

# PREVENTION

## PUPIL CHARTER—WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM PUPILS

Recognise each others rights to:

- Be physically safe.
- Keep possessions and money.
- Be free of insult, derogatory terms and teasing.
- Be able to associate with other young people for companionship and friendship.

Take responsibility for:

- Physical safety of others.
- Security of everyone's personal possessions and money.
- Freedom from hurt by name-calling, teasing.
- Including all pupils in play and learning activities.

## HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENCE OF BULLYING

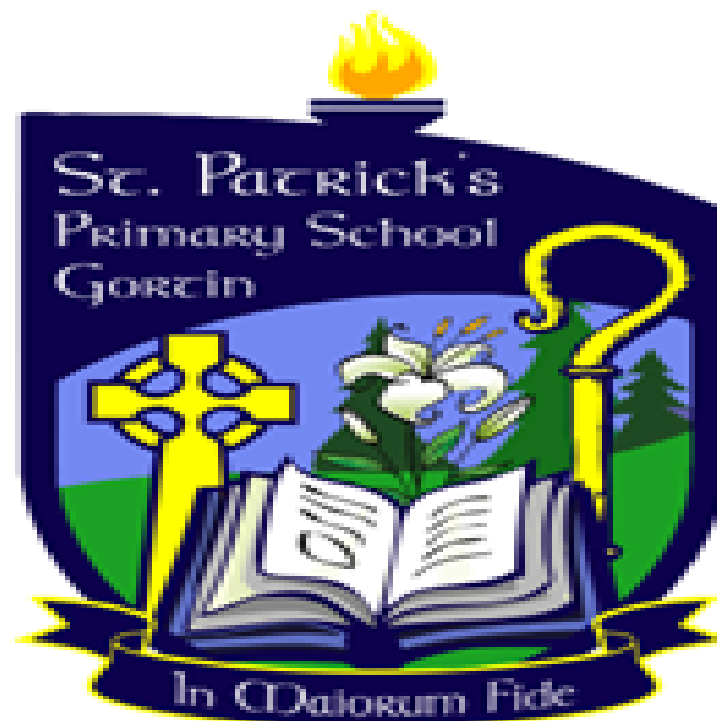
1. Contact the Principal Mrs Grugan immediately you are aware of an incident.
2. Every alleged incident will be thoroughly investigated and, if necessary, measures taken to prevent a re-occurrence.
3. Parents will be kept informed as to what is happening.
4. Parents will be contacted at later date to ensure that the bullied child is now safe and feels secure in school.

Approved by BOG—21st November 2019

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# BULLYING

## A Guide for Parents



## WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT BULLYING

This leaflet has been prepared for parents and is intended to give some information about bullying in schools and we hope that it will encourage you to discuss these issues with teachers so that you can find a way to help all children who may be involved in bullying.

When a person is made unhappy over a period of time because she/he is hurt, teased or left out of a social group we call it bullying. We do not use the word for the general rough and tumble of school life. It is only bullying if it goes on and on intentionally.

Bullying is very nasty but unfortunately —lots of children can experience it at some time in their school life.

Once you have the facts, you can talk to your child about the problem and try to sort it out.

Although you should stay calm you must explain to your son/daughter that this sort of behaviour is unacceptable. The child must apologise, even if it's only a muttered 'sorry' and something should be done to make amends—perhaps replace something that has been taken or broken. You should also keep in close contact with the school to monitor the situation as sometimes other children will taunt bullies who are trying to reform.

## IS YOUR CHILD A BULLY?

The more of these that apply, the higher the risk!

My child—

- Is bigger than his/her peer group.
- Wants his/her own way all the time.
- Wants to be the centre of attention.
- Is often smacked.
- Is often in trouble.
- Disobeys adults.
- Doesn't study.
- Has few friends.
- Comes home with money/toys etc that aren't his/hers.

## WHEN YOUR CHILD IS THE VICTIM

If your child is bullied he may not actually tell you—bullies often tell their victims not to tell anyone or they will make things worse—but a change in behaviour may indicate there are problems at school. You may have to coax your child into talking about what is happening.

Children are often bullied then there is something different about them—shy, quiet, play alone, wear glasses, a brace or have a disability.

## PARENTS' ACTION PLAN

Bullying should always be tackled—and it can be overcome. But parents need to intervene early and approach the situation carefully and sensitively.

Bullying can take the form of name calling, teasing or ostracising. Or it can involve stealing their belongings, hitting and kicking. Whatever form it takes can seriously affect the victim's physical and mental health. It needs to be addressed with compassion for both sets of parents.

### When Your Child is the Bully

One of the most difficult situation for parents is to discover that their child has been bullying other kids at school. An invitation to see the Principal or a confrontation with another parent may be the first inkling that you've had that your child has been behaving antisocially. Whichever way you learn of this news, don't panic or over-react.

However upset you feel, try to stay calm as your child needs your help and support, not your condemnation at this point.

- Try to find out if your child has been the victim of bullying at any time (many bullies have been bullied themselves and have told no-one).
- Ask if anything upsetting has happened. (Sometimes bullying is an attempt to draw attention to another problem which the child has felt unable to discuss).
- Find out what your child has been accused of and whether it has happened before.
- Make an appointment to see the class teacher or Principal to discuss the matter—and listen carefully.
- Talk to other parents and staff members.
- Try not to be confrontational—it makes people less inclined to help.

## WHAT TO DO

Listen carefully while your child tells you about the bullying. He/She may well have suffered in silence for a long time and is often embarrassed or ashamed about what has been happening. Many children tend to blame themselves .

### IS YOUR CHILD BEING BULLIED

Your child may be a victim if any or a combination of the following statements apply:

- Has started wetting the bed.
- Feels ill before going to school.
- Has become withdrawn and lacking in confidence.
- Has begun doing poorly at school work.
- Cries himself/herself to sleep.
- Is having disturbed nights' sleep or nightmares.
- Has asked to change from school dinners to packed lunches or to go home.
- Suddenly refuses to go into the school playground without you next to him/her.
- Comes home with books or clothes torn or destroyed.
- Has acquired unexplained scratches or bruises.

Older children may also:

- Start playing truant.
- Ask for more pocket money or steal money lying about the house or stolen from your purse.
- Stay at home more than they used to.

#### **BOOST YOUR CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM**

Both bullies and bullied children often lack self-esteem and need a boost to their confidence and sense of self-worth.

- A child should always feel he/she is valued, loved and approved by family and friends.
- He/she needs to know he/she is capable of doing some things well and what he/she does well is appreciated.
- Parents should remember to praise all the good things rather than concentrating on criticism.
- If you give your child too many negative comments, your child will feel bad about himself/herself when, in fact, he/she needs to feel that he/she is basically good and able to influence their life.
- Parents should be wary of undermining a child's self esteem.

#### **The vital dos and don'ts:**

- Do show your respect for him/her.
- Do show admiration for what he/she has achieved.
- Don't dominate him/her.
- Don't treat him/her with indifference.
- Don't make disparaging comments.
- Don't be cold towards him/her.
- Don't discriminate between him/her.

You can be confident that the staff are concerned, willing to listen and that they want to help your child.

Children's Motto:

**YELL      RUN      TELL**

#### **THAT LONG ROAD**

Walking up that road to school I consider turning back.

I consider running to that special point, my own special point.

I consider going to their houses and telling their mums.

I consider ruining their lives somehow—to make them feel scared.

Then suddenly I'm in school, they take by bag, ruffle my hair.

Maybe some other day.

Kate Hartoch