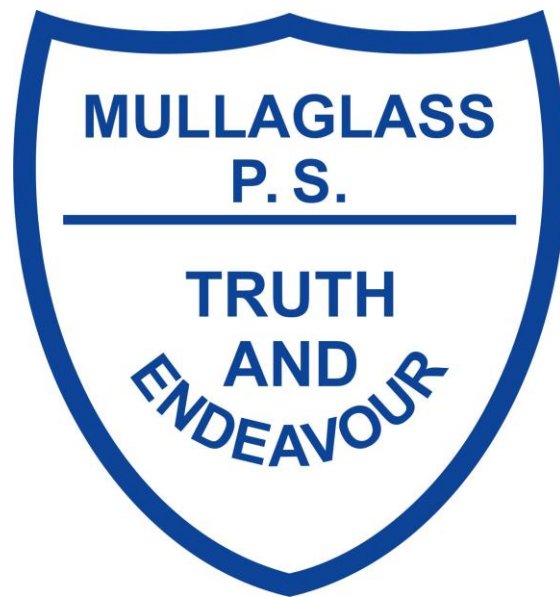


*MULLAGLASS PRIMARY SCHOOL*



**ANTI-BULLYING  
POLICY**

# Mullaglass Primary Anti-bullying Policy

## *What is bullying?*

Bullying constitutes a form of abuse and it will not be tolerated in school. The Department of Education (Pastoral Care in Schools Document 1999) defines bullying as "*...deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over time, where it may be difficult for the victim to defend him or herself.*"

Bullying is an act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of pupils.

## *Forms of bullying*

For example:

- Physical violence, such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil.
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family.
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil.
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- Sending nasty texts or emails (cyberbullying).
- Using social media for inappropriate behaviour or to upset others

## ***Our Aims***

In Mullaglass Primary we believe that every pupil has the basic right to receive their education free from pain, humiliation, fear and abuse, whether physical or verbal.

At Mullaglass Primary, we always endeavour to provide an environment which:

- Is safe, caring and free from intimidation and fear
- Provides challenges and is non-threatening
- Encourages children to feel secure and promotes self-esteem
- Values children's opinions and makes it easier for them to share concerns
- Shows an awareness of children's individual needs and makes an effort to meet these
- In the event of bullying behaviour, puts the needs of the victim first

***Bullying is, therefore, not an acceptable part of school life in any sense or form.***

If unchecked, it can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and longer term, emotionally, physically or both. It can also seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop.

## **Signs for parents to look out for**

A child might:

- Not want to go to school.
- Begin truanting or go missing from home.
- Often feel ill.
- Suddenly become ill when it is time for school.
- Be frightened to walk to and from school.
- Begin to lag in their schoolwork.

- Worrying/unusual online behaviour

### **More signs to watch for**

- 'Lose' possessions at school.
- Cease to communicate with their parents (particularly after school).
- Change their behaviour, e.g. become aggressive, withdrawn, anxious.
- Lose their appetite.
- Have regular nightmares, trouble sleeping and / or begin bed-wetting.
- Ask for money or begin to steal money.
- Bully younger brothers / sisters.
- Self harm or attempt suicide.

**If you see these signs - tell someone.**

### **Action to be taken by parents when bullying is suspected or reported:**

1. If you think your child is being bullied, inform the school immediately.
2. Keep a written record if the bullying persists: who, what, where, when?
3. Advise your child to talk to his / her teacher about bullying incidents; they will discuss strategies that will help your child.
4. Do NOT encourage your child to hit back.
5. If you think your child may be bullying others, do contact us, so that together we can solve the problem.

### **We will support the victim in the following ways:**

- Offer them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, another teacher or Principal, if they choose.
- Inform the victim's parents / guardians.
- Offer continued support if they feel they need it.

**We will discipline yet also try to help the bully/bullies in the following ways:**

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Inform the bully's / bullies' parents / guardians, where appropriate.
- By continuing to work with the bully / bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.

At Mullaglass Primary, we will promote a culture of tolerance where mutual respect and friendship are encouraged through role modelling, teaching and learning, Education for Mutual Understanding, classroom management and the development of good relationships between everyone in the school. However, we will act promptly and fairly to combat bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. Adults and children in school will be encouraged to look out for and report bullying. Teachers will discuss bullying behaviour from time to time in class and at assembly as well as employing strategies such as Circle Time.

### **Disciplinary Steps**

1. Bullies will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Loss of privileges / free time.
3. Parents / guardians will be informed.
4. If bullying continues, suspension for a fixed time in accordance with the school discipline policy.
5. If such behaviour does not end, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion) in accordance with EA policy.

It is anticipated that Steps 4 and 5 will only be carried out in exceptional or persistent cases and will be executed in line with EA procedures.

### What can you do if you are being bullied?

#### Advice for children.

In class and in assembly, children will be encouraged to deal with bullying in the following ways.

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!
- Don't put up with bullying.
- Do
  - tell an adult, teacher or supervisor.
  - tell your parents.
  - keep away from the source of trouble (including online/social media).
  - tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied - it is **WRONG**.
  - be proud of who you are.
  - try not to show that you are upset. A bully thrives on your fear.
  - stay with a group of friends / people - there is safety in numbers.
  - be assertive - shout "NO!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher.
- 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 can you do if you know someone is being bullied?

