

Strabane Controlled Primary

Policy for Anti Bullying

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for the victim to defend himself/herself. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It normally manifests itself in 3 main forms:

- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking
- Verbal e.g. name calling, threats
- Indirect e.g. excluding, spreading rumours

At this school staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect (including cyber-bullying) will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation.

- Positive reward system for good behaviour and caring attitudes promoted throughout school.
- Children encouraged to be kind to each other and help/include each other.
- Discussion in class time of bullying and how to deal with it through PDMU. This can involve drama/role play, stories/poems, circle time, art, debates/discussions.
- Use of a "worry box" in senior classes.
- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding.
- Providing peer support i.e. a circle of friends to support the victim and report any further problems to the teacher.
- Identify the bullying behaviour. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the KS1/2 leader or the Principal.

Discussions with the person/s engaging in bullying behaviour. Set out the details of the incident and ask him/her to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable.

- If they recognise that the behaviour is unacceptable then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Discipline/Pastoral Care Policy. Providing opportunities for the person who has bullied to 'make amends' for their behaviour.

- If they do not admit to bullying further investigations will be carried out to establish the facts.
- Discussions with parents of all children involved by teacher, KS1/2 leader or Principal. The parents of the child/children engaging in bullying behaviour will be expected to support the school's efforts to modify the behaviour at home.
- Sanctions may include verbal admonishments, withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, suspension from school and finally expulsion depending on the perceived severity of the incidents.
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition. Staff will alert each other to ensure a continuity of monitoring.
- As the behaviour hopefully improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- Involving the Educational Welfare Service and/or WEST team and/or the Education Authority's Behaviour Support Team to support the staff/pupils.
- If bullying behaviour is persistent and defies the school's behaviour management strategies our child protection procedures may be triggered. The victim's needs will always be paramount.

In order to identify incidents of bullying we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- All staff listen and act when confronted with potential problems.
- Written records will be kept in the school's discipline file of bullying incidents. This will aid the spotting of trends.
- Posters in school dissuading children from bullying.
- The Childline telephone help number is displayed clearly in school.
- Assistance of ChildLine staff to train P6/7 children in how to deal with bullying.
- School Council to inform children about anti-bullying measures.

Communications re. Bullying

Parents concerned about bullying should speak, in the first instance, to the class teacher. A designated teacher will be involved and will report back to the parent within 7 days.

The school will contact parents if bullying behaviour is identified in school.