

LISNAGELVIN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated November 2023

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy ensures that the school meets its statutory duty under the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. It reflects the school's Core Values and is linked to the Pastoral Care, Child Protection, Positive Behaviour and ICT Policies, with the aim of building an inclusive environment where every child can fulfil their potential.

RATIONALE

The school is completely opposed to bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work and learn in a secure and caring environment. All members of the school community also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

PRINCIPLES

- Pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear;
- The needs of the pupils who have been targeted by bullying behaviour are paramount;
- The school will not tolerate bullying behaviour;
- Pupils who are the target of bullying behaviour will be listened to; and
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

WHAT IS BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOUR?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016 (NI)

Bullying type behaviour exists in all communities including schools. To respond to this, a new law commenced on 1st September 2021 in Northern Ireland. It provides schools with **one** legal definition to assess all reported alleged incidents of bullying type behaviour in schools.

The law states that in all schools:

“Bullying” includes, but isn’t limited to, repeated verbal, written or electronic communication, by a pupil(s) against another pupil(s) that is intended to

cause physical or emotional harm. This also includes leaving someone out on purpose.”

To support a relational and solution focused approach, we no longer use the words ‘***bully***’ or ‘***victim***’. Instead, we talk about:

‘pupil displaying bullying type behaviour’

and

‘pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour’.

When a concern of bullying type behaviour is shared, staff will clarify facts, perceptions and the individual needs of all pupils involved.

Staff will assess the reported incident using TRIP criteria and identify appropriate interventions aimed at repairing relationships.

Targeted

When the behaviour is **TARGETED** at a specific pupil or group of pupils.

Repeated

When the behaviour is **REPEATED** over a period of time.

Intentional

When the behaviour is deliberately **INTENDED** to cause harm.

Psychological/Physical

When the behaviour causes **PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL** or **PHYSICAL** harm.

Behaviour that does not meet **TRIP** is referred to as ***socially unacceptable behaviour.***

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying type behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, **TRIP** criteria are confirmed.

Whether **socially unacceptable** OR **bullying type behaviour**, school will support all young people involved to address the behaviour effectively.

A significant **One-off Incident** can be considered bullying type behaviour if included in the school policy e.g. where a digital communication has been intentionally shared widely to cause harm.

FORMS OF BULLYING

The following are examples of bullying behaviour that are unacceptable in our school:

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil;
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it;
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil;
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family;
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements;
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil;
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity;
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms; and
- Using the Internet to intimidate or cause distress to another pupil.

PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Awareness raising of bullying for staff and pupils;
- Questionnaires distributed to staff, parent representatives on the PTA and the School Council;
- Involvement of the School Council and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in promoting an anti-bullying school; and
- Monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing procedures and the policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- Foster our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for 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 caused to both the child who is bullied and to the person who exhibits bullying behaviour, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens;
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour;
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to, Mrs Lipczynski, Mrs Buchanan, Mrs C Simpson, Mrs Beattie, Mrs Thompson or Mr Torrens, the named teachers for Child Protection;
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures; and
- Follow the processes and procedures laid out in the NIABF Anti-Bullying document.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

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

Anyone who becomes the target of bullying should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets;

The Responsibilities of 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 and explaining the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying;
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keeping a written record of any suspected instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved; and
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are **experiencing** bullying type behaviour and for the children **displaying** bullying type behaviour themselves.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and to eradicate bullying.

PREVENTATIVE INTERVENTIONS TO CREATE A BULLY FREE ETHOS

- School rules
- Promotion of the school's core values
- Classroom management
- Pastoral provision
- Curriculum content. Circle Time. PDMU
- Adult supervision at all times
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week
- Anti-Bullying leaflet for the children and posters designed by the Whole School or Student Council
- Assembly themes
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

- Buddy system at lunchtime
- Talks by PSNI about cyber-bullying

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Action which may be taken:

- Records kept;
- Contacting parents/carers of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident;
- Investigation;
- Feedback to those concerned;
- Support for both parties;
- Sanctions; and
- Contacting relevant professions such as EWO, Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support Team etc.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Training:

- School Ethos and Core Values;
- Child Protection;
- Anti-Bullying policy, reviews and procedures to be followed; and
- Use of information from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum.

HOW DO PARENTS REPORT A CONCERN?

- Report any concerns as soon as possible to the class teacher.
- Arrange an appointment to meet the teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team.
- Outline details any concerns and give staff time to gather information and consider supports.
- Behaviour assessed against the legal definition and TRIP Criteria activated. Parents/Carers informed.
- Legal definition of bullying type behaviour **NOT** met - Socially unacceptable behaviour is supported using Positive Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.
- Legal definition of bullying type behaviour **IS** met - Bullying type behaviour is supported using Addressing Bullying in School Policy.

- Relational supports for all pupils involved are agreed, implemented, tracked and reviewed to determine if the situation has improved or if further support is required that may involve other agencies.

COMPLAINTS

Parents and carers can access the school's ***Complaints Policy*** on the school website or on request from the school office.

SHARED EDUCATION

During shared education activities, the teacher in charge will follow the procedures appertaining to their own school.

If an incident/concern occurs with a child from the partner school, the teacher in charge will inform the child's class teacher who will then deal with the incident/concern.

If this is not immediately possible, the teacher in charge will deal with the incident, according to their individual school's policy and report it as soon as they can to the child's class teacher in the partner school.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents in 2025. Policy review may take place in light of certain incidents that occur before the stated review date.

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Chair of Board of Governors

Date: _____