

## What should I do if my child is bullying others?

### ***Some reasons why children and young people bully others:***

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying friends, siblings or family members.
- They haven't learned healthy ways of interacting with others and making relationships.
- They are part of a group of peers who encourage each other to bully.
- They are going through a difficult time and may be acting out aggressive feelings and insecurities.
- They have been or are being bullied themselves.

### ***To stop your child bullying:***

- Do not ignore the issue. Explain to your child that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Encourage your child to empathise and consider the impact of their behaviour on others. Let them know that they may end up with no real friends themselves if they continue to be unkind.
- Listen to your child and try to draw out what is upsetting them and causing their behaviour.
- Discourage any other members of your family from bullying behaviour.
- Model positive social skills and thoughtful behaviour for your child to copy.
- Praise your child for any improvements in their behaviour. This will encourage them to stop bullying altogether.
- Make an appointment with a member of the school staff to explain the problems your child is experiencing, discuss how you and the school can work together to help. School staff can access specialist support for you or your child if that would be helpful.

*“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that happens repeatedly over an extended period of time that hurts another person either physically or emotionally.”*

## Pensans Community Primary School

### PARENT GUIDE No.3

## ANTI-BULLYING



Updated Oct. 2013

## What is Bullying

Bullying is intentional behaviour and involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the person being bullied. Bullying is not a one off incident, however unpleasant. Bullying happens persistently and may take the following forms:

**Physical:** Hitting, pushing, gestures, taking belongings, unwanted physical contact.

**Verbal:** Name calling, sarcasm and humiliation, threats, and sexual, homophobic or racist remarks.

**Indirect:** Being deliberately excluded or ignored, starting or spreading rumours.

**Cyberbullying:** This is bullying using any form of technology. This can include: sending unwanted, abusive or threatening text messages, phone calls, emails and video clips or use of the internet to degrade and humiliate. Further information is available about this in Pensans Parent Guide 3

Bullying is never a normal part of growing up, character building or something that only happens to children. Whatever form it takes, bullying is always wrong but it can happen to anyone, both within school and outside in the wider community at anytime.

## How can I tell if my child is being Bullied?

Your child may not tell you that he or she is being bullied. However, you may notice some changes in his or her behaviour, including:

- unwillingness to go to school
- feeling unwell, often with a headache
- irritability
- anxiety
- aggression towards you or others in your family
- bedwetting
- waking in the night
- missing or damaged belongings

## What should I do if I think my child is being bullied?

•Bullying is a serious problem and can be very upsetting for both you and your child so it must be taken seriously.

•Bullying is frightening and children may find it hard to talk about being bullied or bullying others so it is important that you listen to your child without interrupting and give them time to express their feelings, which may be different from your feelings as a parent. Talking about their situation and feeling listened to can lessen many of your child's worries.

•Make a note of what your child says has happened, who was involved and specific details of incidents. Give your child a say in how they would like the situation to be dealt with, but be clear that it is important the bullying stops and that the school may need to be involved.

•**Report the situation to a member of school staff as soon as possible and make an appointment to visit the school.**

The law also grants schools the power to take action over incidents that happen away from school in certain circumstances. If the incident involves cyberbullying, it is important that your child keeps a record of any text messages, emails or conversations that have taken place online wherever possible. Such records can further assist the school in investigating the incident.

•Give the school time to investigate the situation thoroughly and to deal with the situation in an appropriate manner.

•In the meantime keep supporting your child and ask at the meeting if there are measures the school can take to further your child.