

St Finian's Primary School

School Anti- Bullying Policy

Mission Statement

The school mission statement states that we:-

Aim to provide a caring and secure environment in which our children can develop their potential while growing in self- esteem and confidence. It is our wish to structure the learning environment so that children will be encouraged to respect themselves and other people. In order to accomplish, this we seek the co-operation of our parents in the shared task of educating our children.

Each member of the school community has the responsibility to contribute to the creation and protection of such an environment. This is a responsibility which is taken seriously and is reflected in a positive and preventative approach to the issue of bullying. The school strives to establish a climate in which a child who is being bullied feels that it is safe to tell. Children are more likely to confide in teachers if they are confident that action will be taken to resolve their dilemma.

Aims:

- to clarify for staff, children and parents that bullying is always unacceptable and that it is regarded as a grave offence by the school.
- To create an environment in which individual children can flourish and fulfil their true potential
- To promote self discipline, self respect and respect for others
- To emphasise the importance of and to strengthen communication between home and the school

Definition

Bullying is repeated deliberate behaviour which makes others feel uncomfortable or embarrassed, whether this is intended or not. Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:

- physical: e.g. hitting, spitting, kicking or damage to belonging
- verbal: e.g. threats or name calling
- indirect: e.g. spreading rumours or excluding someone from social groups

We understand that if unchecked, bullying can be profoundly damaging to the victim both emotionally and physically and can seriously disrupt or impair a child's capacity to learn and develop. It must also be remembered, that not every action of another or others that makes a person feel uncomfortable or hurt, can be described as bullying. From time to time, everyone will experience occasions where they feel embarrassed

or uncomfortable. The process of growing up includes learning to cope with such incidents.

Symptoms of Bullying may include changes in behaviour such as:

- becoming anxious or nervous
- becoming withdrawn
- lack of concentration
- feigning illness
- loss of appetite
- marked deterioration in school work
- absenteeism

We recognise that bullying can occur and all such instances will be treated seriously and investigated. All staff will be vigilant to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening. The parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be contacted.

Responsibilities of School Staff:-

- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour that we expect from our pupils
- be alert to the signs of bullying
- develop self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others in the children
- deal with instances of bullying promptly and effectively
- listen to children who have been bullied and take what they say seriously and act to support them
- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, reporting back fully and promptly on the action being taken
- inform other staff about reported incidents

Responsibilities of the Children:-

- not to become involved in any form of bullying behaviour
- report to staff any suspected instances of bullying
- to speak out against the bully and to report any incidents should they become victims of bullying

Responsibilities of the Parents :

- to support the work of the school by encouraging their children to report any incidents of bullying to their teacher or other member of the school staff
- watch out for any signs that indicate that their child might be being bullied and inform the school accordingly
- reassure their child that something will be done to alleviate any problems they might have
- co-operate with the school in matters of bullying whether their child is the victim or the perpetrator

We believe that all members of the school community share the responsibility to work together to eradicate bullying

The School's Response to Bullying:

One of the key elements in our preventative strategy is the creation of a positive ethos that reinforces a child's sense of self worth. Some of the measures that contribute to the creation of that ethos are listed below:

- celebration of achievements at weekly assemblies
- a variety of methods of rewarding achievement and care for other children are in place in each classroom
- Star of the Week and Helper of the Week
- Liturgical celebrations
- The Alive O programme and accompanying prayer services
- Positive marking policy celebrating a child's success in their work
- Class rules prohibiting bullying
- Clear pastoral care procedures
- Staff awareness of Child Protection issues/procedures
- Extra curricular activities
- Careful supervision at break and lunch times
- Effective liaison with parents

Should incidents of bullying arise the following strategies will be invoked:

- any child suspected of bullying behaviour will be interviewed by the class teacher and/or the Principal
- the victim and any witnesses will also be interviewed separately
- the bully and the victim will be interviewed together unless the victim is unwilling to allow this to happen
- both parties will be made aware of the effects of bullying and will be reminded of the school policy on bullying
- the bully will be given a verbal warning and the incident will be recorded (if bullying is proven)
- further bullying will result in the parents being informed of reported incidents
- an interview with the parents will be arranged. The bully will also be present
- parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed of any sanctions taken
- should the parents feel that their complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, they will then be referred to their rights under the procedures for general complaints