

# St. Colman's Primary School Annaclone



**Annaclone**

# Anti Bullying Policy

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# Vision Statement

## Vision Statement

To be an inclusive, caring School where childhood and community are valued; one, which inspires learning for life and develops the personal qualities needed to succeed in a rapidly changing World. This vision will be best realised as we undergo a continual journey of collaboration and progress through partnership, leading to excellence.

## Mission Statement

**We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:**

- ❑ A broad and challenging curriculum
- ❑ Innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning
- ❑ A stimulating learning environment
- ❑ An enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits
- ❑ A rich, varied and up-to-date range of learning resources
- ❑ An ethos of support, challenge and encouragement to succeed
- ❑ Learning partnerships between the school, home and parish community

**We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:**

- ❑ Striving for continuous improvement in all that we do
- ❑ Working collaboratively towards common goals

## Aims for the Pupils

St. Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit (Annaclone), promote high achievement and learning for life by working with the staff and children to:

- ❑ Develop enquiring minds and a spirit of curiosity
- ❑ Promote well-being and the importance of a healthy work/life balance
- ❑ Encourage excellence and the development of new skills
- ❑ Ensure the children in our school are immersed in their community but are also forward facing and expansive in outlook
- ❑ Achieve their highest standards in all areas of the curriculum

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- ❑ Have high self-esteem - respecting themselves, others and the environment by our positive approach to behaviour thus ensuring that each individual is motivated to do his/her best
- ❑ Utilise and provide opportunities to develop their thinking skills enabling them to work independently or collaboratively
- ❑ Be an integral part of the Parish community - one which fosters a faith commitment to Christ and prepares pupils for a fuller participation in the life of the Church
- ❑ Seek to extend themselves in mind, body and spirit
- ❑ Become highly motivated life-long learners
- ❑ Gain advanced technological skills and an awareness of Global Issues
- ❑ Be flexible and adaptable for the modern world

## Our School Values:

- Happiness and enjoyment
- Effort, attitude and perseverance
- Team, school and community spirit
- Honesty, fairness and trustworthiness
- Respect and tolerance
- Politeness, kindness and caring
- High standards of behavior
- Partnerships and collaboration



## Ethos of the School

St Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit sets out to create a caring and supportive environment, where all children can develop intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, morally and spiritually.

In addition, the delivery of the curriculum is designed to develop interest and motivation in children using enthusiastic teaching and interesting and relevant learning activities.

- Children are encouraged to achieve high standards and are given as much help as they may need in order to achieve success.
- There are many extra-curricular activities that encourage co-operation and discipline through team games. Children are further encouraged through a variety of musical/dramatic productions to develop self-discipline.
- Within this context there is a code of discipline that is consistently enforced to ensure that the education of children takes place in an orderly and caring environment.
- Through continual monitoring of individual children's achievements, class teachers provide work pitched at a level that challenges each child yet does not frustrate.
- Good relationships within the School are vital. The staff set an example by working well together with a harmony of purpose and providing an interesting and caring environment within their classrooms.
- As part of the pastoral dimension of the School, children are taught how to care for others, to respect other people's points of view and to respect property. Children are encouraged to contribute to charity and to help people who are less fortunate than themselves.

We, in St. Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit, believe in the dignity and worth of each individual and in the development of the whole person.

All members of staff share these principles and work to ensure a pupil-centred approach in which caring is a shared responsibility of all staff.

Such values underpin and shape all our school policies.

### **1. Aims and objectives of our Anti-Bullying policy**

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

We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in an environment which is free from intimidation and fear.

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 will work to create an environment within which positive relationships will be fostered throughout the entire school - Bullying/violent behaviour of any sort will be unacceptable or tolerated.

Should bullying occur, the needs of child being bullied will be paramount, and the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the situation is resolved and will not reoccur.

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

The school will seek to involve and inform parents in all areas of its anti-bullying work e.g this policy will be made available to parents', school will seek to distribute leaflets to parents on the theme of bullying.

### **2. Links with other school policies**

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care policy.

It links with 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.

It links with the Discipline policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the sanctions which will be used as part of the disciplinary process.

### 3. Agreed definition of bullying behaviour

Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally.

