

# Londonderry Primary School

Educating, Encouraging, Caring



Shaping the future with  
learning, kindness and care.

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by Board of Governors: November 2025

To be reviewed: November 2028

At Londonderry Primary School, we are dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and caring environment where every pupil can learn, grow, and reach their full potential. Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Every member of our school community has the right to feel respected, valued, and safe at all times.

We actively promote understanding, empathy, and respect for the feelings and differences of others.

We believe that the only effective way to eliminate bullying is for the whole school community, pupils, staff, parents and governors, to work together to create and maintain a secure emotional and physical environment.

Our approach is preventative, responsive and restorative, ensuring that concerns are addressed promptly and fairly. Any behaviour that constitutes bullying will be treated seriously, and every effort will be made to resolve issues in a way that supports all those involved and restores positive relationships.

### **Our Ethos**

At Londonderry Primary School, we are committed to educating young minds, encouraging every child to reach their full potential and caring for the wellbeing and growth of all in our school community. We strive to shape the future with learning, kindness and care.

*See appendix 1 for our Londonderry Primary Promise.*

### **Introduction**

Pastoral Care in Schools; Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001) Paragraph 125 states the following:

*“As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with accepted school policy and procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour.”*

Interventions detailed in this policy are aimed at effectively responding to bullying behaviours in a restorative manner, keeping in mind responsibilities to all pupils. This policy has been written using the guidance provided to primary schools *Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 requirements*.

This Act provides a single, legal definition for use in all schools. *(See page 3 ‘Definition of Bullying.’)*

It Requires Boards of Governors to:

- ✓ *Ensure that policies and measures to prevent bullying are in place, implemented fully and kept under review at intervals of no more than 4 years.*

- ✓ *Ensure a record is kept of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying. The record must include the motivation, methods used and information on how each incident was addressed, together with the outcomes of interventions.*

See Appendix 2 Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)

### **Objectives of the Policy**

The interventions detailed in this policy are aimed at effectively responding to bullying behaviour in a restorative manner, keeping in mind responsibilities to all pupils.

*Pastoral Care in Schools; Promoting Positive Behaviour guidance (DE, 2001) states that: 'As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with accepted school policy and procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help change their unacceptable behaviour.'*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf>

The Education Authority has developed further support materials for schools which are available at [https://www.eani.org.uk/search?search\\_api\\_fulltext=bullying](https://www.eani.org.uk/search?search_api_fulltext=bullying).

All schools must:

- ✓ Ensure all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have a good understanding of what bullying is.
- ✓ Ensure all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents know what the school policy on bullying is and know the procedures for reporting bullying.

### **Defining Bullying**

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 has provided schools with a single, legal, non-exhaustive definition of bullying behaviour which applies to pupil to pupil bullying;

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-04/Addressing%20Bullying%20in%20Schools%20Act%20%28Northern%20Ireland%29%202016.pdf>

### **Definition of “bullying”**

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.

**“Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others.” (NIABF) Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum**

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- ❖ It is repetitive and persistent.
- ❖ It is intentionally harmful.
- ❖ It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- ❖ It causes distress.

In determining harm, we define:

- ❖ Emotional harm 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 can present in varying forms but is not limited to:**

- **Physical** - hitting, kicking, rough pushing, jostling, spat at etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, teasing, insults, threats, racist remarks, spreading rumours etc.
- **Emotional or psychological/omission (*indirect*)** - isolation: excluding an individual from a group, discussion, games, activities, refusal to work with /talk to/help others
- **Damage to property or theft** - includes threats to hand over property.
- **Electronic or written (*cyber bullying*)** Using an online platform or electronic communication to carry out written acts noted above, sharing images (photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone, using online tools to create fake photographs, videos

**Examples of forms of bullying behaviours**

- 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
  - Misusing technology (*online or mobile phones*) to hurt or humiliate another person. *In school we are aware of the potential negative impact of cyber-bullying. We recognise that online behaviour can occur outside the school environment but repercussions can be experienced in school (see the school’s E-Safety Policy for more information).*
- See Appendix 5 for letter sent home to parents at the start of the school year.**
- Racist bullying relating to race, religion or colour.

