



Anti Bullying Policy

Signature of the Chair of Board of Governors: _____

Signature of the Principal: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Anti-bullying

As part of our Behaviour and Pastoral Policies to foster self- esteem and respect for others we promote an anti- bullying policy. We recognise that in this school as in all schools that bullying can exist.

AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent or reduce bullying in any form.
- Adopt a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying.
- Create an emotionally safe environment where positive relationships can develop.
- Ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success.

This policy has been developed consistent with The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and DE Circular 2003/13 - Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

Specific articles of the legislation referring to the welfare and protection of pupils include the following:

Article 17 - Duty to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Pupils

Article 18 - Child Protection Matters

Article 19 - School Discipline: Measures to Prevent Bullying

'Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour' (2001)

Circular 2017/04 Safeguarding and child protection in schools: A guide for Schools.

Close attention was also paid to the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum's
'Effective responses to bullying behaviour'

Definition

Bullying is difficult to define as it is a complex issue which is open to many interpretations. The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- *It is repetitive and persistent*
- *It is intentionally harmful*
- *It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it*
- *It causes distress*

NIABF – DEFINITION OF BULLYING

NIABF defines bullying as the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

Labels

We are keen to avoid labelling individual children and describe situations "a bullying incident "

Victim: the term victim is problematic – it can mean different things to different people. Because of this, we use the term "target of bullying."

Bully: The term bully is problematic – it implies focus on the child's self, rather than the behaviour he or she is displaying. Because of this, we use the term 'child who is displaying bullying behaviour.'

We believe that the emotional damage caused to those who are targeted by bullying, as well as those displaying bullying behaviour themselves, can be extensive and long lasting. It is therefore our aim to create a safe environment for all, where we all respect each other and are tolerant of each others differences.

PRINCIPLES

- Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- The welfare/well-being needs of all children and young people are paramount and pupils' needs (whether bully or targeted pupil) need to be separated from their behaviour.
- When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a restorative and solution focused way to achieve the necessary change.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and encouraged to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.
- Where a concern arises, staff will receive ongoing support from Senior Managers with Pastoral responsibility. Training will be provided for staff on how to deal with bullying incidents.
- Parents will be made aware of our school's practice to prevent and to respond to concerns through parent information meetings, consultation processes and where necessary, their active participation in partnership with the school to resolve concerns involving their child.

Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion and diversity are key principles in our school as it is made up of pupils from many different backgrounds, nationalities and experiences, each who have a wide range of skills, abilities, and interests. Individuality and difference is recognised and indeed celebrated in the school particularly through the importance we put on 'individual improvement'.

'Inclusion is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school'.

Removing Barriers to Achievement (2004).

It is key in this Anti- Bullying Policy that all in Holy Trinity feel special for who they are and that they feel free from any form of injustice or prejudice. It is essential that all pupils feel cared for and safe as equal members of the school community. All pupils have the right to full entitlement and access to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum. Each pupil no matter how they may differ from others should feel valued and offered curricular, pastoral and extra -

curricular opportunities that allow them to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence.

Pupils should:

- Report all incidents of bullying (if a child is being bullied or if another pupil is being bullied - TELL SOMEONE)
- Follow the school's rules.
- Avoid inappropriate behaviour which might be considered as bullying.
- Be respectful and supportive to others.

Parents should:

- Work in partnership with the school.
- Advise their children to report any concerns to a member of staff.
- Discourage behaviours which might be considered as bullying.
- Stress to their children that retaliation is not helpful.
- Contact the School Secretary to arrange an appointment with the child's class teacher to discuss concerns.
- Co-operating with the school, if their child/children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Accept their role in dealing with bullying behaviours which occur outside the school so that they do not interfere with effective learning and teaching during the school day.

Our Staff will;

- ♦ Foster self- esteem, self- respect and respect for others through PATHS
- ♦ Demonstrate by example the high standards of professional and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- ♦ Discuss bullying with our classes so pupils learn about the damage it causes and the importance of telling the teacher
- ♦ Be alert to the signs of bullying
- ♦ Respond to any bullying incident
- ♦ Be consistent and fair when dealing with pupils who make inappropriate choices.
- ♦ Endeavour to correct and guide pupils who have made inappropriate choices in a firm but low toned voice.
- ♦ Endeavour to meet the educational, social and behavioural needs of the children with the support of parents.
- ♦ Maintain regular links with parents through notes, letters, diaries, meetings. Communicate regularly about what is expected.
- ♦ Be aware of the recommended appropriate sanctions and levels of acceptable behaviour
- ♦ Assume responsibility for the behaviour of all pupils in all areas of the school.

