



Anti Bullying Policy

Adopted October 2017

Due for Review: October 2019

Introduction

This Policy has been developed through a process of consultation involving pupils and parents, consistent with 2003 legislative requirements and complies with the requirements of the NI Anti-Bullying 'Addressing Bullying In Schools' 2016 legislation.

We in Whiteabbey Primary School are committed to the provision of a happy and secure environment for every child. We believe in the dignity and worth of each individual pupil and that all our pupils should feel safe, confident and secure in their own worth as a member of our School Community.

Accordingly, we are proactive in working to create a school environment within which positive relationships are fostered, by consulting, discussing and agreeing with members of our school community how we will promote the development of rights respecting relationships.

We promote those values which will make our pupils caring, responsible citizens. These values are enshrined in our School 'Golden Rules', which are our 'Positive behaviour Expectations'.

Principles and values

Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.

The welfare and well-being needs of all children are paramount and pupils' needs, whether pupils displaying bullying behaviour or targeted pupil, are our priority.

Pupils needs have to be separated from their behaviour. In our school we do not want to label pupils unfairly so we use the term '*child who has been bullied*', or '*target of bullying*' instead of Victim. Also instead of describing any pupil as '*a bully*', we will use the term '*child who is displaying bullying behaviour*'. In this way we are separating the pupil from their unacceptable behaviour, emphasising that this pupil's unacceptable, inappropriate and unkind behaviour can change.

When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a 'Restorative' and 'Solution Focused' way, to achieve the necessary changes in behaviour and to restore relationships between the pupils involved, consistent with the NI Anti Bullying Forum guidance document. Interventions will be implemented to ensure bullying behaviour stops immediately and to meet the needs of all pupils involved.

Pupils who are targeted will be listened to, supported and strengthened.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and helped to accept responsibility for their unacceptable behaviour and supported to learn, helped to take responsibility, develop empathy and to change their behaviour.

Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention and in assessing concerns to determine and implement the appropriate, effective intervention working restoratively with individuals pupils and groups.

Parents are made aware in our schools 'Pastoral Care' summary leaflet of how to report any concern or complaint they may have in relation to their child's safety or well-being. Information sent out bi-annually and posters displayed in the school remind pupils that we are 'a listening school' and that pupils and parents/carers should tell a member of staff if they have any worries or fears

During parent evenings, through consultation processes, classroom workshops and in written policy documents, both pupils and parents are made aware of our school's aim and practice to prevent bullying behaviour occurring and of our policy and our practice when responding restoratively to any bullying concerns which may arise. We obtain the consent of pupils and parents when implementing interventions.

The process of Participation and Consultation

Consultation

The 2003 Statutory Requirements (Education & Libraries NI Order) require schools to "encourage **good behaviour and respect for others**" and in particular **prevent** all forms of bullying.

This legislation also requires The Board of Governors and Principal to consult with pupils, parents and staff regarding positive behaviour and bullying prevention measures which must be in place.

We have met this requirement in the following ways;

- Class based PDMU workshops to negotiate and agree our Code of Conduct for Positive behaviours within each class, based on the 6 Golden Rules.
- Pupil consultation exercises and obtaining the views of elected pupil representatives e.g. class council, school's council
- Baseline Pastoral Surveys (questionnaires distributed) involving pupils, parents and whole school staff. **(Date when this was most recently undertaken)**
- Awareness raising programmes eg P1 Parent Information evening, School Information Booklet, School Website, Posters, Newsletters, Involvement in NIABF Anti-bullying Week events.

Links with other School Policies

Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care. Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is addressed through school policies, such as Promoting Positive Behaviour, Pastoral Care; Child Protection. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Within our Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy we outline the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate together with the response and restorative and the solution focused 'measures' which the school staff will use when responding to promote positive behaviour and to address and change any inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. In this way we are actively preventing bullying behaviour occurring.

This policy links with the Child Protection Policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies. Very rarely, in extreme situations bullying behaviour and its impact on pupils may give cause to consider 'significant harm'(safeguarding issues) and/or a potential crime having occurred. In such circumstances a referral to the Social Services

Trust Safeguarding Team is necessary and this will be progressed following the school Child Protections procedures.

Definition of Bullying

The Addressing Bullying In Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as including, (but not limited to) the repeated use of-

- a) any verbal, written or electronic communication
- b) any other act, or
- c) any combination of these

by a pupil or 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.

As a school community we have sought to understand what bullying is and the different forms it can take as the starting point for responding to bullying effectively. We understand that not all unacceptable, unkind, hurtful behaviour is bullying behaviour. Following consultation with teachers, pupils and ancillary staff, the following definition of bullying behaviour has been agreed in our school:

Bullying Behaviour is unacceptable, unkind behaviour, which is recurrent or persistent in which a more powerful pupil, or group, deliberately 'targets' another pupil or group.

