

Anti-Bullying Policy

**St. Brigid's Primary School, Tirkane /
Bunscoil Naomh Bríd**



Updated by: *Safe Guarding Team in Term1 and 2 2017-2018*

Adopted by Board of Governors – 27th March 2018

Review Due: March 2020

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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 St Brigid's 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 must 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.

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

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.

Interventions will be implemented to meet the needs of all pupils involved.

Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention, including implementing effective and appropriate strategies for intervention.

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, 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 how we respond 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 in St Brigid's have met this requirement in the following ways;

- Class based PDMU workshops to negotiate and agree our Code of Conduct for positive behaviours within the class group based on the 6 Golden Rules.
- Awareness-raising programmes through Curriculum including involvement in NI Anti-Bullying Week
- Survey/questionnaires distributed to pupils and whole school staff.
- Awareness raising programmes e.g. P1 Parent Information evening, School Website, Posters, Newsletters, Involvement in NIABF Anti-Bullying Week annual 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 Positive Behaviour / Discipline Policy, 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, the restorative and the solution focused 'measures' which the school uses 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 Safeguarding /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 cause such 'significant harm' that a referral to the Social Services Trust Safeguarding Team is necessary and this will be progressed following the normal 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 tackling 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 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 based on 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 St Brigid's Primary School, Tirkane. 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 and feelings and skills in dealing with situations they may experience.

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 e.g. during Circle time.

Our school community has agreed and communicates our school expectations for 'Positive Behaviour', summarised in the Golden Rules which are evident in displays, on school website and are reinforced during school assemblies.

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 use '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 Spaces* through changing seating arrangements and implement *Peer Support arrangements*, including establishing a 'Buddy system' to 'befriend and support vulnerable pupils. 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 interventions by a class teacher, additional support will be provided by the Principal or Designated / Deputy Designated teachers to review their assessment, their actions to date and to implement further appropriate interventions.

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** (Mrs P Mc Master, Principal or to Mrs. C. O’Loughlin IMU Co-Ordinator and Designated Teacher for Child Protection, or to Mrs L. Convery the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)
- Explaining 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 regarding 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.
- Through assessment, staff roles and responsibilities will be defined in responding to an incident, 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 e.g. Behaviour Management Team, EWO, Education Psychology, or external Child Protection Support Services.
- We will continue to monitor and support all pupils involved.

Professional development of Staff

School Teaching staff and classroom assistants have received relevant INSET training in August 2017

Monitoring and review of policy

Consistent with the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools (Northern Ireland Act 2016 requirements this policy will be reviewed every 3 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 and review records, collect data and monitor and evaluate effectiveness of our policy, procedures, staff skills and intervention strategies.

School will make this policy available on the school website and a hard copy will be available to parents on request from the school office.

Appendix 1 - Documents referenced in the development of this policy

1. This policy has been developed consistent with **The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003** and 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. **'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: (2017)**
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 - Bullying Concerns Recording form
- Bullying Concern Assessment Form

PART 1 - Assessment of Concern

Our School's Definition of Bullying is			
<i>Bullying Behaviour is unacceptable, unkind behaviour, which is recurrent or persistent in which a pupil, or group, deliberately 'targets' another pupil or group.</i>			
	Name(s)	Gender	DOB & Year Group (if Pupil)
Person(s) reporting concern		M / F	
Target			
Other(s) involved in incident/concern			
Does the behaviour involve? <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to individual 1:1 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to Group <input type="checkbox"/> Group to individual			

Type of incident and Theme (if applicable):

Physical bullying (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons)

Verbal bullying (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)

Indirect bullying (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)

Cyber (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)

Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)

Homophobic (related to perceived or actual sexual orientation)

Racist (related to skin colour, culture and religion)

Sectarian (related to religious belief and/or political opinion)

Other _____

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff) including date(s) of events, if known, SIMS record.

Does this incident conform with your school's agreed definition of bullying? Yes No

Is there persistence/recurrence of this behaviour? Yes No

Is it targeted behaviour Yes No

Is there a power imbalance? Yes No

Is it intentionally hurtful behaviour? Yes No

Give details of any previous incidents reported

PART 2 – Details of interventions to be implemented in response

Outline action/support to be undertaken with pupil(s) who has been targeted:
(please tick all that apply) *Refer to Levels Guidance for Interventions

- Intervention with individual(s) peer group whole class
- Ongoing support/monitoring from _____ (named staff)
- Have parent(s) been informed/involved? Yes No (Give details)

- Referral to other agencies (please specify) _____

- Any other details (please specify)

Outline action/support to be undertaken with pupil(s) who has been displaying bullying behaviour:
(please tick all that apply) * Refer to Level 1-4 Interventions Resource

- Intervention re bullying concern with individual(s) peer group whole class

- Ongoing support/monitoring from _____ (named staff)
- Have parent(s) been informed/involved? Yes No (Give details)

- Referral to other agencies (please specify) _____
- Any other action (please specify)

- Suspension
- Expulsion

PART 3 - Status of Concern

This record is now:

Filed (**Interventions complete, issue resolved, record maintained**)

Further intervention/ Required

Copied to Class Teacher/Group Tutor

Passed to Head of Pastoral

Copied to Principal

Referred to external agency, please state: _____

Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PART 4 - Ongoing record of support and interventions **PAGE**

(Refer to Levels Guidance for interventions)

Date

Details of Intervention

Action Required

Action Taken

(Dated and signed)

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Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:

Signed: _____ Date: _____