#### Advice for children.

- When someone is being bullied or is distressed - **TAKE ACTION**. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying.
- Inform an adult, e.g. a teacher immediately.
- Be kind and listen to the victim.
- Do not tolerate bullies in your group of friends.
- Don't ignore bullying - it won't go away.

- Don't be provoked into becoming involved.

#### **As a parent.**

- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has been, who they have spent their time with etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Be aware of what your child is doing online.
- Monitor your child's use of social media and mobile phones.
- Assure your child that there is nothing wrong with him / her. It is not his / her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School's Anti-bullying Policy and that they must not be afraid to report any bullying incident and ask for help.

#### **Further Action.**

- ***If a parent of a child has any concern regarding bullying, it should be reported to Mr Murphy (Designated Teacher for Child Protection), Mrs Ward (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection) or class teacher immediately.***
- If a parent of a child confides in someone other than Mr Murphy, the matter should be referred to him immediately.
- The School reserves the right to inform the parents of both the bully and the victim, if bullying is detected, and of the action that will be taken.
- A thorough investigation will be carried out. The Principal will talk to both parties.
- A record will be kept of all concerns. (Appendix 1 'Alleged Bullying Incident Form' taken from NIABF).
- When bullying is detected, the bully and the victim will be informed of the consequences and what will happen if the bullying continues. Victims will be reassured and encouraged to talk about their feelings. The bully will be encouraged to

- change behaviour by admitting the behaviour, acknowledging that it is wrong, apologising to the victim and making amends.
- Support may be sought from outside agencies, e.g. Personal Development Services, Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, Educational Psychologist etc. The Code of Practice may be applied in relation to persistent behavioural problems. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 will be taken into account in relation to the application of this policy.

### **Tackling Bullying through the Curriculum.**

- Activities that are likely to improve relationships and self esteem in the classroom, and hence reduce bullying, are also central to creating a classroom within which effective learning can take place.
- Building individual self esteem and positive working relations are central to improving the academic curriculum rather than peripheral to it.
- We need to use positive teaching strategies across the curriculum and to reward positive behaviours.
- We participate annually, on a whole school basis, in the NIABF (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum) Anti-Bullying Week.
- *ART* - children often find it easier to express their feelings through art, and this can lead to discussions and hopefully resolutions.
- *RE* - look at and discuss the importance of relationships and the importance of tolerance for others and self respect. We are all individuals.
- *PE* - can contribute by helping children to gain physical confidence and greater self-control. It offers opportunities to work together to build team spirit and to support one another.
- *DRAMA* - offers a wealth of opportunities including role-playing difficult situations, keeping feelings under control, resisting pressure and practising the expression of strong emotions. Situations can be developed with possible alternate strategies or endings. Drama can be used to develop the language of "telling" and feeling confident with this.
- *LITERACY* - this allows the development of many skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing, presenting a case, taking



- part in a debate, planning and evaluating a campaign, speaking and writing reports, newspaper articles and stories.
- *PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding)* - within the NI Curriculum this provides many opportunities to promote positive relationships and anti-bullying strategies.

In Mullaglass Primary we promote a caring, co-operative environment as set out in our Pastoral Care Policy and other related policies.

We have a well disciplined, well organised and child-centred school and this minimises the occurrence of bullying.

We have developed our playground into a place that caters for the variety of play needs that children of primary school age have. We have a playground friend system through the Buddy Bear Bus Stop during break and lunchtimes to support the children. There are also Playground Helpers during the lunch period to organise equipment and games. We also have a "You Share We Care Box" for any comments or worries that the children may have.

A copy of our Anti-bullying Policy is available from the school office.

We will keep a record of bullying incidents (Appendix 1) and through careful monitoring will identify problems and pin-point areas in which specific intervention would be useful.

Mullaglass Primary School's 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 protections. It will be evaluated and reviewed, from time to time, as part of the process of school development planning.

Alleged Bullying Incident Form

(Appendix 1)

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Year</b>
Complainant(s)		M / F		
Alleged child(s) who has been bullied (if different from above)		M / F		
Alleged child(s) who has displayed bullying behaviour		M / F		

<b>Date of incident:</b>
<b>Location of incident:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Playground <input type="checkbox"/> Corridor <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____
<b>Type of incident:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Physical bullying (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons) <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal bullying (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours) <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect bullying (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)
<b>Theme (if applicable):</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber (through technology such as mobile phones and internet) <input type="checkbox"/> Disability (related to perceived or actual disability) <input type="checkbox"/> Homophobic (related to perceived or actual sexual orientation) <input type="checkbox"/> Racist (related to skin colour, culture and religion) <input type="checkbox"/> Sectarian (related to religious belief and/or political opinion)

**Details of incident:**

Name of action/support for child(s) who has been bullied: (please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined ongoing support/monitoring from staff
- Parents involvement (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of action/support for child(s) who has been displaying bullying behaviour: (please tick all that apply)

- Discussion of the incident with peers/class
- Defined ongoing support/monitoring from staff
- Parents involvement (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Counselling
- Referral to other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Fixed exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcome (level of satisfaction)**

Good = 1	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 3	Unresolved = 4
Child who has been bullied			
Parents of above child			
Child who has displayed bullying behaviour			
Parents of above child			

This record is now:

- Filed
- Passed to Class Teacher/Group Tutor
- Passed to Head of Pastoral
- Passed to Principal
- Passed to external agency, please state:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: