



Anti- Bullying Policy

St Canice's Mission Statement:

"To create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating learning environment in which all members of this Catholic school community can grow spiritually, emotionally, socially and academically so that they can make their best contribution to society."

This policy has been developed consistent with:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations 2010
- The Education Order 2006
- 2003 Statutory Requirements [Education & Libraries NI Order] which requires Board of Governors and Principals to consult with all key stakeholders [pupils, parents and staff] regarding Positive Behaviour and bullying prevention measures which must be in place. Specific articles of the Legislation include the following:
[Article 17 – Duty to Safeguard and Promote Welfare of Pupils.
Article 18 – Child Protection Measures.

Article 19 – School Discipline: Measures to Prevent Bullying.

Reference DE Circular 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries [Northern Ireland] Order 2003.]

- The Children's Order 1995

DEFINITION

The legal definition of bullying for Northern Ireland as outlined in the 2016 Addressing Bullying in Schools Act is:

“(1) In this act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of –

A] Any verbal, written or electronic communication

B] Any other act, or

C] Any combination of those,

By a pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of sub section (1), “act” includes omission.

Methods of Bullying

Bullying can be

- Verbal
- Written
- Electronic
- Physical
- Omission

Motivation for Bullying can include

- Age
- Appearance
- Ability
- Breakdown in peer relationships
- Community Background
- Political Affiliation
- Gender Identity
- Looked After Child status
- Young Carer Status
- Religion
- Race
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation

Bullying behaviour can be described as but is not limited to – hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, material harm such as taking or stealing money or possessions, saying mean things to or about others, threats, making fun of others, calling mean or hurtful names, telling lies or spreading false rumours about others, trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil, other direct/indirect acts. This list is non-exhaustive and it is possible for new behaviours to be added.

The use of electronic communication as a method of bullying behaviour is most commonly identified as cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by an individual or group against another child using for example electronic forms of contact and social media platforms.

Various methods of bullying behaviour can occur separately or together.

Bullying behaviour can also include omission where a pupil is intentionally left out or excluded from a group of friends or activities. These exclusionary activities are as serious as other verbal or physical acts of bullying.

Whilst repetition is internationally recognised as an important element in establishing bullying behaviour a one off incident of cyber bullying where one post is viewed or shared repeatedly can be viewed as repetitive. Serious one off incidents may also be viewed as bullying behaviour depending on the severity of the incident.

“Emotional or Psychological Harm” is intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or adversely affecting a pupil’s self-esteem.

“Physical Harm” is intentionally causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

In determining intent to cause harm the school will use their discretion in assessing an individual pupil’s capacity to understand the impact of their behaviours e.g. due to developmental age, disability or delay.

All allegations of bullying will be investigated using the Bullying Assessment Concern Form [BACF] and a record will be stored digitally on the SIMS System. The record will include the motivation of the incident, the methods of bullying and details of how the incident was addressed and the outcome.

It is important to avoid labelling and stereotyping individual pupils and instead to describe the pupil’s behaviours. With this in mind the term “bully” will be replaced with “pupil displaying bullying behaviour” and the term “victim” will be replaced with pupil experiencing bullying behaviour”.

Where an allegation is upheld the school will apply its bullying strategies/interventions as outlined in this policy, where the allegation is not upheld the school will follow its Positive Behaviour Policy.

This policy applies to all pupils registered at St Canice’s Primary School:

- On the premises of the school during the school day
- While travelling to and from school during the school term
- While the pupil is in lawful charge of a member of the school staff
- While the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school

The Board of Governors will ensure that this policy is effectively implemented and updated at intervals of no more than 4 years. They will be informed at Board of Governor meetings about the recorded incidents of bullying, including method, motivation and how the incident was addressed.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care, including child protection, pupil behaviour, health and well-being, safety and security and our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is addressed through our other school policies such as Child Protection, Positive Behaviour Policy and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

THE PROCESS OF PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION

We have an ongoing policy of consultation and participation. We regularly gather and use data to inform policy review. This takes the form of:

- Awareness raising programmes through curriculum involvement in NI Anti Bullying Week and parent information evenings.
- Obtaining the views of elected school representatives e.g. School Council and School Prefects.
- Surveys/ questionnaires to pupils, parents and whole school staff.
- On-going Professional Development and Support for staff.
- Monitoring effectiveness of our policy – when issues arose how effective were our interventions? What learning is there from these – identify and implement improvements/ changes.
- Review of policy as required, formally adopted by Board of Governors, signed and dated

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In order to promote positive behaviour we will;

- Promote and teach Jenny Mosley's Golden Rules in class, the school canteen and in the school playground.
- Follow a school curriculum which addresses prejudice, discrimination and social/ emotional learning [PDMU, PATHS & RE]
- Ensure there is school wide supervision and effective, consistent behaviour management by all staff.
- Create opportunities for developing Positive Peer Relationships through Circle Time.
- Keep a record of serious playground incidents in order to identify patterns of bullying behaviour.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Responsibilities 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 Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs F Mc Cann or Deputy Child Protection Teacher Mrs J Devine. Class Teachers will complete The BCAF form on SIMS and follow school policy in accordance with agreed procedures
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.

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.