The term 'Bullying Behaviour' refers to those situations in which a range of harmful behaviours, physical and psychological occur with the additional following four features presenting:

- The hurtful behaviour is repetitive and persistent
- It is intentionally harmful behaviour which is 'targeted' at an individual
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving 'the targeted pupil' feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it
- It causes distress

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- **Physical:** kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping
- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours
- **Indirect:** includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, interfering with personal property and includes Cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include misusing mobile phones/ computer and internet programmes to humiliate, threaten and isolate another, bullying through Social Networking Sites, messaging and chat rooms.

Pupils may be targeted on the basis of race, religion, culture, gender, homophobic bullying including perceived sexual orientation or identity.

Preventative Measures

Ethos and Pastoral Care:

Relationships are at the 'core' of everything we do in Whiteabbey Primary School,

We are a rights respecting school and encourage pupils to recognise and respect themselves and each other. We aim to be a ‘caring’, ‘listening school’ in which pupils are encouraged to become aware of their feelings and express their fears and concerns and to develop a sense of their responsibility and empathy for others. This process is facilitated through activities such as PDMU lessons (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) in which children explore their needs, rights feelings and thinking and behaviour to develop their skills in dealing with situations they may experience and to develop their self-awareness, coping/resilience and emotional intelligence.

Within our Curriculum we provide children with the opportunity to develop a range of skills, including assertiveness and communication skills, in a wide variety of contexts, both inside and outside the classroom. The School Curriculum (PDMU, Religion) address prejudice, discrimination and Social/Emotional Learning.

We also provide opportunities for developing Positive Peer Relationships and interpersonal and coping strategies during Circle time and in Class/School Council.

Our school community has agreed and communicates our school expectations for ‘Positive Behaviour’, summarised in the Golden Rules, during School Assemblies Displays of Posters & classroom charters. We promote positive behaviour reinforcing the School’s Golden Rules at all times and we reward and incentivise pupils with awards for their ‘Golden Behaviour’ in weekly ‘Golden Time’ and in pupil of the week awards and displays.

There is school wide supervision and effective, consistent behaviour management by all staff. When any inappropriate behaviour is observed or reported, staff will use skilled interventions, ‘Rule Reminder Scripts’ ‘Rights Respecting Scripts’ and ‘Expectation Discussions’, to help pupils recognise their ‘behavioural mistake’ and ‘to help restore’ this pupil to acceptable, positive behaviour.

Should concerns regarding bullying behaviour arise, we aim to assess this concern and then implement the appropriate interventions. A primary aim is to ensure the safety of the targeted pupil. To this end we can create *Safe Havens* or *Safe Spaces* through changing seating arrangements and implement *Peer Support arrangements*, including establishing a ‘Circle of Friends’ to ‘befriend and support vulnerable pupils when moving between classes. As appropriate we address issues and concerns restoratively with individuals who engage in bullying behaviour and within the wider group. We use a range of strategies, consistent with The NI Anti Bullying Forum ‘Effective Interventions’ document.

Should bullying behaviour persist, despite class teacher interventions, class teachers will receive additional support from the Principal or Senior Teachers with Pastoral responsibility and school management to review their assessment, their actions to date and to implement further appropriate interventions. (Appendix School Procedures for Responding To Alleged Bullying Concerns)

Responsibilities of all our school Community

School Staff

Our staff will

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, a sense of their rights and their responsibilities to others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying behaviour with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is targeted and the pupil who engages in bullying behaviour.
- Emphasise the importance of telling a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed.

- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who express bullying concerns, taking what they say seriously and responding appropriately.
- Follow up any concern or complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action(s) which they have taken.
- Respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner, with an expectation of change in accordance with agreed procedures

Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to support any pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe for them to do so.
- Report any concerns or instances of bullying witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their children to report any bullying to **their class teacher or another staff member** (Mr K Wysner, the Principal or to our Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)
- We explain the implications of allowing bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for the pupil themselves and for other pupils
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying behaviour
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- Keeping written or electronic records of any instances of bullying behaviour
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is involved in a bullying concern
- Supporting school attempts to resolve the difficulty using restorative interventions which aim to stop bullying behaviour recurring, meeting the needs of all children involved and restoring positive relationships within pupils/groups

Procedures for Responding To Concerns Re Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

(Includes steps taken to support and respond to the needs of all pupils involved; those who are targeted and those who engage in bullying behaviour)

- We will use a 'Bullying Concerns Assessment Form' to record incidents, the planned intervention to address the issue and to record the action taken and review outcomes.
- We will gather information, using the Responding to Alleged Bullying Behaviour Assessment Form
- We will assess and plan appropriate interventions with reference to the School's Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies and NIABF Interventions Framework Guidance Document, Responding to Alleged Bullying Behaviour.

- During the assessment process, staff roles and responsibilities will be defined when implementing discrete interventions and to ensure communication between all involved is maintained. Actions agreed and named person will be noted. Time frames involved in responding will be noted and adhered to. Outcomes will be reviewed following interventions occurring.
- We may obtain seek advice and support and/or make a referral to other relevant EA Support Services eg. Behaviour Management Team, EWO, Education Psychology, or external Child Protection Support Services.
- Subsequent to implementing our interventions we will continue to carefully monitor and support all pupils involved to ensure no recurrence of concerns arise.

