



# **Castle Gardens Primary School**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**January 2017**

**Building Together for the Future**

## Introduction

At Castle Gardens 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.

## 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 Castle Gardens.

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.

## 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 bully's greatest weapon.
- b) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully 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 bullies in a way, which will end the

bullying 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 bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

### **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 victim 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 bully. 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 bully.

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

1. Record the details of the conversation using the bullying concern record sheet detailed in Appendix 1.
2. Arrange to meet with the parents of the child who is being bullied at the earliest convenient date and time
3. Meanwhile, investigate the reported behaviour and begin to gather evidence by speaking to the child who is being bullied
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 record sheet & record sheet 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.

A copy of If bullying behaviour is suspected we will:

- a) Talk to the child who has been bullied, 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 Castle Gardens.
- 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 child who has been bullied:**

- Immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a staff member of their choosing
- Offer the opportunity to avail of the school counsellor
- 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
- Offer the opportunity to avail of the school counsellor
- 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 Pastoral Care co-ordinator and furnish her with copies of all notes and records.

Records must be kept in the file labelled 'Recording Incidents of Bullying.'

The Pastoral Care co-ordinator 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 child who has been bullied, 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 all of the playgrounds 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 blue coats or jumpers and provide another person in the playground for the younger children to ask for help.

The Castle Gardens 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.

It will be evaluated and reviewed annually as part of the process of School Development Planning.

# Castle Gardens 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.)	<p style="text-align: right;">*Continue on a separate sheet If necessary...</p>		
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 \_\_\_\_\_

# Castle Gardens 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 \_\_\_\_\_