



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Diocese of Ferns undertakes to do all in its power to create a safe environment for children and young people and to ensure their protection from all forms of abuse including bullying.

What is Bullying?

- Bullying is repeated aggressive physical, verbal or psychological behaviour directed by an individual or group against others.
- Bullying can occur at any age, in any environment, and can be long or short-term.
- Bullying can be perpetrated by adults towards children/young people as well as children/young people towards their peer group.
- Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.
- Any child/young person can be a victim of bullying
- Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be defined as:

Emotional/ Psychological	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, extorting, intimidating, etc.
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, intimidating, damaging/stealing property or any use of violence, etc.
Racist	Racial taunts, i.e. insults about colour, nationality, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background. Use of graffiti or gestures.
Sexual	Unwanted physical harassment or contact or sexually abuse comments. This may constitute actual sexual abuse and should be reported.
Homophobic	Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation.
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, etc.
Cyber	Misuse/abuse of email, mobile phones, internet chat rooms, social media, text messaging or camera and video facilities.
Subtle	Such as an unwelcome expression or gesture which is repeated and focussed on an individual.

Prevention

To help in preventing bullying the following strategies are suggested:

- Engage children/young people in discussions about what bullying is and why it can't be tolerated.
- Encourage children/young people to take responsibility and report any incidents of bullying to their leader.
- Review this Bullying policy with children/young people and parents involved in our parish/agency activities.
- Seek to promote positive attitudes of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all personnel.

Procedures to deal with bullying

- All incidents of bullying should be brought to the attention of the leader/person in charge of group.
- All incidents will be recorded on incident report forms and kept on file.
- Leaders should report and seek guidance/support from the Parish Priest/Priest in Charge.
- Parents should be informed of any incidents of bullying and should meet with leader/person in charge to discuss the problem and a record should be kept.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- Both the victim and bully should be supported and helped throughout the process.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Gardaí will be consulted

Diocesan Contact

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For out-of-hours reporting/disclosures & time sensitive matters, please call Emma on 087 718 5541