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## **St. Columba Catholic Primary Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

**1.1** It is particularly important to distinguish bullying behaviour from mere conflict between children. Bullying is said to happen if:

- ❖ It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- ❖ It is repeated over time
- ❖ It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- ❖ It is difficult for those who bully to learn new appropriate behaviours
- ❖ The person who bullies has, and exercises, power over the victim

**1.2** At St Columba we take all forms of bullying seriously and is particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which involve racist, sexist, special educational needs and disabilities or homophobic elements. In such cases these issues will be specifically addressed with the bully (and his/her parents/carers where appropriate) in the course of post incident management.

**1.3** This document sets out St Columba's policy in relation to the issue of bullying. This document is set in accordance with Child Protection and Behaviour and Discipline Policies.

**1.4** It reflects a belief that bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances and that it is best prevented through the development of a school ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality.

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

**2.1** Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. We aim, as a school, to produce a consistent and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

**2.2** This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.



**2.3** We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each persons responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

### **3. The Role of Governors**

**3.1** The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

**3.2** The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

**3.3** The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher and ask him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

### **4. The Role of the Headteacher**

**4.1** It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

**4.2** The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments, for example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may choose to use it as the focus for a whole school / key stage assembly.

**4.3** The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

**4.4** The Headteacher sets the current climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

### **5. The Role of the Teacher**

**5.1** Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in school.

**5.2** If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parent.



**5.3** If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Headteacher and the Learning Mentor. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies.

**5.4** Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

**5.5** Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children in line with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

## **6. Parental Involvement**

**6.1** St Columba is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parent/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

**6.2** We recognise the important influence which parent/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

**6.3** If a child is involved in a serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same child is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a victim or a perpetrator) the Headteacher will inform parents and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents informed.

**6.4** Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school community.

## **7. Prevention**

**7.1** All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the schools policy when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will consistently reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

**7.2** In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:



**7.2.1 At whole school level** – through Friendship/Anti Bullying Weeks, Circle Time and the PSHE Curriculum when children will be informed of the school's policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. This issue will be raised regularly when the whole school will be informed of the progress of the anti-bullying policy and any changes which may be introduced.

**7.2.2 At classroom level** – during circle time, anti-bullying lessons and PSHE lessons.

**7.2.3 At individual level** – children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance from the Learning Mentor or other appropriate staff / agencies.

**7.3** Children that have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.

**7.4** Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

**7.5** Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

**7.6** Similarly if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

**7.7** All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help children learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff at all times will treat each other (and children, parents and carers) with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

**7.8** School is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident.

**7.9** All children need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.



## **8. Incident Management**

**8.1** St Columba will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. Any instances must first be reported to the class teacher, who will then investigate. If the incident falls within the school's definition of bullying, then it will be logged in the Incident Book (located in the Headteacher's Office). The Headteacher will monitor this log to look for either patterns of behaviour, key times or identify places within the school where bullying is particularly prevalent.

**8.2** If the incident is judged to be of a severe instance, or is a repeated behaviour, then it will also be reported directly to the Headteacher who will contact the Parent's/Carers of both the bully and the victim.

### **8.3 Post incident responses for the victim**

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated (as above). We will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. In all instances the Headteacher or other management team member will follow up to ensure that the bullying has not reoccurred.

### **8.4 Post incident responses for the bully**

St Columba Catholic Primary takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way.

School will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- ❖ Immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress. Engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable.
- ❖ Parents informed
- ❖ Loss of lunch/break time privileges, seclusion
- ❖ Removal from class/group
- ❖ Withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- ❖ Fixed periods of exclusion
- ❖ Permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)
- ❖ Rewards/positive reinforcement for children in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control

## **9. Monitoring and evaluating**

**9.1** Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded in the school's centrally held incident log. Any incidents with a racist, sexist, disability or homophobic element will be identified. Racist Incidents are reported to the LA on the agreed pro-forma.



**9.2** Staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.

**9.3** This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's incident logbook, and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

