

# Brookeborough Primary School



## ***Anti-Bullying Policy***

**The school will review this policy in March 2025**

Signed: A. Young (B.O.G.)      Date: March 2024

Signed: B Ovens (Principal)      Date: March 2024

## **Context**

*This School Community repudiates bullying behaviour of any kind, to any member of the school community, by any member of the school community.*

**This Policy is informed and guided by current legislation and DE Guidance listed below:**

### **The Legislative Context:**

- Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- The Education Order (Northern Ireland) 2007
- The education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

### **DE Guidance:**

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour DE, 2001
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools DE 2017
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019

## **Rationale/Principles**

*Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of Pastoral Care, Child Protection, Pupil Behaviour, Health and Well-Being and Safety and Security.*

Through consistent implementation of the 'Positive Behaviour Policy', the school currently:

- Sets high standards of behaviour e.g., everyone follows the 'Golden Rules', policies and procedures are ratified by the Board of Governors and shared with all stakeholders.
- Carries out audits, through questionnaires and consultation, every three years to ensure that expectations are being met and to address any areas of concern.
- Actively promotes an open, inclusive, and mutually respectful working environment.
- Ensures high levels of pupil participation through Class, School and Eco Councils.
- Works in partnership with parents through the development of an open system of communication e.g., home/school diaries, monthly school letters, termly school newsletters, text service, parent meetings, Parent Support Group and Seesaw etc.
- Implements a whole-school reward system which consistently acknowledges, affirms, and celebrates positive behaviour and achievement. This is done through monthly Pastoral Care assemblies, Athletics, and Accelerated Reading certificates.
- Promotes confidence, self-reliance, resilience, and effective interpersonal skills through effective delivery of the PDMU curriculum, Helping Hands and Healthy Me Projects.
- Works effectively with appropriate outside agencies to support the care and welfare of the pupils.

- Works in conjunction with the SEN policy to identify and meet the needs of children with additional needs.
- Involve pupils in target setting, self-assessment and writing of PLPs.
- Implements a post-incident debriefing process to help pupils develop restorative attitudes and learn from their experiences.

### **Consultation and Participation**

Legislation 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.

In Brookeborough Primary School we consult with our stakeholders by -

#### **Consultation**

- Survey/questionnaires distributed to all pupils, parents, and school staff every three years. Results are then analysed, used to inform the School Development Plan and guide amendments to policies and procedures. This information is then shared with all stakeholders.
- Parents and children consulted on the Anti-Bullying and Positive Behaviour Policies, every three years.

#### **Participation**

- Participation in the annual NIABF Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Pupil questionnaires and audits
- The School Council are consulted and contribute to all relevant policies
- Pastoral Assemblies
- Comprehensive PDMU curriculum taught in ALL classes, addressing Anti-Bullying issues
- Circle Time/Show and Tell lesson when children can talk about concerns, they may have
- Study Buddy systems in classrooms
- Playground Pals Scheme, run by P6/7 pupils
- Worry/Suggestion box for children to post their concerns
- Helping Hands (Woman's Aid) Project
- Anti-Bullying activities are highlighted on the School Website
- In September each class draws up their own 'Class Charter', in line with the Golden Rules
- Healthy Me Programme (Action Mental Health)

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Every member of the school community – pupils, parents, staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors work together collaboratively to address bullying and bullying concerns in school.

#### **Board of Governors**

It is the duty of the Board of Governors to -

- Secure measures to prevent bullying.
- Keep a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil at the school. (This is a standard item on each agenda)

- Use the feedback provided to inform and guide School Development Plans, with regards to targets, success criteria and outcomes.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school.
- Consult with registered pupils on the general principles which will be reflected in the school's 'Positive Behaviour' policy.

### **The Principal**

It is the duty of the Principal to -

- Decide on measures which will be used to encourage good behaviour in school and specifically include measures to prevent bullying among pupils.
- Consult with pupils registered at the school and their parents when drawing up the 'Positive Behaviour' and 'Anti-Bullying' policies
- Provide regular training for teachers and non-teaching staff on spotting the signs of bullying and how to respond
- Use school assemblies and collective worship to reinforce the school's anti-bullying ethos
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times to create an environment where pupils feel safe and secure

### **School Staff**

Our staff will -

- Foster in the 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 behaviour.
- Listen to children who have experienced bullying behaviour, take what they say seriously and respond appropriately.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying behaviour, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner, with an expectation of change in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties.

