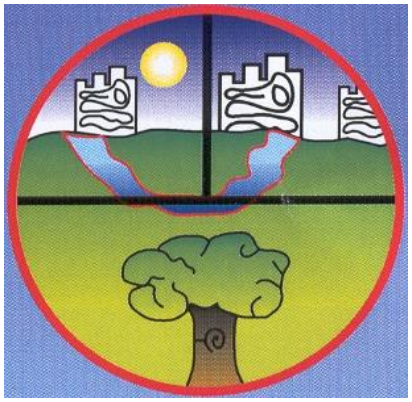

Cumran Primary School

Anti-bullying

Policy

Reviewed: December 2016

Ratified : December 2016

Signed _____ *(Principal)*

Signed _____ (*Chairman of Board of Governors)*

Cumran Primary School

Our Vision: “Learning together in a changing world.”

Our Motto: “Look up and aim high.”

The Italian Artist Michelangelo said,
“The greatest danger for most of us, is not that we aim too high and miss it, but that we aim too low and reach it.”

Mission Statement

As a community of learners we aim to provide an environment where:

1. Each child is developing his/her full potential intellectually, creatively, physically, emotionally, socially, morally and spiritually in a secure, happy and caring atmosphere.
2. Each person is valued, respected and encouraged to value and respect all others.
3. We empower pupils to develop their role as a contributor to the economy and the environment, both within our school and the wider community.
4. We lay the foundations of life skills that the children will build upon as they mature and develop.

In developing our school as a Rights’ Respecting School, we aim to provide an ethos that has the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of the school. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is based on four general principles: non-discrimination, best interests of the child, survival and development and participation. These principles are the foundation on which we build our Rights’ Respecting ethos.

Policy Statement

The anti-bullying policy reflects the school's mission statement with a view to providing a secure and caring environment where there is effective learning and teaching and everyone has the best possible opportunities to develop to their full potential.
The school aims to foster values of tolerance and mutual respect through promoting the self-esteem of all members of the school community. Article 3 of the UNCRC states that "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that effect children."
In Cumran Primary School bullying behaviour is contrary to the school's ethos and therefore will not be tolerated. We take an active approach to promoting good behaviour, having respect for others and tackle all forms of bullying – including prejudice driven bullying and cyberbullying. With the support of parents, the wider community, the EA and the children themselves, we aim to take effective action to prevent bullying happening in the first place.

This school policy has been formulated in line with EA policy, circulars and Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum.

Aims

1. To create an emotionally safe environment where positive relationships can develop.
2. To promote an ethos of positive behavior.
3. To prevent or reduce bullying in any form.
4. To create an awareness and understanding of the causes and effects of bullying.
5. To adopt a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying.
6. To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of this policy and their roles and adult responsibilities in contributing to its success.

A Definition of Bullying

The Department of Education defines bullying as "deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself." (Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection 99/10)
The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

Bullying can take many different forms-

1. **Physical**-This may include kicking, hitting, tripping, pushing etc.
2. **Verbal** – This may include inappropriate language, malicious gossip, offensive name-calling, spreading rumours, preventing another child from speaking, talking behind backs, teasing etc.
3. **Social/non-verbal** –This may include offensive gestures, excluding, dirty looks, getting others into trouble, unpleasant notes, etc.
4. **Emotional** – This may include personal comments/graffiti about others, making people feel unhappy/isolated, deliberate spiteful actions, writing nasty notes etc,

5. **Cyber-bullying** –This may include abusive or threatening messages on mobile phones, by e-mail or by telephone etc.
6. **Racial, sectarian, disablist and homophobic bullying** – any inappropriate comments or behaviour regarding someone's race, religion, colour, disability etc.

All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- ❖ It is repetitive and persistent
- ❖ It is intentionally harmful
- ❖ It involves the balance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- ❖ It causes distress.

Proactive Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Bullying

We believe that the implementation of preventative measures will help to reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour.
Article 28 UNCRC states that "Every child has the right to an education ….. discipline in schools must respect children's dignity"

"Every teacher needs to focus on fostering self-confidence and self-esteem: in every pupil, in every lesson, every day." (Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour. DENI)
Within the context of Cumran Primary School, we will establish and maintain the following strategies to prevent and reduce bullying behaviour.

1. Ethos and Pastoral Care

We aim to be a caring school in which pupils are encouraged to express their feelings, fears and concerns and feel safe to do so. As a Rights Respecting School, we teach pupils about their rights as children and introduce them to the articles of the UNCRC. Rights Respecting Actions are our response to the articles and pupils are taught to value and respect the rights of others. In collaboration with the teacher, they create their Class Charter that outlines their rights respecting actions, rewards for positive behaviour and consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

2. Circle Time

Each child has the opportunity to express opinions and feelings through Circle Time while also learning to listen to others.
Article 12 "Every child has the right to have a say in all matters effecting them, and to have their views taken seriously."

