



Anti-Bullying Policy

June 2024

Review Date: June 2025



Anti-Bullying Policy

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

At Tannaghmore Primary School, we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment. Our ethos and aims place emphasis on promoting the worth and self-esteem of all individuals with our school community.

We undertake the responsibility of creating a safe and secure environment for all the pupils who are in our care. It is a basic entitlement of all the children that they receive their education in an atmosphere free from fear, intimidation, humiliation, oppression and abuse. Tackling bullying will contribute significantly to making our school a happy place for everyone; no child deserves to be bullied.

Section 2 – Context

This policy has been developed consistent with the following contexts:

The Legislative Context:

- * [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)
- * [The Education and Libraries Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2003 \(A17-19\)](#)
- * [The Education \(School Development Plans\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010](#)
- * [The Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1995](#)
- * [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- * [The Health and Safety at Work Order \(Northern Ireland\) 1978](#)

The Policy & Guidance Context

- * The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
- * [Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour \(DE, 2001\)](#)
- * [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools \(DE, 2017\)](#)
 - [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland \(Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016\)](#)

- [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures \(SBNI, 2017\)](#)

The International Context

- * [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

This policy aims to-

- Promote a nurturing school environment where children's rights are known, respected and upheld
 - Promote a secure and happy environment for all pupils, free from threat, harassment and any other type of bullying behaviour
 - Support a school ethos which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying type behaviours
 - Assist in the provision of a positive and supportive atmosphere across the school including for those who may experience bullying type behaviours and those who may be displaying bullying type behaviours
 - Ensure the promotion of a whole school approach which identifies incidents of bullying and ensures educative work is provided to protect and educate our children accordingly
 - Instil a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying
 - Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying behaviour is reported
 - Develop procedures for noting recording and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour
 - Reinforce the schools expectations and inform pupils and parent accordingly, thereby fostering a productive partnership with the aim of maintaining a bully-free environment
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Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

Our Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed in in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Consultation with pupils took place using

- * Class-based activities
- * The School Council
- * Pupil Questionnaires

Consultation with parents/carers using

- * Information shared with parents/carers via school website
- * Random parent focus group
- * Parental Questionnaires

Consultation with staff using

- * Focus group of staff including SLT and PDMU co-ordinator
- * Alignment of previous policy to statutory guidance and identification of current need
- * Questionnaires

Section 5 – What is Bullying?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which must be used.

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:

(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.

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

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 wider school community*
- * *previous relationships between those involved*
- * *any previous incidents involving the individuals*

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

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a 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 spread false rumours about others*
- *try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s*

* ***Physical acts***

- *Hitting*
- *kicking*
- *pushing*
- *shoving*
- *material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions*

* ***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 (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

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

Various motivations behind bullying, may include, but are not limited to:

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

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters.

For that reason, we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'.

Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

- * ***A child displaying bullying behaviours***
- * ***A child experiencing bullying behaviours***

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussion bullying incidents.

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.*
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Section 6 – Preventative Measures

Under the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work will be on **prevention**.

In this section we, as a school, set out a number of key actions that will be taken forward, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment. Examples of these include:

- * Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- * Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
- * Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU/PD (eg. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
- * Through the preventative curriculum, actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (eg. mindfulness training)
- * Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- * Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, National Empathy Week etc.
- * Development of peer-led systems (eg. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- * Development of effective strategies for playground management, eg. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches/stops) 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
- * Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (eg. break time, lunch)
- * Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example sporting activities, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

Under the new legislation, schools must state within their policy the preventative measures they will put in place to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school. While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, the following can further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

- * Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
- * Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring systems on buses and for those walking.
- * Regular engagement with transport providers (eg. Translink etc.) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
- * Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (eg. local shops, cafes, service providers, residents, etc), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- * Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (eg. staff duty at school gate/bus collection spot)

Online Bullying:

Bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school, will be addressed as follows:

- * Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/PD, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- * Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- * Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- * Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- * Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy, etc.)
- * Use of Securus Software (while in school) to monitor and track unacceptable behaviours whilst using a school provided device
- * Sharing of key resources to educate parents on online safety through the school website (Parents Area – Safer Schools NI)

This lists above are not exhaustive but used in conjunction with our suite of Pastoral Care Policies is most likely to bring about the key outcomes of keeping children and young people safe and allowing them to feel safe at school.

Parents are also reminded school does not permit pupils to bring personal mobile devices to school. Contact with your child during the school day must be through the school office.

Section 7 – Responsibility

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school 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 being bullied, 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 bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
 - * know how to seek support – internally and externally
 - * resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties
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Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Children and young people have told the NIABF that when they have a concern about a potential bullying situation, they would like the opportunity to discuss this with a member of staff that they trust. Pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

Ways that pupils can report bullying concerns, including:

- * Verbally- talking to any member of staff. Posters of our safeguarding team are displayed around the school and in classrooms
- * By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. in a homework diary)
- * By posting a comment in a 'worry box' which can be found in classrooms and along the main corridors and resource areas

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents and carers should raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity.

Parents/carers also need to be mindful of need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

How Do I Report a Bullying Concern?

1. In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the **Class Teacher**
2. 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 **Vice-Principal**
3. Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to **Principal**

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This usually involves

making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors. Please see our School Complaints Policy which is available on our website www.tannaghmoreps.com

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school must be open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying will be dealt with in line with this Anti-Bullying Policy. The school will report back to the person who raised the complaint.

*It is important to note that **no information** in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his or her parents/carers.*

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall...

- * Clarify facts and perceptions
- * Check records (SIMS/BMM)
- * Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
- * Identify any themes or motivating factors
- * Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- * Identify intervention level
- * Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource booklet
- * Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- * Review outcome of interventions
- * Select and implement further intentions as necessary

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

Please Note: When communicating with the parents/carers of a child experiencing bullying, school will discuss strategies and support which will be offered/provided to the child in question. However, school will not discuss or share any information about another child with anyone other than that child's parent/carer.

Section 10 – Recording

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

- * how the bullying behaviour was displayed (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.

Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

Tannaghmore Primary School is committed to delivering up to date staff CPD for all school staff.

Training provided will

- * be part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions*

- * changes to advice &/or legislation will be used to update the school's policies and procedures e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
 - * ensure that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and safeguarding training is provided annually for all staff – teaching and non-teaching including E-Safety, NSPCC, Women's Aid etc awareness on a bi-annual basis
 - * CPD records will be kept and updated regularly on SIMs
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Section 12 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the 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 bullying will be noted
- * 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

Whilst the school's Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years, the policy will be reviewed following any incident which highlight the need for such a review.

Policy must also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before the 30th June 2028.

Section 12 – Links to Other Policies

In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:

- * ***Positive Behaviour Policy***
- * ***Pastoral Care Policy***
- * ***Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy***
- * ***Special Educational Needs Policy***
- * ***Health and Safety Policy***
- * ***Relationships and Sexuality Education***

