

# Anti-Bullying Policy



## **Aims:**

At Ranelagh Primary School we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn in a safe relaxed atmosphere free from anxiety.

Bullying is wrong and damages individuals. It can also have a devastating impact on the pupils' social and emotional well being and as a result is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

## **What is bullying?**

Using the **DCFS guidelines: Safe to learn** bullying is defined as:

*'Deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms but the three main types are physical, verbal and indirect bullying (e.g. spreading rumours)'. DCFS (2007)*

- Physical- hitting, kicking, taking belongings, spitting and any use of violence.
- Verbal- intolerance towards others through; name calling, insulting remarks, sarcasm and teasing
- Indirect- spreading unpleasant stories, excluding someone from social groups.

We also take into account other types of peer on peer abuse/ bullying such as:

- Emotional bullying- excluding from groups, games or work, tormenting (i.e. hiding belongings, threatening gestures), being unfriendly and inciting others to be unfriendly.
- Racial bullying- racial taunts, graffiti and gestures.
- Sexual bullying - unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- Homophobic bullying- focussing negatively on the issue of sexuality.
- Cyber bullying- by setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, Emails and abusing victims via their mobile phones

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All these features undermine relationships and are not conducive to the learning environment.

**Objectives:**

- The objective of the policy is to create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- All members and stake holders of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.
- The school will take into account and reflect upon the outcomes set out from the Children's Act.
- All pupils, parents and staff will be encouraged to talk openly about the issue; the school will try to provide a supportive network of understanding for parents and bullied pupils.
- Parents will be informed at the earliest stages of incidents involving their child, whether their child has been bullied or has been involved in bullying another child or children.

**The role of governors:**

The governing body supports the Head teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt appropriately.

**The role of the Head Teacher:**

The Head teacher will implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and ensure that all staff (both teaching and support) are aware of the school's anti bullying policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.

### **The role of the Teachers and Support staff:**

When teachers or support staff witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate and deal with it appropriately themselves or refer it to the Head Teacher or member of the Leadership Team.

### **The role of parents:**

Parents are made aware of the school's approach to anti-bullying behaviour. They will be informed at the earliest stages of incidents involving their child, whether their child has been bullied or has been involved in bullying another child or children. Staff will provide feedback to parents on any steps taken.

### **Signs and Symptoms of bullying:**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"

This is of course not an exhaustive list of symptoms and could indicate other problems. However, bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### **Preventative strategies to reduce bullying**

At Ranelagh we believe prevention is better than cure resulting in a whole school approach to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur. Strategies will aim to promote a positive and safe learning environment. Any allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Staff members will be vigilant for signs of bullying. In addition to this:

- The school will use a regular program of PSHCE work throughout the whole school to promote anti bullying behaviour.
- Circle time will be used to build upon and add to the work around bullying issues.
- The school will take an active part in raising awareness through anti- bullying assemblies
- National anti- bullying week (celebrated throughout a term) will be a high profile event, with classes incorporating anti- bullying messages throughout the curriculum.
- An encouragement of the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards each other.
- Drama, role-play and theatre groups will be used to help children become more assertive to deal with bullying situations.
- Through the use of social and self esteem groups support will be given to the bullying child/children to raise their self esteem and develop social skills.
- A child friendly version of the anti bullying policy will be displayed in each classroom and will be revisited by the children during anti bullying term.

### **Reactive strategies to deal with bullying:**

- When bullying does occur between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately in a calm and consistent manner. This may involve support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying using the school's behaviour policy.
- Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why his /her action was wrong and the child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in

future. Subsequent behaviour will be monitored over a period of time. Yet at the same time praise the bullied child when they make genuine attempts to be better behaved or kind.

- The bullying child may also be removed from class and asked to work in isolation.
- In more extreme cases, the Head Teacher or SENCO will be contacted where a written record of the bullying will be made. The parents of the bullying child will be informed of the situation and invited to discuss the matter further.
- The child may be withdrawn from school visits, events and or other privileges.
- There may be instances when outside agency involvement is required e.g. Conflict Resolution Workshop. Parents will be notified at all stages.
- The school may also liaise with neighbouring schools to offer the bullying child a placement at a new school as part of a 'Managed Move' process.
- As a last resort the bullying child may be given a fixed term exclusion or permanently excluded from school at the Head Teacher's discretion.

**Monitoring and evaluation of the policy:**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

This policy should be seen as part of the school behaviour policy.