## **Dealing with Relationship Issues**

Bullying is an emotive term that can be misused. Staff deal with concerns relating to fallouts and friendship issues on a regular basis. Such incidents are often temporary and, when challenged in a timely manner, are relatively straightforward to resolve. Occasional squabbles, minor playground conflicts, falling out and fleeting name calling are not considered to be bullying. If the situation is not considered to fall into the bullying category it will be dealt with through the school's Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Establishing and maintaining positive teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships creates a safe and secure nurturing environment in which staff and pupils feel valued and supported. By effectively supporting young people to understand the need for respectful behaviour towards their peers, school staff continually promote a restorative, anti-bullying culture within the school and the wider community. It is important to foster the development of strong, supportive mutually respectful peer relationships and friendships within the school, however, we must be clear that pupils will not be friends with everyone they meet. The focus must be on displaying respectful 'friendly behaviour' as opposed to 'being friends'.

Bullying can take place almost anywhere such as the playground, the cloakroom, in class, lining up and so forth. It may also take place outside school, travelling to and from school, day trips, residential trips or team events, all of which can have an impact in school. It often takes place out of view of the teacher or during less structured times in the school day, and it can therefore be quite difficult to establish the facts.

Where bullying has been reported it is our primary concern that it will be addressed and resolved as quickly as possible and that all pupils in our care feel safe and secure.

## **Labels**

Bullying is an emotive issue therefore, it is essential that we use supportive, understanding language when discussing or recording bullying incidents.

For that reason, we never refer to a child/young person as a 'bully' or a 'perpetrator', nor do we refer to a child/young person as a 'victim'.

**Victim:** The term victim is problematic – it can mean different things to different people. NIABF recommends that schools use the term '*child/young person experiencing bullying behaviour*'.

**Bully:** The term bully is problematic – it implies focus on the child's self, rather than the behaviour he or she is displaying. NIABF recommends that schools use the term '*child/young person displaying bullying behaviour*'.

## **Role of Staff**

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying. It is their responsibility to play their part in creating an atmosphere, which is caring and protective. They have a vital role in assuring pupils and parents of our commitment to detecting and dealing with bullying in school.

### **Identifying a Child who has been Bullied**

Although a child who has been bullied often remains silent, changes in their mood and behaviour can be indicative of their suffering. Children who have been bullied feel helpless and overwhelmed by the power that a child who is displaying bullying behaviour exercises. This can lead to insecurity, increased fear, and loss of confidence and consequently lowering of self-esteem. Vigilance with regard to any behavioural changes is important as early intervention is crucial.

### **A pupil who is being bullied may display some of the following signs and symptoms:**

- ✓ A pattern of physical illness e.g. stomach aches, headaches.
- ✓ Anxiety about travelling to and from school, wanting to be taken to and collected from school.
- ✓ Changes in their own temperament or behaviour.
- ✓ Difficulty sleeping, eating or becoming introverted or unsociable.
- ✓ Increased request for or stealing of money.
- ✓ Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- ✓ Deterioration in educational performance or loss of enthusiasm and interest in school.
- ✓ Reluctance and or refusal to say what is troubling him / her.

Individually these signs and symptoms do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. However, if there is a combination or repetitive occurrence of these, then further investigation is needed in order to determine what is affecting the pupil.

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

*See Appendix 3 Effective responses to bullying behaviour poster NIABF*

To respond restoratively to a bullying concern, staff will adopt a positive approach, focused on supporting resolution of the situation.

Staff will be prepared with options on how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way. Responding to bullying behaviour requires a high amount of self-control as well as preparation to know what to say and do. The following are important factors that we will keep in mind when managing a bullying situation.

- **Be calm.** It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control.
- **Be positive.** Have in mind the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with a pupil. A pupil is much more likely to modify his/her behaviour if he/she perceives that a teacher cares.

