One Week

☐

One Month

☐

Six Months

Further Comment (if applicable):

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal's signature: _____