



Anti-Bullying Policy

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It is the aim of Castlereagh Nursery School to create a community in which all staff and pupils feel safe, valued, supported and happy. Bullying is an activity which flows contrary to this stated aim.

Definition of Bullying

For the purposes of this policy we define bullying as follows:

'Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others'.

To do this, the child displaying bullying behaviour has to have some sort of power over the other person. Power is not always recognisable to the teachers in the classroom. Any behaviour which is the illegitimate use of power in order to hurt others is described as bullying behaviour.

For some of our children, bullying behaviour may be regarded as acceptable in their out-of-school world, where strength is shown through bullying behaviour. Some of our parents/ carers may teach their children to stand up for themselves; they may also teach them to retaliate first. These are not values which Castlereagh Nursery School accepts or promotes.

Methods of Bullying

In this policy "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—

(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication.

These methods can be described as, but are not limited to, saying, writing or using online contact and platforms to:

- say mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
 - make fun of others
 - call another pupil mean and hurtful names
 - tell lies or spread false rumours about others
 - try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
- extort from, blackmail or exploit another.

The use of electronic communication as a method of bullying behaviour is most commonly identified as cyber bullying. Due to the age of the children attending Castlereagh Nursery School, cyber bullying will not be an issue.

(b) Other methods of bullying behaviour commonly include physical bullying and can be described as, but are not limited to:

- hitting
- kicking
- pushing
- shoving around
- locking a pupil/s inside a room, locker etc.
- material harm such as taking/stealing money or possessions
- other direct/indirect acts such as intentionally leaving a child out (not letting a child play with them on a regular basis). Exclusionary bullying behaviours are as serious as other verbal or physical acts.

(c) any combination of (a) and (b).

This Policy acknowledges that various methods of bullying behaviour can occur separately or together.

Tackling bullying is one part of making our school a happy place for everyone and this is best achieved through curriculum based activities to broaden children's perceptions.

Anti-bullying messages are promoted through Circle Time, Anti-Bullying Week and through the Personal Social and Emotional Development curriculum content.

At Castlereagh Nursery School, we endeavour to:

- pre-empt the issue by discouraging such behaviour before it develops
- create an environment in which such behaviour and attitudes do not flourish
- watch out for behaviour that is, or could become, bullying in nature
- actively and effectively intervene, if identified
- deal with such behaviour appropriately and in line with the school's anti-bullying policy.

Recognising bullying behaviour

All bullying behaviour usually has the following four 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.

These attitudes and behaviours can be addressed through curricular intervention aimed at the prevention of bullying.

1. Co-operative work and non-aggressive behaviour should be praised through stickers/praise
2. Empathy should be encouraged through role play activities
3. Language and communication work should cover the theme of how other people feel
4. Circle time should be used to explore children's feelings and attitudes.

Recognising potential targets of bullying

These may be pupils who are:

- New to the Nursery class or to Castlereagh Nursery School
- Different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils
- Experiencing low esteem (but it's not clear whether this is a cause or effect of bullying)
- Demonstrating 'entertaining' reactions when bullied, e.g. tantrums, loss of control
- More nervous or anxious.

Anti-Bullying Action Plan

Bullying can be dealt with through active classroom management. If a staff member becomes aware of bullying behaviour, they should:

- Take the incident or report seriously
- Remain calm - reacting emotionally may encourage the bullying behaviour and give the child demonstrating bullying behaviours more control of the situation
- Reassure the child who has been bullied - don't make them feel inadequate
- Offer concrete help, advice and support to the child affected
- Encourage the child displaying bullying behaviour to see the other child's point of view
- Use consequences with the child displaying bullying behaviour if appropriate, but be very careful how this is managed. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it's all right to bully if you have the power
- Explain clearly the consequence and why it is being given.

Whole School Management Issues

- Staff must inform the Class Teacher so that incidents can be handled discreetly and sensitively
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where there are broader learning points and everyone should be vigilant
- Inform the Principal, who may inform the parents/carers of the children involved
- Carefully monitor all areas of the environment e.g. including bathrooms and cloakrooms
- Think ahead and plan how to prevent a recurrence of any incident of bullying
- Record and report the incident at the next BOG meeting.

The school Anti-Bullying Policy applies when

- On school premises during the school day
- Pupils are under the lawful control of school staff (e.g. during a school trip)
- Pupils are receiving education, arranged by the school, but delivered away from the school premises (e.g. at another school in the Area Learning Community).

Recording Instances of Bullying Behaviour

The school must first decide if this is a 'one off' occasion, taking into account:

- The severity and significance of the incident
- Any evidence of pre-meditation
- The impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional); the impact of the incident on the wider school community; and, previous relationships between those involved.
- Any previous incidents involving the individuals.

When alleged incidents fail to meet the criteria for bullying behaviour, the school will use the Positive Behaviour Policy to address unacceptable behaviour.

The governors must ensure that ALL incidents that are reported as bullying are recorded. (see appendix 1) (Names will be anonymised when the Principal is reporting to the BOG).

The report will include:

- Circumstances and motivation of the bullying behaviour (e.g. age, appearance, race, disability, ability or child looked after etc.)
- Method of bullying
- How the incident was addressed (see Appendix 1 for record management pro forma)
- Frequency of bullying incidents will be reported at each governors meeting
- Details of review actions.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the school's policy review schedule (no longer than every 4 years).

This policy was written using the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum's Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource.

Record of Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

Date of incident	Initials of child displaying bullying behaviour	Initials of target child	Motivation behind the behaviour	Method of bullying (verbal, physical etc.)	How the situation was addressed	Review, including date