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|   | St. Mary’s Primary School, 67 Downpatrick Street,Rathfriland,Co. Down,BT34 5DQTel: 028 406 30630 www.stmarysrathfriland.co.uk |

29th March 2021

Dear Parent,

Presently in school we are evaluating and updating our Anti-Bullying Policy. In St Mary’s PS, we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe secure and supported environment so that the personal, academic and social development of our children is realised. We repudiate bullying behaviour of any form both towards or from any member of our school community.

In St Mary’s P.S we take the legal definition of bullying from “The Addressing Bullying in School Act (NI) 2016.

**Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:**

**(1) In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:**

**(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,**

**(b) any other act, or**

**(c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.**

**(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.**

We also realise that while bullying is unusually a repeated behaviour, there are one- off incidences that we will consider as bullying. These will be assessed against a criterion.

We are seeking the views of pupils and parents to help us find out how effective our school has been in creating an Anti-Bullying culture and to review the effectiveness of our Anti-Bullying procedures and in the updating of our Policy.

This week the children will be completing a Questionnaire in class on their views and experiences of bullying including Online Bullying. We also ask that Parents complete a questionnaire. Parental questionnaires will be available online and a link will be sent to you in order for you to complete the Questionnaire online. Paper copies can be requested from your child’s teacher. Your views would be very welcome and your responses will be treated in complete confidence. The questionnaire has 18 questions and should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. If you have more than one child at the school, please respond with only one child in mind.

When the data from all questionnaires has been collected and analysed, you will be given feedback. This will help to inform updates to our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Many thanks for your continued cooperation,

Mrs Jane Fitzpatrick