Forms of Bullying

<p>PHYSICAL BULLYING</p> <p><i>e.g. hitting; pushing; kicking; tripping; spitting; hair pulling; throwing things; interfering with another's property by stealing / hiding / damaging / intruding upon it;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extortion / threatening demands for money or other items - writing or drawing offensive notes / graffiti about another 	<p>VERBAL BULLYING</p> <p><i>e.g. name calling; insulting or offensive remarks; accusing; taunting; put downs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ridiculing another's appearance/way of speaking/disability/personal mannerisms/race/colour/religion; - humiliating another publicly - spreading malicious or nasty rumours; threatening; intimidation; mocking; sarcasm
<p>EMOTIONAL BULLYING</p> <p><i>e.g. excluding/shunning others from group activity/social setting or play;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - belittling another's abilities or achievements; - menacing looks/stares; - rude signs or gestures 	<p>CYBER BULLYING</p> <p><i>e.g. misuse of e-mails, images, text, blogs, tweets, forums and chat rooms to hurt /embarrass /demean /harass /provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misuse of mobile phones by text messaging /calls or images - again to hurt /embarrass /demean /harass /provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity - unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information; impersonation

Signs/Symptoms

A pupil may not wish to disclose incidents so staff should be vigilant in observing symptoms such as,

- Deterioration of work
- Spurious (fake) illness and /or erratic attendance
- Isolation/desire to remain with adults
- Problems reported from home (e.g. bed wetting, nightmares)
- Childhood depression/anxiety
- Unexplained damage or loss of property
- Unwillingness to talk about school/friendships
- Unexplained bruises or marks

Responding to a bullying concern;

- **Be calm.** It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control.
- **Be positive.** Have in mind the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the pupil. A pupil is much more likely to modify his/her behaviour if he/she perceives that a teacher cares.
- **Be assertive.** Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop bullying, but also make restitution with the child who has been bullied.
- **Be Confident.** It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have on the pupil's future behaviour. It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the pupil.
- Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying behaviour as in policy.
- Assess the situation and its severity level. Determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively.
- Once the Incident Level has been determined, select one or more responses from those outlined.

To determine the level of severity, staff should take account of the following:

- The nature of the bullying behaviour- for example teasing, excluding or hitting. There is a tendency to rate some bullying particularly violence as more serious than others. This can be a dangerous mistake and leave us vulnerable to ignoring 'teasing or exclusion'.
- The frequency of the bullying
- The duration of the bullying behaviour
- The perceptions of the child being bullied - the seriousness of bullying can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target.

Once an alleged bullying incident has occurred:

1. Gather and clarify the facts.
2. Check:
 - That the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as defined by school.
 - Records for any previous incidents.

3. On the basis of this initial assessment:

- Choose appropriate intervention from intervention levels **outlined below**
- Ensure effective communication amongst all parties.
- Consider the possible need for:
 - Parental involvement
 - Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) involvement
 - Risk Assessment
 - External agency involvement e.g. CPSS CHILD Protection Support Service for Schools.

4. Refer to the support materials provided on the intervention selected.

5. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of chosen intervention.

6. **Record** actions taken and outcomes achieved.

7. Review the outcomes to determine whether further action is required and progress accordingly.

Choosing an Appropriate Intervention

There is no one is always preferable intervention. Remember, the main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying that is taking place, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all those involved.

In selecting an intervention schools should take account of:

- The level of severity
- The age and ability of those involved
- Whether an individual pupil or a is involved group
- The level of staff agreement, confidence and competence in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.
- The agreement of parents/carers
- Whether the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately.
- The willingness to engage in a group intervention method

- Whether it is realistic to expect that the child experiencing bullying can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation.

Understanding the levels of Intervention- Refer to booklet 'Effective responses to bullying behaviour.'

Level 1 Interventions

Low Level Bullying Behaviour

Interventions at this level are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to 'get them back on track' while listening to and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying. Never ignore low level bullying behaviour.

Staff should;

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour
- Identify possible consequences if the bullying behaviour continues.
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the child experiencing bullying.
- Talk with the child experiencing bullying to explore whether in any way he/she has provoked the bullying behaviour.
- Help the bullied child to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported.
- Encourage reparation if appropriate.
- Monitor the situation carefully.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

Level 2 Interventions

Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour

While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is a shift from individual work to group interventions. To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent of the child being bullied
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability
- Parental/carers consent and agreement from participating pupils
- Carefully selected group membership
- To be facilitated in a positive manner, ideally by two adults, one participating one observing.

