

14. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING BULLYING

Bullying may be seen as particularly hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, theft
- Verbal (including teasing) e.g. racist remarks, spreading rumours, threats or name-calling
- Emotional e.g. isolating a child from the activities or social acceptance of the peer group
- Harassment e.g. using abusive or insulting behaviour in a manner intended to cause alarm or distress
- Prejudiced based e.g. racist, homophobic, sectarian

Children may be bullied by adults, their peers and, in some cases, by their families.

Action to help children and young people on the receiving end of bullying behaviour:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim(s) to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment
- Take all allegations seriously and take action to ensure the victim(s) is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully/bullies separately
- Reassure the victim(s) that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no-one else
- Keep records of what is said i.e. what happened, by whom and when
- Report any concerns to the person in charge at the organisation where the bullying is occurring

Support for children and young people involved in bullying behaviour:

- Talk with the bully/bullies, explain the situation and try to get the bully/bullies to understand the consequences of their behaviour
- Seek an apology from the bully to the victim(s)
- Inform the bully's parents/guardians
- If appropriate, insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully/bullies compensates the victim
- Impose sanctions as necessary
- Encourage and support the bully/bullies to change behaviour
- Keep a written record of action taken