

Clare Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy

Date the policy came into effect	February 2019 (Amended Dec. '19)
Date of next policy review	December 2022
Name of person responsible for this policy	Principal, BOG, Staff, Parents, Pupils
Other related policies	Attendance, Complaints, GDPR, Educational Visits, ICT and e:safety, Health and Safety, Pastoral Care, Use of Reasonable Force and Safeguarding
Issued to	Staff, BOG, Parents

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Introduction

At Clare Primary School we believe that it is the right of the child to be educated in an environment where they are respected and where they feel safe and valued. We believe that this can only be achieved in a positive environment where mutual respect and trust are encouraged. This is outlined in our Positive Behaviour Policy which is understood and ratified by all members of the school community.

Mission Statement

In Clare it is our specific aim to welcome all children into a learning environment where they will feel valued, happy and safe. Where the pupils will gain knowledge, develop their interests, talents and abilities which will hopefully allow them to reach their full potential and become the citizens of tomorrow.

The Legal Definition Of Bullying For Northern Ireland As Outlined In The 2016 Act

“(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 against another 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 subsection (1), “act” includes omission”.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, **repeated over a period of time** where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself.

All bullying behaviour usually has the following 4 features:

☐ It is repetitive and persistent

☐ It is intentionally harmful

☐ It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it

☐ It causes distress

This is behaviour that is never acceptable in Clare Primary School. Bullying generally falls into one or more of these categories:

1. PHYSICAL e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, theft of or damage to property

2. VERBAL e.g. threats, name-calling

3. INDIRECT e.g. spreading rumours, exclusion from a group

4. PSYCHOLOGICAL e.g. Exclusion from the group, intimidation, sneering, rude signs, name calling and teasing, etc;

5. CYBER-BULLYING the misuse of technology to bully or harass;

6. RACIST BULLYING related to race, religion or colour;

7. HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING related to gender or sexual orientation.

8. OMMISSION e.g. leaving someone out

What Can Children Do If They Are Being Bullied?

Each term or when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

a) Remember that your silence is the pupil displaying bullying behaviour's greatest weapon.

b) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to have bullying behaviour directed at you and that it is wrong.

c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a pupil displaying bullying behaviour thrives on someone's fear.

d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.

e) Be assertive – shout “No!”. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.

f) Fighting back may make things worse.

- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- h) Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour in a way, which will end the bullying behaviour directed at you and will not make things worse for you.

What do you do if You Know Someone Is Being Bullied?

- ☐ Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. It makes the target feel more unhappy and on their own.
- ☐ If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour without getting you into trouble.
- ☐ Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a pupil displaying bullying behaviour.

The Teacher's Role

- ☐ Teachers will be aware of the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents of alleged bullying.
- ☐ Teachers will listen to children when they are willing to talk about bullying and will take appropriate follow-up action.
- ☐ Teachers will be sensitive to a child's need for privacy and respect.
- ☐ Teachers will reward positive behaviour where appropriate.

The Parent's Role

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- ☐ Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- ☐ Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc.
- ☐ If you feel your child may be a target of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately following the normal procedure for contacting your child's teacher. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. You will be kept informed of the situation at regular intervals.
- ☐ If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child on the playground or involve an older child to deal with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. Please inform school immediately.
- ☐ It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- ☐ Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- ☐ Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- ☐ If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

Strategies For Dealing With Bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as children who display bullying behaviour are often victims too – that is why they display bullying behaviours.

If bullying behaviour is reported to a member of staff we will:

1. Record the details of the conversation using the Bullying Concern Assessment Form detailed in Appendix 1.
2. Arrange to meet with the parents of the target at the earliest convenient date and time.
3. Meanwhile, investigate the reported behaviour and begin to gather evidence by speaking to the target.
4. Class teacher reports incident(s) to the Designated Teacher.
5. Put appropriate measures in place to support both children and recorded using record sheet detailed in Appendix 2.
6. Meet with the parents of the child who is displaying the bullying behaviours and discuss actions required.
7. Monitor the situation closely for a designated period of time.
8. Arrange review meetings with both sets of parents.
9. Paperwork - Bullying Concern Assessment Form for a pupil(s) who has been displaying bullying behaviour – to be filed by the Principal and Designated teacher. Principal will be kept informed at all stages of the process.
10. The Anti-Bullying Register will be updated.