### **Pupils**

We expect our pupils to:

- 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 pupil who is experiencing bullying behaviour unless it is unsafe for them to do so.

- Report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour 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 bullying behaviour should:

- Be encouraged to speak out and tell a trusted member of the school's learning community.

### **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 their being a 'target' of bullying behaviour.
- Advising their children to report any bullying behaviour to their class teacher, classroom assistant or the Principal and explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour.
- 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 records of any reported instances of bullying behaviour.
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is involved in a bullying concern, to resolve the difficulty by intervening restoratively, aiming to stop the behaviour recurring, to meet the needs of all children involved and to restore positive relationships within the group.

### **Preventative Measures**

The school has put in place measures specifically to prevent bullying behaviour among pupils. These include the following -

#### **Consistent Implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy which:**

- Upholds everyone's right to be safe both physically and emotionally and requires everyone to behave in ways which keep everyone safe – both physically and emotionally
- Includes a statement repudiating Bullying behaviour – 'Bullying Behaviour of any kind by any member of our school community to any other member of our community is completely unacceptable'
- Requires high standards of behaviour from all members of the school community, clearly spelt out in 'Roles and Responsibilities'
- Acknowledges and affirms positive behaviours
- Acknowledges socially unacceptable behaviours and the resulting consequences
- Regularly (every three years) audits all members of the school community through questionnaires and consultations

### Consistent Delivery of the Preventative Curriculum which:

- Addresses issues such as bullying, inclusion and good relations through the PDMU curriculum and Anti-Bullying Week.
- Actively promotes positive emotional health and well-being, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and builds confidence, self-esteem, and resilience through the PDMU curriculum.
- Reduces the likelihood of 'Cyberbullying' through Internet Safety Days, Parent Evenings, PSNI visits and involvement with projects such as 'Bee Safe'

### Monitoring Supervision Arrangements through:

- Regular communication with all members of staff to identify supervision needs and potential 'hotspots' around the school.
- Provision of support for vulnerable pupils e.g., Buddy Bench/Buddy Stop in the playground, Playground Pals scheme and a Study Buddy in the classroom.
- Seeks the pupils' opinions through e.g., Class/School councils, Suggestion box

### Whole School Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities including:

- Individual class lessons focussing on the Anti-Bullying theme e.g., 'Choose Respect over Bullying'
- Visit from the PSNI – talk on Cyberbullying
- Anti-Bullying Poster competition
- 'Show and Tell' Pastoral assembly at the end of Anti-Bullying week

### Active Pupil Involvement in for example:

- Playground Pals Scheme – children draw up playground rules
- School Council – consulted on Anti-Bullying policies and procedures
- P5/6/7 class design 'Anti-Bullying' leaflets for all of the children at the beginning of each year

### Definition of Bullying Behaviour

As a school community we have sought to understand what bullying behaviour is and the different forms it can take as the starting point for tackling it effectively. We understand that within school there is a continuum of anti-social behaviours which stop people feeling safe. They include the following examples:

- **Physical:** includes jostling, physical intimidation, punching/kicking and nipping
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours
- **Indirect:** includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, interfering with personal property and includes Cyber-bullying: misuse of mobile phones and internet programmes to humiliate, threaten and/or isolate another

All socially unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with in line with the school's 'Positive Behaviour' policy and procedures. **Socially unacceptable behaviour** becomes **bullying behaviour** when the information gathered clearly demonstrates that -

- The behaviour is intentional
- It is targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils
- It is repeated
- The behaviour has caused physical or emotional harm  
It involved omission

**The Legal Definition of Bullying**  
**For Northern Ireland**  
*As Outlined in The 2016 Act*

- 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 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 purpose of subsection (1), 'act' includes '**omission**'

The school is committed to using this definition to assist pupils, parents, staff and governors to recognise 'Bullying Behaviour'.

