



*"Learning for Tomorrow"*

# Ballymoney Model

## Controlled Integrated Primary

### ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(Reviewed January 2015)

#### **Definition**

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as "the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others."

#### **Rationale**

Bullying is not individual or isolated instances of aggression but rather the wilful and conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else repeatedly or over a period of time putting someone else into a state of anxiety. It may be carried out by an individual or groups.

At Ballymoney Model Controlled Integrated Primary School we believe that our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Teachers and all staff continually reinforce the aims of the school relating to appropriate behaviour. Teachers and all staff set high standards of expected behaviour both inside and outside the classroom.

We realise that, if unchecked, bullying can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and longer term, emotionally, physically or both, and can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop. At Ballymoney Model CIPS we encourage respect, self-discipline, consideration for others, responsibility, good citizenship, happiness and cooperation.

Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is **WRONG** and will not be tolerated.

Bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly and promptly.

Ballymoney Model CIPS is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and as such recognises the rights of the school community regarding safety. (UNCRC Articles 19, 34 and 37).

The primary duty of this school is to provide care for its pupils.

We want every child and young person to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution

Bullying can occur in a number of different ways i.e. physical, verbal and emotional.

### **Verbal bullying**

- Name calling
- Making insulting or offensive remarks
- Making threats

### **Emotional or indirect bullying**

- Spreading malicious rumours or nasty stories
- Leaving people out of social groups
- Sending nasty text messages, e-mails (cyber bullying) and engaging in social media negatively about the person/persons.

For each of these, the bullying can also be driven by prejudice based on:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Special Educational Needs and Disability

**Don't put up with it – tell someone now!**

## **Guidance for all staff and parents – watch out for the signs of bullying:**

A child might:

- Not want to go to school
- Begin truanting or go missing from home
- Often feel ill
- Become isolated from friends
- Suddenly become ill when it's time for school
- Be frightened to walk to and from school
- Begin to lag in their schoolwork

### **More signs to watch for:**

- 'Lose' possessions at school
- Cease to communicate with their parents (particularly after school)
- Change their behaviour, e.g. Become aggressive, withdrawn, anxious
- Lose their appetite
- Have regular nightmares, trouble sleeping and / or begin bed-wetting
- Ask for money or begin to steal money
- Bully younger brothers/sisters
- Self-harm or attempt suicide

If you see these signs – tell someone.

### **Action to be taken by school when bullying is suspected or reported**

- React promptly, firmly and sensitively
- Identify those involved
- Talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully, and any witnesses establishing the location, time and date of incident
- Establish the type of bullying
- Help and support (where possible) will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies

If any degree of bullying is identified the following action will be taken:-

We will support the victims in the following ways:

- Offer them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, another teacher, member of Senior Management Team, VP or Principal if they choose
- If the experience has been reported to a member of non-teaching staff it should be reported immediately to the class teacher
- Inform the victim's parents/guardians
- Offer continued support if they feel they need it

We will discipline yet also try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- open discussion between the bully and victim – an apology may suffice
- inform the bullies' parents/guardians, where appropriate
- by continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
- refer pupils to relevant outside agencies if deemed necessary, i.e. MASTS, CAHMS, Educational Psychology.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below.

### **Disciplinary steps**

1. Bullies will be warned officially to stop offending
2. Loss of privileges, 'Golden Time'.
3. Parents/Guardians will be informed.
4. If bullying continues, suspension for a fixed time in accordance with school discipline policy.
5. If such behaviour does not end, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion) in accordance with NEELB policy.

It is anticipated that steps 4 and 5 will only be carried out in exceptional or persistent cases and will be executed in line with NEELB procedures.

### **What can you do if you are being bullied?**

Through class teaching and in assemblies children will be encouraged to deal with bullying in the following ways.

