



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

FANE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT ON ANTI-BULLYING

Rationale:

Fane Street Primary School is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it as it is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by in school. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Principles:

The school actively promotes positive relations between all members of the school community – pupils, staff and parents. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn free from intimidation and fear; that the needs of the victim are paramount; that pupils who feel that they are being bullied will be listened to and any reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Definitions:

What is Bullying?

Bullying is an abuse of power that can be carried out by an individual or a group and is the repeated use of negative actions/aggression with the intention of deliberately hurting another person physically, emotionally or mentally and which results in pain and distress to the victim.

The following is not an exhaustive list; however, it is important to remember that some of these may be a one-off or irregular occurrence and would not therefore be viewed as being an incident of bullying. As stated above bullying is something that is sustained and repetitive over a period of time.

Bullying can be any one of, or a combination of:

Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, pinching or any use of violence.

Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Emotional - excluding, tormenting (hiding or damaging property, threatening gestures, being unfriendly), belittling another's abilities or achievements, writing offensive notes, inappropriate use of new technologies e.g. email/text, excluding another pupil from a group activity, ridiculing a pupil's appearance or mannerisms etc .

Racist/Sectarian - racial/religious taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual - unwanted physical contact or abusive/personal comments.

Links to other school policies:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents/policy statements: Pastoral Care Policy, Our Children Statement; Positive Discipline Policy and our Child Protection Policy.

Consultation Process:

Pupils have been involved in the formulation of this policy through completing suitable surveys/questionnaires to a random sample of children. It is anticipated that once the school council is formed it will have an input into future reviews of this policy. Children's views on bullying will be ascertained through Circle Time and other PDMU activities as well as through unplanned, informal feedback as it may arise.

Teaching staff have also been surveyed to ascertain their thoughts regarding this policy and finally a random sample of parents have been surveyed in order that there might be a wide range of views and needs reflected in a policy that is endorsed by all.

The Responsibilities of Staff:

Our staff will:

- Help to foster self-esteem and self-confidence in our children and respect for self and others.
- Demonstrate by example, the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes (age appropriate) to ensure that all pupils learn about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully through Circle Time and other PDMU activities.
- Ensure that all children know that they are to tell an adult about bullying if 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 appropriately to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to Mr Nicholl in the first instance or to Mrs Cunningham if Mr Nicholl is unavailable. Mr Nicholl will address this matter following the procedures outlined under Action section below, and inform Mrs Cunningham about this situation. If there is a reoccurrence of this behaviour by the same pupil then the pupil will be referred to Mrs Cunningham who will follow the procedures outlined below.
- Follow up any complaint about bullying made by a parent and report back promptly on the action taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of our Pupils:

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of becoming temporarily unpopular.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying to help prevent any further occurrences.

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 the result of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to Mr Nicholl/Mrs Cunningham/their class teacher.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Keeping a written record of any instances of bullying and informing the school about these immediately.

- Co-operating with the school as it investigates the situation to establish the facts and deal with the situation in an appropriate way.
- Understanding that bullying is a sustained and repeated action and realise that it is natural for children to have a disagreement or hit out on a one-off basis and that this may not be an instance of bullying.
- Not encouraging their children to respond in a manner contrary to the school rules in a bid to 'take the law into their own hands'.
- Not adding any further distress by constantly raising the matter with their child.
- Giving the perpetrator an opportunity to change.
- Not approaching the bully themselves but informing the school so that they can deal with the matter appropriately.
- Reporting any incidents that occur outside school to the PSNI.

How to prevent bullying:

Teachers and supervisors will always be vigilant. In some cases it may be appropriate to introduce a 'Buddy System' to assist children who feel anxious and need reassurance at break and lunch times.

It should be made clear to all children that bullying is unacceptable. We advocate a 'telling, listening and responding' environment where children should be encouraged to inform teachers or supervisors if they feel that they are being bullied and should be assured that their complaint will be taken seriously.

School rules should be stressed, especially the caring rule. Children should be encouraged to look out for each other. 'Reformed' bullies should receive praise and encouragement.

Talking and listening, role-playing and circle work should be used to help children to empathise with victims and with bullies, and to develop skills for resolving conflict without resorting to violence.

Procedures for responding to allegations of bullying behaviour:

Action

Children will be given straightforward instructions about reporting bullying to their teacher.

The teacher/supervisor will listen carefully and sympathetically to what they are being told without being judgemental, and encourage the child to write down (or dictate to the teacher) what has happened..

The teacher/supervisor will talk to the person being accused of bullying, and listen carefully to what he/she has to say. The child will be encouraged to write down (or dictate to the teacher) what has happened.

The teacher/supervisor will listen separately to both parties and may talk to other children before making a judgement.

If it is deemed to be a case of bullying, the teacher/supervisor will assure the victim that something will be done to try to resolve the situation. The bully will be spoken to and staff will stress that bullying will not be tolerated; they will criticise the behaviour, not the child. It will be accepted that people who bully have a problem too and therefore need help to change this behaviour. The bully will be expected to understand that he/she is causing suffering, and that the behaviour is unacceptable.

We will use the sanctions in the schools Positive Behaviour policy as disciplinary procedures. A record will be kept of the incident on a Bullying Incident Sheet (appendix A). Staff will monitor the situation and inform other teachers and supervisors as appropriate. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child who has displayed bullying behaviour will be informed and provided with an opportunity to discuss the matter with the principal. Appropriate feedback will be given to the parents of the victim.

If there is a recurrence, parents of the perpetrator will be asked to meet with the Principal and further sanctions identified in our behaviour policy will be applied.

If the bully repeatedly displays this behaviour then a referral will be made to the Belfast Education & Library Board Behaviour Panel.

Continuous Professional Development of Staff

Training will be provided by BELB to staff as deemed necessary. School will seek advice and support from various agencies as necessary e.g. CASS, Behaviour Management Team, EWO, Education Psychology, Child Protection officers, NSPCC etc.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the SMT at regular intervals. Parents, staff and pupils will be surveyed every three years to ensure that progress has been made in reducing and eradicating bullying from Fane Street.

Appendix A

BULLYING INCIDENT SHEET

Date: _____

Victim: _____

Time: _____

Perpetrator: _____

Location: _____

Reported by: _____

What was involved - tick boxes

1. Verbal Abuse

persistent and offensive

inciting other people

other

2. Refusal to Co-operate

sit next to/talk to/work with/help

persistent

inciting others

other

3. Violence

jostling

intimidation

bribery

ganging up - leader

ganging up - follower

punching/kicking

serious fighting

use of weapons

other

4. Abuse of Personal Property _____

detail _____

Other/further comments _____

How Dealt

Further Comment/Action

Discussion with pupil _____

Discussion with parent _____

Discussion with all involved _____

Refer deputy head _____

Refer head _____

Letter home _____

Child sent home _____

Request Suspension _____