Further clarification of the terms used in the definition include –

- **Emotional Harm** – intentionally causing distress, anxiety, humiliation, and the impact on self-esteem.
- **Physical Harm** – intentionally causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns
- **Intention** – continuation of identified bullying behaviour after the school has implemented the interventions to respond to the situation. In determining intent to cause harm, the school can use its discretion in assessing an individual pupil's capacity to understand the impact of their behaviours e.g. due to development age, disability or delay.
- **Omission** – this includes where a pupil is intentionally left out and there is a wilful failure to include a pupil. Other examples include a pupil being left out of – a group of friends, activities, games and group work in class
- **Repeated** – three or more repeated incidents involving the same target/s

- The school believes that a Cyber Bullying incident can be treated as a **one-off act** of ‘Bullying Behaviour’ e.g., when bullying behaviour occurs through the medium of electronic communications, ‘repetition’ can take place through the repeated viewing and sharing of a post even if there is only one post. In exercising the school’s authority to decide that an intentional one-off incident should be recognised as bullying, schools may wish to consider factors such as evidence of premeditation or whether the incident has caused significant levels of emotional or physical harm to one or more pupils.
- An ‘**Imbalance of Power**’ is not included in the 2016 Act. However, we believe imbalance of power is still an important factor to be considered in assessing whether behaviour is to be considered bullying behaviour or not. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate.

### Methods of Bullying Behaviour

#### **‘Any verbal, written or electronic communication’**

These methods can be described as, but are not limited to, saying, writing or using online platforms to:

- Say mean and hurtful thing to, or about others
- Make fun of others
- Call another pupil mean and hurtful names
- Tell lies or spreads false rumours about others
- Try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
- Extort from, blackmail or exploit another

The use of electronic communication as a method of bullying behaviour is most commonly identified as Cyber Bullying. Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by an individual or group against a target using, for example, electronic forms of contact and social media platforms.

#### **‘Any other act’**

Other methods of bullying behaviour commonly include **physical bullying** and can be described as, but are not limited to:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Shoving around
- Locking a pupil/s inside a room
- Material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions
- Other direct/indirect acts

This is not an exhaustive list, ‘new’ types/methods may be added.



## Responding to Incidents of Alleged Bullying Behaviour

Staff will respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner, with an expectation of change being achieved through implementing the procedures set out in the Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Mr Young (Principal/Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection) and Mrs Gould (Designated Teacher for child protection) will instigate and lead the process once the information is passed to them. They will be responsible for recording the information, keeping it updated, reviewing and providing feedback to the Board of Governors. They will ensure that information is balanced, non-subjective, dated and tagged and compliant with current legislation.

External Advice/Support will be accessed by Mr Young (Principal) on the basis of early intervention, by completing a Stage 3 Code of Practice referral form or a UNOCINI Assessment form to access the relevant support services e.g. Education and Welfare Service, Behaviour Support, ASD Service etc.

### The Process

1. Gather information – clarify facts and perceptions
2. Use the school's system for recording incidents of unacceptable behaviour, to check for previous incidents and identify behavioural patterns
3. Use the information gathered to complete part 1 of the '**Bullying Concern Assessment Form**' (BCAF)
4. Check the information gathered against the legal definition's criteria and on this basis determine whether bullying has taken place
5. If on the information gathered Bullying Behaviour **has not been met**, socially unacceptable behaviours will be dealt with under the 'Positive Behaviour Policy'
6. If on the information gathered the criteria for Bullying Behaviour **has been met** the following procedures will be followed –
  - The Code of Practice is used to develop agreed **Action Plans** for both targeted pupil/s and pupil/s displaying bullying behaviours
  - Support details are recorded on the '**Bullying Concerns Assessment Form**' (BCAF)
7. If/When a 'Risk Reduction Action Plan' is needed this is drawn up and implemented by the SLT, in consultation with all partners.

### Support Provisions

#### Support for Targeted Pupil/s would involve:

- Discussing and agreeing an action plan which would involve pupil/s in; identifying target/s, relevant success criteria, outcomes and assessment procedures
- Keeping a record of the agreed action plan (Part 3 of the BCAF)
- Ongoing dialogue to ensure that the strategies identified and agreed would, when implemented, result for example in: greater resilience; development of new coping skills and the promotion of positive restorative relationships
- Copies of agreed Action Plans are shared with key partners to ensure clarity of roles and understanding of specific strategies

- Staff and pupil/s together track and monitor progress
- Track data to evaluate the intervention – has the success criteria been met?
- Keeping staff and pupil self-assessment records
- Progress being regularly reviewed and updated in the BCAF and outcomes shared with key partners

Support for Pupil/s displaying Bullying Behaviour would involve:

- Discussing and agreeing an action plan which would involve pupil/s in; identifying target/s, relevant success criteria, outcomes and assessment procedures
- Keeping a record of the agreed action plan (Part 3 of the BCAF)
- Ongoing dialogue to ensure that the interventions/strategies identified and agreed would, when implemented result in; reduction/removal of unacceptable bullying behaviour/s, an enhanced ability to empathise and the restoration of relationships
- Copies of agreed Action Plans are shared with key partners to ensure clarity of roles and understanding of specific strategies
- Staff and pupil/s together track and monitor progress
- Track data to evaluate the intervention – has the success criteria been met?
- Keeping staff and pupil self-assessment records
- Progress being regularly reviewed and updated in the BCAF and outcomes shared with key partners

***Follow-up Procedures***

- Report back promptly (within two weeks, ten working days) to parents informing them fully of actions taken/to be taken and outcomes achieved
- Provide regular opportunities for debriefing sessions for both target/s and pupil/s displaying Bullying Behaviour E.g. Think Time Discussion Sheet
- Acknowledge, affirm and celebrate success

**Record Keeping**

The Board of Governors must ensure that a record is kept of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a pupil in the school.

*The School will:*

**Keep a central record of ALL bullying or alleged bullying incidents that occur while:**

- on the premises of the school during the school day
- travelling to or from school during the school term e.g. to travel daily *directly* to school at the start of the day and directly from school to home at the end of the day when: on foot or on the school bus
- the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school e.g. whilst on a school trip, a school visit, playing on a school team or attending another school

- the school is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school

**What *MUST* be recorded:**

- Where the incident/s occurred
- The motivating factors/underlying themes (e.g. differences of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age etc.)
- The methods (i.e. verbal, written or electronic or any combination of these)
- Information about how the incident was addressed
- Record of support and intervention for the pupil/s displaying Bullying Behaviour and the pupil/s experiencing Bullying Behaviour
- Review of the Bullying concerns and actions to date

**Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and the Principal, who on the evidence gathered monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying policy by using performance and other data to:

- Determine how effective the school's preventative measures are in reducing: levels of and opportunities for bullying behaviour; severity and frequency of incidents
- Identify patterns and trends
- Determine how effective the policy's processes are in: identifying underlying motivation and promoting and maintaining restoration
- Ensure that the policy, through consultation and participation is successfully identifying current needs and addressing them appropriately
- Inform and guide policy development and review through feedback received from surveys with parents, staff, governors and pupils
- Ensure that policy concerns are identified quickly and addressed through the ongoing School Development Planning process

Child Protection is a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board of Governors under which a report on bullying is presented. The minutes will record the number of incidents of bullying including method, motivation and how the incident was addressed.

**Review of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Governors every three years. It will be dated and signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors to confirm ratification of the review process.
- A copy of the updated 'Anti-Bullying' policy will be shared with parents and pupils and they will be given an opportunity to provide feedback and suggest amendments.

- The policy review will note what changes have been made in light of consultation.
- From time to time additional policy amendments will be made as a result of feedback generated from surveys (every three years linked to the School Development Plan) and when changes in legislation occur.
- Amendments may also be made in response to: issues arising from a current situation or from existing behavioural patterns and trends.

*The school will promote awareness of the Anti-Bullying policy through –*

- Pupil friendly version stuck into pupil's homework diary
- Pastoral Assemblies – reminding children what to do if they have a bullying concern
- Circulating it to parents every three years
- Making it available on the school website
- Paper copies available at the school office
- Parent events on Cyber-Bullying and Anti-Bullying

### **Linked Safeguarding Policies**

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The Child Protection policy should complement and support a range of other policies including the Anti-Bullying policy.

The Anti-Bullying Policy has close links with other Safeguarding Policies and they should be referenced for –

- All socially unacceptable behaviours which is managed under the **Positive Behaviour Policy**.
- Code of Practice Action Plans which are drawn up, tracked, monitored, assessed and reviewed through the **Special Educational Needs Policy**.
- The use of physical restraint, undertaken in compliance with the **Safe Handling Policy**.
- Incidents of E-Safety which should be managed under the **E-Safety Policy**.
- Further details on the preventative curriculum can be found in the **Child Protection Policy**.

### **Professional Development**

The school is committed to ensuring that governors, staff – teaching and non-teaching are provided with appropriate opportunity for Professional Development. Future training needs are identified through PRSD outcomes, audits/surveys and are linked to the School Development process.

Detailed 'Continued Professional Records' are kept in school and regularly updated. Records include –

- Details of the training which governors and staff receive
- Note when and how training outcomes were disseminated to all staff
- Monitor the impact of the training on both policy and practice
- Detail when and how appropriate policy amendments have been made to the current Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures as a result of training