- **Be assertive.** Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop bullying but also make restitution with the child who has been bullied.
- **Be confident.** It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have an impact on the pupil's future behaviour. It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the pupil.
- **Involve both** the pupil experiencing and the pupil displaying the bullying behaviour in seeking an agreed way forward.
- **Assess the situation and its severity level.** Determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively. Once the Incident Level has been determined we will select one or more of the responses from Levels 1-4 included in the Appendices. (Appendix 4) Levels taken from 'effective responses to bullying behaviours.' This document was compiled by DENI, EA and the NI Anti-Bullying forum. (A copy can be found in CRL, Policy documents, Anti-Bullying)

When a child has disclosed that they have been exposed to bullying behaviour or a member of staff has identified a bullying situation, parents of the children involved should be contacted by telephone to inform them of the situation and make them aware that an investigation will ensue. The same procedure must occur on the day on which any pupil is interviewed about suspected bullying behaviour.

### **Determining the Level of Severity**

Staff should take the following into account:

- The **nature** of the bullying behaviour – for example deliberately teasing, excluding or hitting. There is a tendency among those who have a duty of care to rate some bullying, particularly violence, as more serious than subtle forms. This can be a dangerous mistake and leave us vulnerable to ignoring 'teasing' or 'exclusion'.
- The **frequency** of the bullying behaviour: daily, weekly or less often.
- The **duration** of the bullying behaviour; whether over a short or prolonged period of time.
- The **perceptions** of the child being bullied – The seriousness of bullying may be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target

## **Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

Bullying is often reported to schools by parents /carers. Such complaints should be met openly and sympathetically.

### **The following should be considered when meeting with the parents / carers of pupils bullying others:**

- ✓ Acknowledge that the parent / carer may be under stress as a result of having to come into school to discuss the incident with a member of staff.
- ✓ Remain understanding if the parent/carer expresses anger directed at the school.
- ✓ Try to get clear facts from the parent/carer but don't cross examine or emphasise inconsistencies in their version of events.
- ✓ Ensure that you have already gathered as much reliable information as possible and be clear that the behaviour does represent bullying.
- ✓ Ensure that the parent/carer understands how their child's behaviour conforms to the definition of bullying.
- ✓ Share your concern about what has happened to the child experiencing bullying.
- ✓ Avoid suggesting that it is the character of the child that is at fault. Emphasise that it is aspects of the child's behaviour that must change. Try to refer to their child's positive qualities.
- ✓ Be understanding but firm.
- ✓ Tell the parent/carer that you will need time (be specific) to gather information and that you will keep them informed.
- ✓ Avoid getting into an argument. Try to avoid blaming the parent/carer for their child's behaviour.
- ✓ Remind parents/carers that the only information that can be shared with them is information regarding their own child. No information regarding action taken in relation to another child can be shared with any other parent/carer.

It is important to ensure that **ACTION** will be taken under our Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy if socially unacceptable behaviour has occurred or alternatively under the school's Anti-Bullying Policy if the legal criteria has been fully met and bullying behaviour has occurred.

## Steps to Follow When Recording an Incident of Confirmed Bullying

1. Gather and clarify the facts.
2. Check records for any previous incidents.
3. Complete a Bullying Concern Assessment Form (NIABF template) Appendix 2
4. On the basis of this initial assessment:
  - Choose an appropriate intervention level, which are an appendix to this policy, with guidance from the Principal and any other relevant members of staff. (*Appendix 4*)
  - Identify any themes or motivating factors for example Disablist Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Bullying involving Looked After Children (LAC), Bullying involving Racism, etc
  - Identify the method of bullying behaviour being displayed.
  - Decide on the level of parental involvement needed.
  - Invoke the school discipline policy, if necessary, at the appropriate level and stage.
  - Possible involvement of the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).
  - Child Protection issues or involvement of outside agencies.  
Examples of outside agencies: Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychology Service.
5. Refer to the support materials outlined in the NIABF file linked to the intervention path decided upon. (*‘Effective Responses To Bullying Behaviours.’ Saved in CRL, Policy Documents, Anti Bullying*)
6. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of the chosen intervention strategy.
7. Record actions taken and outcomes achieved in the relevant class behaviour book, or file kept in the office.
8. Review the outcomes to determine whether further action is required and progress accordingly.  
*(A copy of NIABF’s Bullying Concern Assessment Form is attached to this policy)*