3. Buddy system

Each child in Year 1 is paired with a Year 4 pupil at the beginning of the school year. This develops friendship and confidence in the year 1 pupil and is a leadership role for the year 4. The younger pupil has someone to play with in the playground, someone to talk to and has a friendly face to play with when they first enter the school in September.

4. Playground Friendship Stop

This is a place where pupils can go to if they have no one to play with. Playground Pals, buddies and prefects are available to assist those who need someone to play with or talk to. Year 6 pupils are trained to be Playground Pals.

5. Prefects

Children from Year 7 are encouraged to apply for the post of prefect. They are made aware of the job description and develop an understanding of what this role involves. Bus, class and playground prefects help to promote and model positive behaviour in Cumran Primary School.

6. Rewarding Positive Behaviour

We will promote and reward positive behaviour in accordance with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. We have a positive discipline system where emphasis is placed on positive behaviour and rewards. Children are all treated equally and are rewarded according to their own efforts and behaviour.

7. School Code Of Conduct

We ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents and pupils and all members of the school community are aware of the School Code of Conduct as set out in the school Positive Behaviour Policy. All children are consulted and contribute to the Classroom Charter and all parents receive a copy of this to comment on and sign.

8. Responsibility

We ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents, and all adult members of the school community are aware of their responsibilities to prevent and reduce bullying.

9. Awareness

We ensure that awareness is raised through:

- Staff training (teaching and non-teaching) to ensure that all individuals are competent in implementing the policy.
- A deepening understanding of the UNCRC Rights of the Child by both adults and children. Article 1: Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the convention.
- Areas of the curriculum, especially PDMU.
- Communicating the policy to all members of the school community e.g. through our parents' and pupils' guide.
- Child protection training (for teaching and non-teaching staff)
- All staff and volunteers are provided with a staff code of conduct.
- An annual Anti-bullying week.

10. Procedures

We ensure that agreed procedures are in place for effectively responding to a bullying concern.

11. Response

We ensure that all members of our school community take proactive measures, especially in key areas e.g. around the Muga pitch and at key times e.g. lunch, break times to reduce the risk of bullying behaviour occurring.

12. Policy.

We ensure that the policy is implemented, reviewed and up-dated regularly.

Procedures for Responding to a Bullying Concern

Every incident of bullying that the staff becomes aware of will be taken seriously. Through the UNCRC article 12, the children should understand that they will be listened to. When dealing with bullying behaviour the school aims to:
Stop the bullying behaviour.
Protect and support the pupil subjected to bullying behaviour.
Change the attitude and behaviour of the pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour.

At Cumran Primary School, the following strategies will be implemented by **all staff.**

1. Staff will listen to all concerns when reported.
2. They will take account of the following:

- The nature of the bullying behaviour
- The frequency and duration of the behaviour
- The perceptions of the child being bullied

3. Communicate with the appropriate members of staff-
    - Class teacher
    - Head of Pastoral Care / Vice Principal Mrs. McDade.
    - Principal Mrs. Moles.

4.The teacher will record incidents as appropriate, identifying those involved in the bullying incident. Staff members will use the Bullying Assessment Form.

5.On the basis of this initial assessment an appropriate intervention will take place. At this stage there may be the need to involve parents, SENCO, external agencies and /or carry out a risk assessment.

6. The school will employ a range of strategies to deal with incidents of bullying. These will normally be carried out by the class teacher in consultation with the Head of Pastoral Care/Designated teacher for Child Protection.

- **One to one interview intervention with restorative questioning**
- **Think time Discussion Sheet-** where pupils reflect on the inappropriate behaviour
- **Co-operative group work** – where children are working collaboratively on a task.
- **Circle time** – within the whole class context.
- **Buddy System** – those on the receiving end of bullying behaviour will be given a buddy to spend time with in the playground for peer support.
- **Method of shared concern**- staff will be informed of the situation as all staff will be involved in keeping an eye out for, and dealing with, unacceptable behaviour.
- **Mediation-** peer mediation.
- **Behavioural targets in a PLP**
- **Assertiveness training** – information about developing assertiveness will be given to parents and pupils. A friendship skills programme will be taught to children in small groups by our learning support teacher.
- **The No-blame Approach**. (ref: pg 78 Positive Behaviour in Schools. Also refer to appendix for additional information.)

The **No-Blame Approach** is a participative, non-punitive approach, which lets the pupil exhibiting the unacceptable behaviour know that he or she has been found out. It takes firm, clear, cohesive action, does not allow pupils exhibiting the bullying behaviour off the hook and supports those pupils who are subject to bullying behaviour. It makes it clear to pupils that all bullying behaviour has to stop immediately. It is a long-term approach and involves the peer group of the child exhibiting the unacceptable behaviour. It focuses on changing the behaviour of the child and those who collude with him or her, either tacitly or openly.
A group of 5/6 pupils come together. The conversation could begin: "I have a problem. Johnny is not happy so I need you all to help me sort out the problem……."

