

- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is safe to do so;
- Refrain from taking matters into their own hands and lashing out physically at others; and
- 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.

We ask 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 concerns to a member of staff as soon as possible. Children need to be taught how to be assertive rather than always relying on a phone call from their parents. So many issues can be sorted within school if staff are informed by the pupils;
- Explaining to their children the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and other pupils;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if their child is not involved;
- Checking all the facts—BEFORE determining whether bullying has occurred ie the behaviour was deliberate, harmful, targeted and repeated over a period of time;
- Co-operating with the school, especially if their child is accused of bullying and needs to be disciplined.

The Responsibilities of all

Everyone should work together to combat, and hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying. Bullying is undesirable and hurtful and it will not be tolerated in our school.

In the Model Primary School, we also recognise the importance of distinguishing between those behaviours, which while undesirable and unacceptable, do not constitute bullying from those which are undesirable and unacceptable and do constitute bullying because they are PROVEN to be deliberate, hurtful, targeted and repeated over a period of time.

The Board of Governors and staff of the Model Primary School are committed to an Anti-Bullying Policy that contains guidelines and measure that will contribute to us creating a whole school approach to this issue.

I THINK MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED; WHAT SHOULD I DO?

1. Reassure your child that he / she is right to tell you.
2. Listen to and reassure your child that you will do everything you can to help them and so will their teacher and the school.
3. Find out the facts and record them.
4. Make sure your child knows what bullying is, that it is wrong, and that no-one deserves to be bullied.
5. Emphasize that he or she needs to tell the truth and be honest if they themselves have done something wrong.
6. Allow him or her plenty of time to explain what is happening.
7. Write down:
 - What happened
 - Who else heard or saw it (this is extremely important)
8. If you feel the bullying placed your child in physical danger on the way to or from school, please contact us immediately.
9. If your child is in Primary 5 – Primary 7 encourage them to tell their teacher first before contacting the school. It is vital that our older children are empowered to deal with issues in order to prepare them for big school and the ability to assert themselves and develop self-confidence.
10. Approach the school, starting with the class teacher.

HOW DO I APPROACH A MEETING AT THE SCHOOL?

Please remember that we are here to help. We are as anxious as you are to resolve this problem. It is always going to be more helpful if we work in partnership. In most instances, please contact the school to initially speak to the class teacher. The teacher will contact you when their teaching commitments have finished for the day. We will give you the opportunity to establish on-going communication with the school to monitor the progress of the situation. If you feel that the situation is not being resolved you may contact the Principal by phone or make an appointment. Please do not ask to speak to a teacher or the Principal first thing in the morning as many of our staff have duties and are preparing for assemblies or the teaching day ahead.

CARRICKFERGUS MODEL PRIMARY SCHOOL



‘Inspiring excellence through example, endeavour and encouragement.’



**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
PARENT SUMMARY**

Dear Parents

This is a summary of our Anti-Bullying Policy. The full version of the policy is available on request and has been ratified by our Board of Governors.

We seek to create a **TELLING, LISTENING** and **RESPONDING** school environment where everyone can feel safe, valued and cared for. Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse which we do not tolerate.

We believe that every member of the school community has the right to;

- Feel safe and secure;
- Be treated with respect and courtesy;
- Have equal opportunities, regardless of sex, race, religion or ability;
- Be able to learn; and
- Be valued as a member of the school community.

Bullying behaviour is against the ethos and values of our school.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

'Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself.'

The 3 main types of bullying are;

- Physical
- Verbal
- Indirect

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. Bullying behaviour usually has the four features;

- It is repetitive and persistent
- It is intentionally harmful
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence.

These may take the form of the following;

- Name calling or making hurtful comments
- Hitting, kicking, biting, pushing and shoving or other physical attacks over a period of time
- Threatening Behaviour
- Taking things away from a child
- Stealing Money
- Damaging Property
- Making things up to get another child into trouble
- Taking friends away from a child
- Leaving a child out, spreading stories/rumours, gesturing etc
- Conditional Friendship

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

A child may:

- Refuse or do not want to go to school
- Cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares or wet the bed
- Complain of a sore head or stomach
- Have possessions that go missing
- Have unexplained cuts or bruises
- Become withdraw or aggressive
- Ask for or steal money
- Are reluctant to get out of the car or get ready in the morning
- Have mood swings and want to stay close to you
- Let their standard of school work deteriorate

The above may be signs of other problems too but if you notice any of them it is important to find out why they are happening.

HOW MIGHT A BULLIED CHILD FEEL?

- Angry: venting this anger against family or pets
- Anxious: being worried about going outside or going to school
- Sick: having headaches, stomach pains etc
- Isolated: wondering 'Why is no-one playing with me?'
- Unable to sleep: crying out or having disturbed sleep
- Vulnerable: expecting something to happen or being constantly on edge

RESPONSIBILITIES

Our staff will:

- Be consistent in our approach when dealing with bullying concerns/behaviour;
- Foster in our pupils self-esteem and self-respect;
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of all of our pupils;
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every child 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;
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively;
- Keep a record of alleged/observed incidents;
- Check all the facts before determining whether or not bullying has taken place;
- Keep parents informed;
- Use the curriculum to address issues of bullying and how pupils can deal with it (eg Circle Time, PDMU)
- Hold a Anti-Bullying week each year;
- Access agencies such as NSPCC, PSNI, EWO and Gateway.

We expect our pupils to:

- Report concerns of bullying to staff at once or as soon as is practical. This will help staff to investigate concerns quickly and without information potentially being distorted;
- Report the complete truth, without omissions or additions;
- Use the word 'Bullying' carefully and not just for a quick reaction from school staff or their parents;
- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;