The following definition of bullying behaviour has been agreed:

*Bullying is a form of aggressive, hurtful behaviour which is **persistent and unprovoked**. It involves an abuse of power. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal and emotional.*

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

**Physical:** *kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping*

**Verbal:** *name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours*

**Emotional:** *excluding from play, threatening, pulling faces*

### **Effects of Bullying**

We recognise that children cannot learn or develop effectively unless they feel secure. Bullying, when unchecked can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and long term, emotionally, physically or both and can seriously impair the emotional well being of the child and the capacity to learn. Symptoms may include behaviour change such as withdrawal, lack of concentration, marked deterioration in schoolwork or absenteeism. These are also symptomatic of various other conditions e.g. puberty, adolescence, bereavement, family breakdown or drug and solvent abuse. Hence careful analysis of each case is essential before a diagnosis of bullying is confirmed and preventative action attempted.

#### **4. Preventive strategies**

The school recognises that incidents of bullying are inevitable but take every measure to minimise the amount of bullying which might occur and the effects of such bullying on the individual. Our aim is to provide a safe and caring environment in which our students can learn effectively and where consideration, respect and care of others are the norm. We believe that the implementation of preventive measures will help to reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour. We will take the following preventative steps:

##### **Ethos and pastoral care:**

We seek to be a "listening school", in which pupils are encouraged to express their feelings, fears and concerns. This will be facilitated through measures such as PDMU and Circle Time.

**We will promote and reward positive behaviour through measures such as awards for caring and friendliness through our House System and weekly Achievement Assembly.**

##### **Curriculum:**

The school curriculum addresses the issue of bullying in various ways. Both Personal and Social Education and Drama address the issue directly and attempt to make students aware of the issue and its implication for all concerned. Both also attempt to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to deal with the various forms of bullying, which may occur.

In Literacy the theme of friendship is explored and bullying and its consequences examined. In Religious Education through the 'Grow In Love' Programme - the emphasis is on care and respect for one another and an acceptance and acknowledgement of the different qualities each student brings to the school. The Arts and the World Around Us (Science, Art, Music and Physical Education) directly encourage teamwork and sharing, as do most other subjects on the curriculum. We provide a personal safety teaching programme from P1 - P7 e.g Road Safety, Heart Start. This programme will help children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness and communication skills.

*Playtime provision:*

**Supervision Arrangements**

Our pupils are supervised from 8.30am daily until they leave the premises. Staff are on supervision duty in the school prior to the beginning of class each day. At break time pupils are also supervised by school staff. During lunch supervisors are employed to ensure the safety of our students.

We will aim to provide training for teachers, classroom assistants and supervisors in the promotion of positive play and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying.

**Teacher Awareness**

All staff in the school are made aware of bullying as an issue during initial teacher training and on staff development days organised by the school or under the auspices of EA(S). We are required to be vigilant both in class and while on the school premises. They are also alert to the risk of emotional abuse caused by persistent sarcasm, verbal bullying or severe and persistent negative comments or actions on the part of teachers. All staff strive to build quality and mutually supportive relationships with one another, with our students and with their parents, which generate openness, confidence and trust. They aspire to encourage and build the self-esteem of all students and to nurture in them a positive self-image through the quality of our relationships, teaching methods, assembly experiences and the general implementations of our School Policies e.g. Pastoral Care, Discipline Assessment and Homework and Discipline.

### 5. Agreed code of conduct for the school community

#### **Strategy for dealing with Bullying**

We always encourage an atmosphere of openness, educating our students to tell someone, be that a friend, a parent, a teacher or the Designated Teacher (refer to Child Protection Policy). We want students and parents to bring any form of bullying to the attention of staff and we want them to feel confident that allegations of bullying will be carefully investigated and if substantiated taken seriously and acted upon.

#### **Pupils:**

Pupils have an entitlement to be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.

Pupils have a responsibility to treat all other pupils, teachers and other staff with respect. They have a responsibility to refrain from engaging in bullying behaviour and to report it if they are aware of it occurring.

If a pupil feels s/he is being bullied s/he should tell someone. This could be a friend, a parent or a teacher. The Class Teacher/Designated teacher of the student must then be informed immediately.

If any pupil is aware or suspects that another pupil in the school is subject to bullying they should immediately inform their Class Teacher/Designated teacher.

#### **Parents:**

Parents have an entitlement to expect that their child will be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child co-operates with teachers, other staff and other pupils.

Parents have a responsibility to inform the school of any incidents of bullying which they are aware of.

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher/Designated teacher immediately.