Anyone who experiences bullying behaviour 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 (our Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs F Mc Cann ,Deputy Child Protection Teacher Mrs J Devine or their class teacher) 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 forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards 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 children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. And point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are experiencing bullying behaviour and for the child displaying bullying behaviour.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

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

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

A Restorative Ethos is concerned with:

- Developing, maintaining and repairing positive relationships
- Helping pupils learn and develop the skills to make good choices
- Enabling children to acknowledge when they have harmed someone and think about what to do to put it right
- Encouraging children to consider their own feelings and those of others [emotional well-being]
- Encouraging children to consider their own behaviour and the effect it has on others.

In order to avoid labelling children we will throughout our dealings use the terms “child who has experienced bullying behaviour” and “child who is displaying bullying behaviour” as recommended by the NIABF.

All staff will adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns. They will react to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way.

Once an alleged bullying incident has occurred staff members directly involved and if appropriate the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or Principal will:

1. Gather and clarify facts.
2. Complete The Bullying Concern Assessment Form on SIMS. [Appendix 1]
3. On the basis of this initial assessment :
 - Choose an appropriate intervention from the 4 Intervention Levels outlined by the NIABF.
 - Ensure effective communication amongst all parties.
 - Consider the need for [a] Parental Involvement, [b] SENCO involvement, [c] Risk Assessment and [d] External Agency involvement.
4. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of the chosen intervention/strategy.
5. Record actions taken and outcomes achieved on SIMS.

School Procedures for Effectively Responding To Incidents of Bullying Behaviour and Implementing Effective Interventions.

The main aim of any intervention will be to RESPOND to the bullying that is taking place, RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the well-being of those involved. The 4 levels outlined by NIABF are

1. Level 1 – Low level Bullying Behaviour.

Interventions at Level 1 are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to “get them back on track” while listening to them and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying. Class teachers who confront a low level incident of bullying behaviour [observed or reported] have an initial responsibility for taking positive action. This may include using different practices such as:

- Rights Respecting Scripts
- Restorative Questioning

1] Tell me what happened?

2] Why did you behave that way?

3] Who has been upset by what you have done?

4] How do you think that person is feeling?

5] What do you need to do to make things right?

- One to One discussions and/or Think Time Discussions
- Whole class/group discussions
- Quality Circle Time.

Staff will address concerns with all pupils directly involved or indirectly impacted upon. This will include bystanders and as appropriate, the group or whole class. Appropriate records will be maintained throughout.

2. Level 2 – Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour.

Interventions at Level 2 continue with the above but there is a shift from individual to group interventions. Class teachers will obtain additional advice and support from the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or Principal regarding their “Assessment of the Concern”. This may include:

- Obtaining parental consent to planned interventions
- Meeting with pupils involved or impacted upon
- Meeting with parents/carers.

3. Level 3 – Complex Bullying Behaviour.

At this level a “history” of on-going concerns and interventions may exist or this may be a newly emergent complex bullying concern. Staff members actively involved will include The Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, SENCO and Class Teachers. There will be a need to:

- Gather and assess complex and dynamic information
- Liaise and make referral to external professionals and agencies
- Maintain ongoing communication with pupil’s, their parents and carers.

There may be a need to include an integration of the following Plans:

- Risk Assessment/Risk Management Plans
- Pastoral Care Child Protection Plans
- Special Education Needs/IEP’S.

Bullying at this level often involves complex group dynamics, where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying behaviours. Consequently interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement. Possible interventions could include The PIKAS Method of Shared Concern or Support Group Method along with individual support and strength building programmes.

Level 4 – High Risk Bullying Behaviour.

Bullying concerns which require this level of intervention include considerable pupil vulnerability and well-being considerations, “risk of considerable harm” or criminal aspects. There may be a threat to the safety and welfare to any or all of the pupils involved. Staff members actively involved will include The Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, SENCO and Class Teachers. Interventions will be carefully managed and may include:

- Discussion with and referral to multi-disciplinary agencies
- On-going liaison with Family Support, Safeguarding and /or medical agencies to elicit intensive support services for the pupils and their families
- Working in close partnership with parents/carers
- Advising and supporting school staff implementing risk management plans
- Supporting school staff implementing discrete school and classroom based “Pupil Strengthening” interventions
- Obtaining advice and support from the Child Protection Support Services for Schools.

April 2019 JD

Appendix 2

RECORD OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

5th January 2015 – All teaching staff and classroom assistants participated in training. We agreed on a working definition of bullying and discussed the complex and traumatic effects of bullying. We spent some time examining the NIAFB resource “ EFFECTIVE RESPONSES to BULLYING BEHAVIOUR” and agreed on a whole school approach incorporating solution focused questions and the 4 levels of intervention. We agreed to begin to use a playground incident book so that we would have records to help us identify patterns of bullying. We completed questionnaires and discussed strengths and weaknesses with regard to bullying.

3rd January 2018 – Revision Training with Teaching staff & questionnaires.

8TH January 2018 – Questionnaires completed with pupils Primary 4 to Primary 7.

Questionnaires issued to parents.

18th January 2018 - Revision Training with Ancillary staff & questionnaires.

Meeting of Principal and VP to discuss any issues. Completion of Data Analysis shared with Staff and Parents.

11th March 2019 – Mrs J Devine attended a 1 day course – Supporting the Successful Implementation of The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act NI 2016

4th April 2019– Mrs Devine attended Using SIMS Behaviour Management to Record a Bullying Concern

May 2019 – New Anti Bullying Policy written in line with Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016, approved by Board of Governors and consultation with parents.