If bullying behaviour is suspected, we will:

- a) Talk to the target, and any witnesses.
- b) Identify the child who is displaying bullying behaviour and talk about what has happened to discover why they became involved. Make it clear that bullying is not tolerated at Clare Primary School.
- c) Arrange to meet with the parents of both children and follow the procedures as outlined above.
- d) If the child who is displaying bullying behaviour owns up then sanctions procedures outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy will be followed. These may be enhanced at the discretion of the class teacher following discussion with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and the Principal. Any sanctions will be in keeping with the child's age and stage of development and appropriate to the severity of the incidents.
- e) If the child who is displaying bullying behaviour does not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are not telling the truth, continue with the procedure.
- f) Continue monitoring the situation to ensure no repetition. The follow-up findings will be recorded in the monitoring section of the school Incident Log held by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Strategies for Supporting the target:

- ☐ Immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a staff member of their choosing.
- ☐ Use of a peer or buddy for school times to alleviate any anxieties felt.
- ☐ Support will continue for as long as the child feels it is necessary.
- ☐ Parents will be informed at all stages.

Strategies for Supporting the child who is displaying bullying behaviour:

- ☐ Discuss what happened.
- ☐ Inform parents at all stages of discussion.
- ☐ Enhance the PDMU teaching in order to strengthen their understanding of the feelings of others and try to reduce their prejudices should they exist.
- ☐ By implementing the sanctions as outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- ☐ If bullying continues, the child who is displaying bullying behaviour will be subject to formal disciplinary procedures detailed in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

During this procedure staff must liaise with the Designated Teacher and furnish her with copies of all notes and records.

Records must be kept in the file labelled 'Antibullying.'

Staff will refer closely to the resource 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour' published by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying forum.

Prevention of Bullying in School

Bullying can be very damaging to the target, not only physically and emotionally but can also have a detrimental effect on his/her academic performance. All staff will be vigilant at all times in the prevention of bullying. Our Anti-Bullying Policy is made available to all members of staff within school.

Strategies for self-protection and respect for others will be discussed through our PDMU programme as identified in the Revised Curriculum and through the use of Circle Time. Activities are designed to increase the self-esteem and self-respect of all of the children and they are encouraged to praise each other. We try to ensure that each child feels valued. The 'Buddy System' is also in operation in our playground in school.

The Buddies are P7 children who have applied for the position. They must complete an application form and sign a contract before engaging in a program of training undertaken in class time. They are easily identifiable in the playground by their Hi-Viz jackets and provide another person in the playground for any child to ask for help.

The Clare Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy is part of the school's overall concern to promote a healthy environment, good pastoral care and a positive approach to child protection.

APPENDIX 1

Clare Primary School Bullying Concern Record Sheet

Ref number _____

Child's name..... Class..... School Year..... Teacher.....

Contact made by: ☐ in person ☐ by phone

Date.....

Person(s) involved			
Type of Behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual to Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to Group <input type="checkbox"/> Group to individual <input type="checkbox"/> Group to Group	Type of Incident	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect (isolation etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber <input type="checkbox"/> Racist <input type="checkbox"/> Homophobic
Outline of incident: (to include specific incidents, dates, times etc.)			
	*Continue on a separate sheet If necessary...		
Actions required: (to include personnel responsible and completion dates)			
Meeting time And date: To be attended by:			
Review Meeting Date and time:			
Further actions Required:			
Actioned by:			

☐ Copy given to Pastoral Care co-ordinator ☐ Copy of Anti-Bullying Policy given to parent
 Teacher/Adult completing this form _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 2

Clare Primary School Record Sheet for a Pupil(s) Who Has Been Displaying Bullying Behaviour

Ref number _____

Outline of action/support to be implemented:

Have the parents been informed? Yes/No (Give Details)

Date	Interventions	Action

Status of Concern

This concern is now resolved: Yes/No

Forms copied and filed Yes/No

When a Concern is not resolved:

Further intervention required – this may include a referral to senior teacher or Principal.

Teacher/Adult completing this form _____ Date _____