Presbyterian Church in Ireland Taking Care Two

**::12.26 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

All kinds of bullying are wrong and should not be tolerated within organisations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Our organisations should be a safe and welcoming place for all children and young people.

# What is bullying?

The government defines bullying as; “deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time” .

# What forms does it take?

**::** bullying can be name calling or teasing.

**::** bullying is often physical; victims are pushed, punched, kicked and hit.

**::** Victims can be forced to do things they don’t want to do, are left out of games or ignored by others.

**::** Cyber bullying is when bullies contact their victims via text messaging or via the internet.

# Why do we have a bullying policy?

**::** all leaders, parents and children who attend this organisation should have an understanding of what bullying is and know that it is not tolerated within the organisation.

**::** all leaders should know what to do if bullying arises.

**::** as an organisation we take bullying seriously, children and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.

# Why is it important to respond to Bullying?

**::** bullying hurts.

**::** everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

**::** individuals who are bullying need to learn to stop.

**::** This organisation has a responsibility to respond effectively to bullying issues.

# Preventative Measures

**::** Leaders should encourage children to befriend others who are alone within the group.

**::** bullying should be discussed openly within the group, perhaps through activities such as circle time.

**::** young people should regularly be encouraged to talk to leaders about anything that is bothering them.

# What will happen if bullying occurs?

1. attempt reconciliation by getting the parties together to talk, it may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. if bullying continues or it is serious, leaders should meet with the parent and child(ren) who is/are being bullied.
3. Leaders should also meet with the child(ren) who is bullying and their parent/s.
4. if serious, bullying should be reported to the designated person as a child protection issue.
5. Leaders should consider appropriate consequences for the bully and make sure these are carried through.
6. keep the situation under review.