Professional development of Staff

School Teaching staff & Support Staff have received relevant INSET training on 29/9/2017

We will also identify any relevant future training needs within the School Development Planning Process

Monitoring and review of policy

Consistent with the ‘Addressing Bullying In Schools (Northern Ireland Act 2016) requirements this policy will be reviewed every 4 years and following any incident, to assess and ensure that it is “fit for purpose”. and its efficacy when responding to bullying concerns.

We will maintain & review records, collect data and monitor and evaluate effectiveness of our policy, procedures, staff skills and intervention strategies.

School will provide a (Summary) copy of this policy to all parents and make the policy available on the school website.



PRINCIPAL

CHAIR of GOVERNORS Mr. Ken Swarbrick

DATED

October 2017

Appendix 1 Documents referenced in the development of this policy

1. This policy has been developed through a process of ‘Consultation’ which has involved key stakeholders, consistent with **The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003** and adheres to the statutory requirements of the **‘Addressing Bullying In Schools’ (Northern Ireland) Act 2016**

2. **Further information on specific articles of the legislation referring to the welfare and protection of pupils include the following:**
 - a. ARTICLE 17 – DUTY TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF PUPILS
 - b. ARTICLE 18 – CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES
 - c. ARTICLE 19 – SCHOOL DISCIPLINE: MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING

3. **‘Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour’ (2001)**

4. **‘Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection’ (1999)**

5. **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)**
 - a. Article 12 - the right to express views and have these taken seriously
 - b. Article 19 - the right to protection- incl. bullying

6. **Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum - Effective Interventions Guidance Document**

APPENDIX 2

School Procedures For Effectively Responding To Incidents Of Bullying Behaviour and Implementing Effective Interventions.

When bullying concerns arise it is important members of school staff know who is responsible for responding by assessing concerns and implementing interventions. There needs to be a specific line of responsibility and accountability for responding, This includes indicating on the NIABF Assessment Form , the appropriate Level of Intervention required and who in the school team is responsible for implementing this intervention or response, maintaining appropriate records and linking with individual pupils and their parents throughout.

Consequently four levels of response are suggested for school staff corresponding to the four Levels of Intervention detailed in the NIABF Document, ‘Responding To Bullying Behaviour: Effective Interventions’.

Level 1 Interventions

Class or Form teachers who confront a low level incident of bullying behaviour (observed or reported) have an initial responsibility for taking positive action. This may include using one or more of the following intervention practices:-

- Rights Respecting Scripts
- Restorative Questioning
- One to One discussions and/or Think Time Discussions
- Whole class & Small group discussions
- Quality Circle Time.

Staff should restoratively (NON-PUNITIVELY) address concerns with pupils directly involved or those indirectly impacted upon. This will include bystanders and the group and/or whole class, as appropriate. Records should be maintained of staff interventions in response ie. inputs & outcomes. Staff should carefully continue to monitor and make enquireies post-intervention to ensure pupil well-being & safety have been restored.

Level 2 Interventions

Class Teachers will obtain additional advice & support from the school’s Pastoral Co-ordinator, Vice Principal or Principal, regarding their ‘Assessment of the Alleged Bullying Concern’. This may also include:-

- Obtaining parental consent to planned interventions
- Meeting with pupils involved or impacted upon
- Meeting with parents/carers

Each staff member involved will maintain and provide appropriate records of their intervention for the key co-ordinating staff member’s information.

Level 3 Interventions

At this level, a “history” of on-going concerns and interventions may exist or this may be a newly emergent but complex bullying concern.

School's Senior Leadership Team members actively involved, such as VP Pastoral, SENCO and/or Designated Teacher for Child Protection, who will be identified on the 'Assessment of Concern' form. Their responsibilities will include:-

1. Gathering and assessing complex and dynamic information
2. Liaising with Making Referral to external professionals and agencies
3. Maintaining ongoing communication with pupil's, their parents and carers

Collaborating with, updating and advising school staff re implementing interventions and 'Pupil Strengthening' interventions.

This Role and Responsibility may include an integration of the following Plans:-

- Risk Assessment/Risk Management Plans
- Pastoral Care Child Protection Plans
- Special Education Needs I.E.P.'s

Level 4 Interventions

Bullying concerns which requires this level of intervention include considerable pupil vulnerability and well-being considerations, risk of "significant harm" or criminal aspects to bullying behaviour.

External agencies will undertake their Safeguarding investigations and school based interventions will need to be carefully managed by the school Principal, who will appropriately involve members of the Senior Leadership team, Pastoral Care and Designated Teacher with Safeguarding responsibility. These may include:-

Working in close partnership with pupil(s) and parents/carers

Referral to multi-disciplinary 'Safeguarding Agencies' for Investigation

On-going liaison with Family Support, Safeguarding, PSNI and medical agencies

Advising and supporting school staff on a 'need to know basis' and implementing school risk assessment and risk management plans

Supporting 'key Adults & Safe Hand Team' to implement school and classroom based support and interventions(NIABF)

Ongoing monitoring and 'Pupil Strengthening' interventions.