- Structured and focused activities to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity.
- Decisions and outcomes to be agreed and recorded.
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- A solution focused approach.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility
- Regular meetings of the group
- Regular meetings with the bullied pupil to assess on going effectiveness of agreed actions.

Level 3 Interventions

Complex Bullying Behaviour

It is clear that more complex bullying situations, which may be resistant to change, require the school to collaborate and network with parents/carers and other agencies, in addition to working with individual pupils.

Consequently, at this level, regarding a pupil's bullying behaviour require a formal referral to the Pastoral Co-Ordinator (Mr Reihill) who will assume over-arching responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school based interventions. In addition, he/she will have a lead role when liaising with external agencies.

The Pastoral Coordinator will refer to the school's Positive Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies to ensure that the response is consistent with the provisions in these policies.

These pupils will be at Stage 3 of the SEN Code of Practice requiring that the SENCO, in partnership with the Pastoral Coordinator determine appropriate interventions.

The inappropriate pupil behaviour should be identified within an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with the intervention detailed in the Behaviour Support Plan. It is imperative that other school staff implementing discrete interventions have been assigned responsibility accordingly.

At this level all available information should be used to inform a Risk Assessment. This assessment should involve an analysis of the presenting Risk Factors and Protective Factors. This risk analysis will determine the level of risk and needs and appropriate intervention from the framework. We consider these in terms of the following:

- School Environment
- Family Environment
- Peer Environment

This planning may also occur through a Multi-Agency Support Team meeting (MAST). For vulnerable pupils at higher risk the Pastoral Coordinator should further liaise with the DTCP/ Principal and consider the need for a UNOCINI assessment for Family Support by the Health and Social Care Trust is required.

Strength Building

It is clear that pupils who engage in repetitive and/or severe bullying behaviour require additional measures in order for their behaviour to be influenced. This is especially case for 'at Risk' pupils who present with many risk factors and few protective factors.

Research shows that such pupils often have 'delays' in one or more of their social and emotional capabilities, as well as being disconnected from positive relationships, programmes and opportunities in their school, home and community. Such pupils require Strength Building interventions. Individual action plans for 'strengthening' such pupils should focus on developing their social emotional skills and values.

Responsibility for strengthening these skills can be assumed by class teachers, SENCO or Pastoral Coordinator and involve support from other professionals, such as the School Counsellor, Educational Welfare Officer and other outside agencies.

Parents/carers will be informed of the programme, their consent obtained and wherever possible parents will be involved and contribute to this intervention, reinforcing these skills beyond the school setting.

Level 4 - Interventions

High Risk Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviours assessed as level 4 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. The school's Child Safeguarding Procedures will need to be invoked. MAST meeting to be organised to develop an inter-agency risk management plan. This may incorporate intensive support services to the pupils involved and their families.

DE's guidance 'Pastoral Care in School: Child Protection (Circular1999/10) states:
'Where a pupil's bullying behaviour is persistent and defies attempts by the school to address it satisfactory by behaviour management strategies or disciplinary methods within a reasonable time, the child protection procedures should be instigated. The victim's needs should always be paramount. (para87)

Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures 9.50 (2005)

The framework in accordance with CH5 of these procedures should be instigated in the following circumstances:

- Anti- bullying procedures have failed to be effective
- Bullying is persistent and severe, resulting in the victim suffering/likely to suffer significant harm
- There are concerns that the bullying behaviour is indicative of the bully suffering/ likely to suffer significant harm
- Where concerns exist in relation to the parent's/carers capacity to meet the needs of the child

Referral to inter and multi -agency liaison and integrated working with other external agencies is required at this stage. Referral to and /or liaison with other EA support services may occur at this time as the Behaviour Support Team, EWS and Educational Psychology. Other external agencies may include the Gateway Team, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team (CAMHS), PSNI.

Relevant and associated school policies include-

Child Protection (including the overview pamphlet distributed to all families biennially)

Pastoral Care

Positive Behaviour

Health and Safety

Safe Handling

Intimate Care

Critical Incident

PDMU/PATHS

Special Educational Needs

Guidance for Staff on the use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling of Children

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy was formulated by Mr Reihill in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. It has been approved by the Board of Governors and it is the intention of the staff to review and update it regularly.

It is important to remember that staff, pupils and parents all have an active part to play and have a responsibility to ensure an effective implementation and maintenance of this policy.