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!
- Don't put up with bullying
- Do
  - Tell an adult, teacher, supervisor
  - Tell your parents
  - Keep away from the source of trouble
  - Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied – it is WRONG
  - Be proud of who you are
  - Try not to show that you are upset – a bully thrives on your fear
  - Stay with a group of friends/people – there is safety in numbers
  - Be assertive – shout “No” – walk confidently away – go straight to a teacher
  
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

### **What can you do if you know someone is being bullied?**

- When someone is being bullied or is distressed – TAKE ACTION. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying
- Inform an adult e.g. teacher immediately
- Be kind and listen to the victim – reassure victim and offer to support by telling someone about the situation
- Do not tolerate bullies in your group of friends
- Don't ignore bullying – it won't go away
- Don't be provoked into becoming involved

### **As a Parent**

- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has been, who they have spent their time with etc.
- Understand the difference between one off incidents and bullying.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Assure your child that there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and that they will not be afraid to report any bullying incident and ask for help.
- Parents have an important role to play in supporting their child who may be a victim or an offender.
- Parents will be encouraged to remain involved in order to provide information at follow up meetings if required.

Ballymoney Model CIPS procedure for dealing with parental concerns is included. (Appendix 1)

## **Tackling Bullying through the Curriculum**

- Activities that are likely to improve relationships and self-esteem in the classroom, and hence reduce bullying, are also central to creating a classroom within which effective learning can take place.
- Building individual self-esteem and positive working relations are central to improving the academic curriculum rather than peripheral to it.
- We need to use positive teaching strategies across the curriculum and to reward positive behaviours.
- Everyone participates in our whole school 'Friendship Week' during Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Week.

Activities during this week include special assembly with guest speakers. Children take part in a variety of writing, reading, circle time, music, art and drama activities in relation to promoting positive friendships. Children's work is displayed in the foyer as a celebration of this special week in school.

## **Curricular Areas**

Art – children often find it easier to express their feelings through art and this can often lead to discussions and hopefully resolutions.

R.E. – together pupils can explore and discuss the importance of relationships and the tolerance for others along with self-respect. (We are all individuals).

P.D.M.U. – provides many opportunities to promote positive relationships through circle time, and anti-bullying strategies. Each class has circle time regularly timetabled and activities address particular problems associated with behaviour, relationships, anger, aggression and bullying.

P.E. – can contribute by helping children to gain physical confidence and greater self-control. It offers opportunities to work together to build team spirit and to support one another.

Drama – offers a wealth of opportunities including role – playing difficult situations, keeping feelings under control, resisting pressure and practising the expression of strong emotions. Situations can be developed with possible alternate strategies or endings. Drama can be used to develop the language of "telling" and feeling confident with this.

Literacy – this allows the development of many skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing, presenting a case, taking part in debate, planning and evaluating a campaign, speaking and writing reports, newspaper articles and stories.

Literature is a core component of the English Curriculum, making it a good vehicle for exploring a wide variety of behaviour including bullying.

Browne A. – Willy the Wimp (Methuen)  
(Puffin)

Bryars B. - The Eighteenth Emergency

Elliot M. - Willow Street Kids (Andre Deuth)

Gooden R. - The Diddakoi (Puffin)

Kemp G. - Gowie Corby Plays Chicken (Puffin)

Walsh J.P. - Gaffer Samson's Luck (Puffin)

In Ballymoney Model CIPS we promote a caring, co-operative environment as set out in our Pastoral Care Policy and other related policies.

We have a well-disciplined, well organised and child-centred school and this minimises the occurrence of bullying.

We have developed our playground into a place that caters for the variety of play needs that children of Primary School age have. We have introduced a Playground Buddy system to support children in the infant playground.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is made available to everyone in the school community via the school website or on request from the school office.

Ballymoney Model CIPS's Anti-Bullying Policy is part of the school's overall concern to promote a healthy environment, excellent pastoral care and a positive approach to child protection. This policy and our practice will be evaluated and reviewed regularly as part of the process of school development planning.

JJ,RC & HMcC January 2015

Approved by the Board of Governors: 5th March 2015

Appendix 1

Procedure for dealing with parental concerns:

