



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**



### **OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES**

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Pastoral Care Policy;
- Special Educational Needs Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Relationships and Sexuality Policy;
- E-safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy;
- Mobile Phone Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Parental Complaints Policy

**This policy was first drawn up by the Head of Pastoral Care in October 2021**

## **Rationale**

At Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School we believe that all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we wish to uphold a positive image with all stakeholders: pupils, staff, parents, governors and community members. We strive at all times to create an environment where there is mutual respect, where each person is valued as an individual and pastoral care is an integral part of education. Each pupil will be encouraged to fulfil his or her moral, intellectual, spiritual, physical, social and emotional potential.

Lough View is a Rights' Respecting School and upholds the articles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy reflects the caring ethos of the school and focuses more closely on the following articles:

- Article 1 – All children have all the rights in the convention
- Article 2 – The convention applies to every child without discrimination
- Article 7 – Every child has the right to a name
- Article 8 – Every child has the right to an identity
- Article 19 – Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents and anyone else who looks after them

## **Context**

This policy has been developed in line with current key legislation and guidance applicable to schools in Northern Ireland as listed in Appendix 1. The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, alongside guidance provided by DE and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), have the aim of ensuring '*policies designed to prevent bullying of a registered pupil at the school are pursued at the school*' and '*to determine the measures to be taken at the school with a view to preventing bullying involving registered pupils at the school*'.

This policy reflects the school's commitment to the prevention of bullying involving a registered pupil of the school and to supporting those pupils experiencing bullying behaviour and those who display bullying behaviour towards another pupil/pupils.

## **Aims**

The Aims of this Anti-Bullying Policy are to:

- provide a safe and caring environment for all pupils;
- raise awareness and promote understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour;
- ensure pupils and parents know how to raise a concern about bullying;
- encourage pupils and parents to report bullying behaviour to a member of staff;

- ensure an appropriate and consistent approach to all reported instances of bullying behaviour;
- provide support for pupils who are experiencing bullying behaviours;
- support those pupils who display bullying behaviour to adopt positive attitudes and behaviour.

### **Scope**

The **scope of this policy** includes the prevention of bullying involving a registered pupil of Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School:

- on the school grounds during the school day;
- while travelling to or from the school during the school term;
- while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school;
- while the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school;
- while using personal electronic devices in any of the above settings;
- while using digital property belonging to the school for electronic communication

Online bullying can happen at any time in any place. It can be in public or in private, known only to the person experiencing bullying behaviour and the person displaying bullying behaviour. The school and Board of Governors reserves the right to take steps to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term time, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on a pupil's learning at school.

### **Consultation and Participation**

This policy is written in consultation with students, parents, staff and Governors of Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School, in compliance with The Addressing Bullying Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. Specific consultation activities included:

#### **Pupils**

- Discussions with the Pupil Council
- Age appropriate, class-based activities

#### **Parents**

- Discussions with the Lough View Parents' Council

- Consultation on draft policy via email

#### **Staff**

- Staff review of the draft policy before ratification

#### **Governors**

- Training, consultation and ratification of the policy

#### **What is Bullying?**

The Addressing Bullying Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which states;

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 (when someone has been left out or excluded, with the aim of causing harm).

#### **\*Physical and Emotional Harm**

In determining ‘harm’ we define:

- Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil’s self-esteem
- Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

#### **One-Off Incidents**

In exceptional circumstances, a one-off incident may be considered as bullying if, in the view of the School and/or the Board of Governors, it is aggravated by the level of harm caused and/or the intention of the perpetrator. In any such case, the school and/or the Board of Governors will decide if the behaviour meets the threshold to be defined as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

- severity and significance of the incident;
- evidence of pre-meditation;

- impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional);
- impact of the incidents on the wider school community;
- previous relationships between those involved;
- any previous incidents involving the individuals.

### **Positive Behaviour Policy**

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

### **What is Bullying Behaviour?**

Bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour, but not all unacceptable behaviour can be considered bullying. The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered as bullying behaviour:

#### **Verbal or Written Acts**

- saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
- making fun of others
- calling another pupil mean and hurtful names
- telling lies or spreading false rumours about others
- trying to make other students dislike another student
- making racist, sexist, sectarian or homophobic comments

#### **Physical Acts**

- hitting
- spitting
- kicking
- pushing
- shoving
- causing material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions
- threats of violence

#### **Omission (Exclusion)**

- Leaving someone out of a game
- Refusing to include someone in group work

#### **Electronic Acts**

- Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above
- Impersonating someone online to cause hurt
- Sharing images (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

- Using online tools to create fake photographs, videos etc

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

### **Motivations behind Bullying Behaviour**

The various motivations behind bullying behaviour, including those named in the Act, include, but are not limited to:

- |                                   |                         |                      |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| • Ability                         | • Disability/SEN        |                      |
| • Age                             | • Gender identity       | • Race               |
| • Appearance                      | • Looked After status   | • Religion           |
| • Breakdown in peer relationships | • Marital status        | • Sexual Orientation |
| • Community background            | • Political affiliation | • Young Carer status |

### **Language to be Used**

Bullying is an emotive issue and the school will endeavour to use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, members of the school community will not refer to a child as a 'bully' (but as a child 'displaying bullying behaviour') nor will we refer to a child as a 'victim' (but as a child 'experiencing bullying behaviours').

We will encourage all members of the school community to use the above language when discussing incidents involving alleged bullying behaviour.

### **Harm**

In determining 'harm', we refer to the DE guidance which defines:

- Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.
- Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

### **Preventative Measures**

In line with the requirements of the legislation, at Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School, we strive to maintain an ethos of anti-bullying, supported by a wide-ranging suite of preventative measures. These include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages throughout the curriculum;

- Addressing issues, such as the various forms of bullying through age-appropriate, classroom-based activities
- Actively promoting positive emotional health and well-being;
- Development of peer-led systems such as pupil council and playground pals to support the delivery and implementation of key anti-bullying messages within the school;
- Participation in NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- Development of effective strategies for the playground management such as training for supervisors and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils;
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying;
- Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks.

#### **Preventative Measures on the Way to and from School**

- Development of a culture where students take pride in the school and its Integrated ethos and are viewed as ambassadors within the community;
- Regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of students whilst travelling to and from the school;
- Regular engagement with transport providers to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns;
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to the journey home.

#### **Preventative Measures for Use of Electronic Communication**

- Participation in Safer Internet Day;
- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through ICT/PDMU, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use;
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, PHA, SBNI) to support the promotion of key messages;
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas.

## **Responsibility**

At Lough View, everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, parents/carers, staff and Governors are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

- foster positive self-esteem
- behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
- model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour
- intervene to support any person who is experiencing bullying behaviour, unless it is unsafe to do so
- report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff
- emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
- explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others
- listen sensitively to anyone who has been experiencing bullying behaviour, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
- know how to seek support – internal and external
- resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

## **Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors of the school has a responsibility to “*take an active interest in all aspects of their school’s activities that promote pupil welfare.*” (ESAGS: The Governor’s Role, p107)

The Board of Governors are responsible for ensuring that appropriate interventions are implemented to meet the needs of both those experiencing bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour.

Bullying statistics should be discussed regularly at Board of Governor meetings and used to identify patterns which inform policy review to meet the needs of young people more effectively.



## **Staff**

All teaching and support staff, have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and caring environment within the school. Staff must foster an ethos of mutual respect and positive self-esteem for our pupils. They must report any alleged incident of bullying behaviour in the appropriate manner.

## **Pupils**

Pupils have a responsibility to respect the rights of every other individual in the school. Pupils must treat all others with respect and must not engage in bullying behaviour. Equally, they are encouraged not to be a bystander to bullying behaviour. They should report bullying behaviour of which they are aware to a member of staff and encourage others to get help from a trusted adult when it happens or is observed.

## **Parents**

Parents have the right to expect that the school is a safe and caring environment for their children. They have a responsibility to ensure that their children respect all others in the school and that they act as a model of good behaviour.

## **Reporting a Bullying Concern**

### **Pupils Reporting a Concern**

Pupils can report a bullying concern:

- verbally by talking to any member of staff
- by writing a note to a member of staff (using eg “worry boxes” in each class)

Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns involving another pupil and should not assume that the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour will report the concern themselves.

### **Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern**

Parents should raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour at the earliest opportunity. Parents are encouraged to remind their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour by not retaliating or ‘hitting back’. The process for reporting a bullying concern is outlined below:

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be discussed with the child’s class teacher
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Head of Pastoral Care

- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the school's Complaints Procedure should be followed. See Step 1 – Formal Stage: Writing to the Principal.

All reports of bullying concerns will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be given to the person who made the report. However, it should be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

### **Responding to a Bullying Concern**

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any concerns/allegations of bullying behaviour

#### **Stage 1**

The member of staff will:

- Listen carefully and clarify all facts and perceptions;
- Carefully record the details, including the motivating factors;
- Assure the pupil/parent that the matter will be dealt with as quickly as possible;
- Inform their line manager who will work with them to assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour as defined by The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016;
- If a determination is made that the incident does not constitute bullying behaviour, it will, if appropriate, be dealt with under the Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Head of Pastoral Care.

#### **Stage 2**

If a determination is made that the incident does constitute bullying behaviour, the staff member, alongside the Head of Pastoral Care should:

- Complete the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF);
- Clarify facts and perceptions;
- Check records (SIMS Behaviour Management Module);
- Gather evidence from any witnesses;

- Identify any themes or motivating factors;
- Determine the type of bullying behaviour being displayed;
- Decide on the appropriate sanctions/consequences for those involved in displaying bullying behaviour;
- Identify the intervention level in line with guidance provided by NIABF;
- Keep a written record of all conversations regarding the incident;
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions;
- Review outcome of interventions;
- Select and implement further interventions if necessary.

### **Recording**

As set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be maintained.

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (e.g. the method);
- the motivation for the behaviour;
- how each incident was addressed by the school;
- the outcome of the interventions employed.

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

### **Professional Development of Staff**

As a school, we recognise the need to appropriate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. Training to support staff and Governors in responding to allegations of bullying will be provided as deemed necessary by the Principal. Records of all training in this area will be maintained and updated regularly.

### **Monitoring and Review of Policy**

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

- maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of confirmed incidents of bullying behaviour shall be noted in the minutes of each meeting;
- identify trends and priorities for action;
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour;
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour.

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed every four years, unless required by an incident which highlights the need for such a review. It will also be reviewed in light of provision of further guidance from the Department of Education.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Consulted on (month/year)</b>
Pupils	February 2022
Staff	November 2021
Governors	January 2022
Parents	January 2022

Adopted by Board of Governors	February 2022
Made available to parents	February 2022
Latest date for next review	February 2026