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

### **All Staff:**

All staff in the school community have an entitlement to work in an environment which is characterised by respect and caring for all.

All staff 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, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

All staff in the school community have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of such an environment and to work for the wellbeing of all pupils.

All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. A record of the incident will be kept by the designated teacher, recording any action that has been taken.

Bullying will be dealt with using a variety of techniques. The nature, extent and effect of the bullying and the personality, character and maturity of the victim and the bully (ies) will be taken into consideration.

All disclosures of bullying will be treated in a confidential manner and all allegations will be investigated carefully. The school will act promptly to combat bullying whenever and wherever it occurs.

All staff who become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and sanction for the child who has carried out the bullying. We may 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 Principal/Vice Principal and if necessary the special needs co-ordinator. 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 Principal/Vice-Principal may contact external support agencies such as social services.

As a rule any pupil involved in physical violence may be suspended, as stated in the School Discipline Policy. At a follow up meeting with the parents of any pupil found guilty of physical bullying general welfare of the student will be spelt out clearly. It may be the case that the concerns of the school for the pupil is themselves being the subject of bullying at home. A referral to Social Services may result if this is the case. It may be that the pupil has psychological and emotional problems of his own. In this case the Special Educational Needs coordinator in the school will be consulted. Counselling will be offered in more serious cases by the Schools Psychological Services or through referral to the School Health Service, the Students' Family Doctor and in extreme cases to the Children's' Psychiatric Unit, R.V.H.

The school's action will always be guided by the individual needs of the pupils involved and the general safety needs of the entire student population of the school. Referral to external agencies may in turn lead to placement outside of mainstream schooling in a Educational Support Unit on a daily or residential basis for a set period of time prior to attempting to reintegrate the student into the school set-up.

In the most serious cases, when all factors have been considered, the Board of Governors may expel a pupil.

In the case of psychological and verbal abuse, all those involved will be brought together to 'talk out' the problem in an open and non-judgemental manner. Various exercises from the Personal and Social Education Programme and Role Play in Drama will be used to help pupils empathise with one another and understand the effects of their behaviour on each other. If this fails to resolve the problem the Discipline Policy of the school will be implemented. In some cases where it is deemed appropriate victims of bullying will be offered counselling to help them cope better. Assertiveness training may also be offered in some cases.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

We keep an anti-bullying logbook in the Principals office where we record all incidents of bullying that occur. This is signed by the Chair of Governors after the T3 meeting each year.

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

**6. Procedures for dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, including contact with parents and external agencies**

Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned.

**The following steps will be followed:**

**1. Reporting of an incident**

When a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the following people:

The teacher of any child involved  
The principal  
The designated teacher for child protection

**2. Investigation of an incident**

This will normally be carried out by the designated teacher for child protection, in co-operation with any class teachers concerned.

Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses in the Bullying log book.

Parents of all pupils involved will be informed of the school's action up to this point and will be kept informed of subsequent action.

**3. Agreeing a plan for resolution**

Working with the pupils concerned, the designated teacher will devise a plan for resolution of the conflict. This plan will include targets for acceptable behaviour and will set out support measures which will be provided for the pupils concerned.

Any disciplinary action required will use the system of sanctions which is set out in the school's discipline policy.

A child, who has bullied will have, explained to them, why their actions were wrong. Support will be provided to help them to change their behaviour. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying behaviours, their parents will be informed and they will be invited to the school to discuss this issue. In more extreme cases where the initial discussion/resolution has proven to be ineffective, the Principal/Vice Principal may involve the SENCO or contact external support agencies. If staff suspect that the child may be a victim of bullying behaviours at home this must be reported to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection - a referral may be made to Social Services (refer Child Protection policy). If psychological/emotional problems of the bully have instigated bullying behaviour, the SENCO will be consulted and counselling services maybe provided through referral to the appropriate agencies.

#### **4. Reviewing the situation**

The situation will monitored and formally reviewed within one month of the initial report. This will be done by the designated teacher, in co-operation with the other teachers, pupils and parents concerned.

#### **Involvement of other agencies in provision of support**

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team and the Educational Psychology Service. In most instances, the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources. However, if it becomes clear at step 3 or 4 that outside help is needed, the school will not hesitate to avail of it.

#### **7. Monitoring and review of the anti-bullying policy**

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the principal and designated teacher for child protection. A report on implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on pastoral care provision.

**This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed as necessary.**

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