

## Anti-bullying policy

All kinds of bullying are wrong and should not be tolerated within organisations of Loughaghery Presbyterian Church. 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 our organisations should understand what bullying is and know that it is not tolerated within our organisations.
- All leaders should know what to do if bullying arises.
- As a congregation 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 congregation 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.