- **Lessons that focus on** how to be a good friend using NIABF materials during anti-bullying week.
- **Social skills / Behaviour Management Programmes.**

7. If the problem is not resolved procedures will be implemented within the hierarchy of sanctions (ref to Positive Behaviour Policy.)

Sanctions- The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case and will be guided by our Positive Behaviour Policy but will include the loss of any privileges or role he/she holds in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until members of staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the Child Protection procedures will be instigated. (See Child Protection Policy)

8. Staff will continue to monitor the situation.

9. Parents will be contacted, if necessary, at any stage of the procedures, depending on the seriousness of the bullying e.g. phone call, letter or request for an interview by the teacher, Head of Pastoral Care/Designated teacher for Child Protection, Principal.
10. In consultation with the SENCO, a behaviour programme may be put in place to address the pupil's behavioural problems, which would be consistent with the SEN Code of Practice.
11. If necessary, an outside network of support may be contacted at any stage of the procedures e.g. Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Support Team, PSNI.
12. In all circumstances, discipline in school must respect the dignity of all children.

Individual Roles

All members of the school community have a key role in promoting, implementing and supporting the Anti-bullying Policy in Cumran Primary School. It is important that there is a collaborative whole school approach to address any difficulties that may be encountered.

Staff should:
- Provide a safe, secure and caring environment.
- Promote and sustain good behaviour.
- Listen to all reports of bullying.
- Address each situation in line with procedures.
- Work collaboratively with all relevant members of the school community, developing positive partnerships with parents.

Pupils should:
- Experience lessons that teach them about their rights and the rights of all children.
- Avoid inappropriate behaviour, which might be considered as bullying.
- Be respectful and supportive to others.
- Recognise that they have a right to be listened to and that their views will be taken seriously. (Article 12)
- Report all incidents of bullying. Pupils are taught that if they are being subjected to this type of behaviour or if another pupil is, they must tell someone.

Parents should:
- Work in partnership with the school.
- Report any concerns to the school.
- Discourage behaviours, which might be considered as bullying.
- Accept their role in dealing with bullying behaviours, which occur outside the school so that they do not interfere with effective learning and teaching during the school day.
- Stress to their children that retaliation is not helpful.
- Contact the school secretary to arrange an appointment with the appropriate member of staff to discuss concerns.

Links with the Curriculum

The topic of bullying, including preventative strategies, assertiveness training and how to report an incident will be addressed during an Anti-bullying Week, held annually. Bullying is addressed as the subject arises in a variety of curricular areas and specifically in PDMU, lessons with a Rights' Respecting focus and in the Emotionally Intelligent Schools Programme.
As a Rights Respecting School, the pupils will learn about the articles of the UNCRC, how to be respectful of the rights of others and how what they say and do can effect relationships and a pupil's ability to learn.
Pupil awareness will be raised through P1 induction talks/pack, assemblies, Emotionally Intelligent Schools' materials, PDMU lessons within each year group, Circle Time and CRED links with St Macartan's PS.

Links with Other Policies

Cumran Primary School's Anti-bullying Policy is set in the context of our Pastoral Care Programme and reflects our Mission Statement. It links with other policies such as:

1. The Child Protection Policy, in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies.
2. The Safeguarding Policy outlining the promotion and preventative strategies and activities in place to protect our pupils.
3. The Positive Behaviour Policy in which the school outlines appropriate behaviour, together with the rewards and sanctions which will be used as part of the Positive Behaviour Plan.
4. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy.
5. E- Safety policy- promoting safety online.
6. Curricular policies.
7. Health and Safety Policy.

Parents' Concerns

Any concerns from a parent that their child is, or may be being bullied will be fully investigated by the Head of Pastoral Care/Designated Teacher for Child Protection and team action will be taken to protect them. This will usually include ensuring that another child or small group of children befriends and supports the child being subjected to bullying behaviour, during the school day. A parent expressing a concern about bullying will have a personal response from the Principal or Head of Pastoral Care/Designated teacher for Child Protection, within one week of expressing the concern, indicating the action being taken. Confidential Records will be maintained securely, formats shared with the staff and updated as required. Staff recognise the need for confidentiality and secure storage of sensitive information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was formulated in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. It has been approved by the Board of Governors and it is the intention of the staff to review and update it regularly, in line with current best practice. The Principal and the Head of Pastoral Care/Designated Teacher for Child Protection will monitor implementation of the policy.
It is important to remember that all in our school community have an active part to play in the implementation and the maintenance of this policy.
We would like to acknowledge the advice and support from the Behaviour Support Team.