*Link for guidelines to complete the Assessment form:*

[The Bullying Concern Assessment Form \(BCAF\) | Education Authority Northern Ireland](#)

## **Choosing an Appropriate Intervention**

The intervention undertaken will depend on the nature of the bullying itself. The main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying that is taking place. **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of those involved.

The following should be considered when selecting an intervention:

- The level of severity.
- The age of those involved.
- Whether an individual or a group is involved.
- The agreement and support of the parent/carer in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.
- Whether the pupil(s) displaying the bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately.
- Whether it is realistic to expect that the bullied pupil can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation.
- Whether or not the pupil experiencing bullying has acted provocatively.

*Please see the guidance from NIABF attached on how to choose an appropriate intervention.  
(Appendix 4)*

## **Addressing Bullying through the Curriculum**

In Londonderry Primary School we endeavour to ensure all pupils are aware of the effects of bullying behaviour, the steps they should take to prevent it and also how to report / deal with bullying.

This is addressed through:

- ✓ Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (PDMU) teaching, in all year groups.
- ✓ Teaching through areas such as role play, stories, problem solving, discussions, debates, drama and circle time.
- ✓ Anti Bullying Week / Friendship Week, run in conjunction with NIABF.
- ✓ Access to a school councillor through our association with SPACE.
- ✓ Awareness of Designated Teachers for Child Protection.

- ✓ School Council.
- ✓ Whole school assembly.
- ✓ Internet safety lessons and participation in Internet safety week.
- ✓ Additional resources may be utilised to support classroom teaching such as NSPCC and Childline.

If there is a concern regarding bullying which targets a particular area such as race, disability or gender, a series of related, specific lessons may be devised to address the issue.

## **Preventative Measures**

### **School Vision and Ethos**

The cultivation of a positive ethos and promotion of a caring school community are key elements which restrict the potential for bullying behaviour. Pupils are aware of the zero-tolerance stance we take at Londonderry Primary School. This is reinforced through our 'kind hands and kind words' vocabulary the children hear from when they first enter Primary 1. Kind behaviour is recognised, praised and rewarded through our 'Spirit of Londonderry Award' which is celebrated during whole school assembly. Our school promise that is displayed in every classroom and throughout the school is recited at the start of each assembly reinforces the expectations we have for all our pupils.

### **Good Teacher-Pupil Relationships**

We encourage pupils to talk to a member of staff or their trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied. Telling an adult will enlist the help of a responsible adult who can help to address the situation. This is achieved through open communication between pupil and teacher through varying teaching strategies depending on the key stage. In the Foundation Stage staff will focus on stories such as: The Big Bag of Worries, Colour Monster, Have You Filled a Bucket Today and various books about feelings and friendship. Puppets, feeling masks and role play are also used through Circle Time lessons. In key stage 1 and 2 communication is opened through PDMU lessons, drama activities and open communication between staff and pupils. The use of the worry box is used in Key Stage 2 where children can post their worries for teachers to read.

In order to develop an ethos of trust it is vital that positive relationships are developed between teacher and pupil. Through positive relationships staff are more likely to observe a change in mood or behaviour in a pupil and pupils will feel able to talk to staff if necessary.

Pupils will be made aware of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Photographs of these staff members will be on display in the main hall and every classroom. Mrs Hamilton (Designated Teacher) will speak with all children during assembly in September to remind them of her role.

### **Collective Responsibility**

Teaching staff, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils have a collective responsibility for the wellbeing of each pupil and consequently to report incidents of suspected bullying. The only effective way of eliminating bullying is for the whole school community to address the issue and work together to establish a safe emotional and physical environment.

### **Acknowledgements**

*This policy was compiled using the NIABF file 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour', issued to schools in January 2022*

[Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour \(January 2022\)\\_0 \(2\).pdf](#)

### **Appendix 1 (Londonderry Primary Promise)**

## **Londonderry Primary PROMISE**



### **EDUCATING**

I promise to try my best every day, to learn new things and keep going, even when it's hard.



### **ENCOURAGING**

I will use kind words and cheer others on, helping my friends to feel brave and proud.



### **CARING**

I will be gentle, helpful, and kind, looking after people, places and things around me.



At Londonderry Primary, we all work together – **EDUCATING**, **ENCOURAGING**, and **CARING** every day.

**TOGETHER, WE SHINE!**

## Appendix 2 (Bullying Concern Assessment Form)

See separate attachment

## Appendix 3 (Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour Poster) NIABF



## Appendix 4 Understanding the Levels of Intervention (NIABF)

The levels suggested in this document are for guidance only. Schools should consider a range of interventions from across all of the levels when responding to a bullying concern. It is important to remember that every bullying incident should be considered individually and an intervention chosen which best meets the needs of the pupil/s involved.

Socially Unacceptable Behaviour Incidents where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but which fail to meet the legal definition on the basis of the information gathered, can often be addressed through the use of interventions suggested at Level 1. For example, where a member of staff observes, in a moment of tension, hurtful language being directed towards another pupil, the 'Rights Respecting Script' can be used to challenge this behaviour. When responding to an incident, while it is important to understand if the incident does or does

not constitute bullying behaviour, it is essential to ensure that all incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with through the appropriate policy (see Dealing with a Bullying Concern Flowchart: An Overview of the Processes Involved on page 11).

### **Level 1 - Individual Interventions**

Interventions at Level 1 are designed to help pupils displaying socially unacceptable behaviours or bullying-type behaviours to recognise and reflect on their behaviour and to “get them back on track”. These interventions should be taken forward while listening to, supporting and strengthening the pupils involved. It is essential that schools NEVER ignore either low level socially unacceptable behaviour or bullying-type behaviour.

The interventions at this level support staff to:

- ✓ Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with the school’s vision and ethos (refer to school’s Promise and Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy).
- ✓ Identify possible consequences if the socially unacceptable behaviour or bullying behaviour continues.
- ✓ Point out the level of distress felt by the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- ✓ Enable pupils to adapt their behaviour with targeted interventions.
- ✓ Talk with the pupil(s) involved to explore coping strategies and to build resilience by helping the pupil(s) to identify ways in which they may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support.
- ✓ Promote appropriate reparation to be undertaken.
- ✓ Monitor the efficacy of the outcomes/impact on the situation carefully.
- ✓ Review the situation with the pupils involved to determine further intervention if required.
- ✓ Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the behaviour is resistant to change.

### **Level 2 – Group focused Interventions**

While interventions at Level 2 may involve continuing with the above, there may be a shift from individual support to larger group or whole-class interventions.

To be effective group work needs:

- ✓ The consent and involvement of the pupils whether experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour.
- ✓ To be planned and timetabled, with the length of the session dependent on age and ability of those involved.
- ✓ Parental / carer consent and agreement from participating pupils.
- ✓ Careful and balanced selection of membership for group support.
- ✓ To take place in a suitable, sensitive and comfortable environment.
- ✓ To be uninterrupted.
- ✓ To be facilitated in a positive manner for all - ideally by two adults whose roles may alternate allowing one to participate and one to observe.
- ✓ Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion amongst participants.
- ✓ Decisions taken and outcomes agreed and recorded.
- ✓ To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- ✓ A solution focused approach to the situation.
- ✓ To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their actions in a safe and supported environment.
- ✓ To ensure regular feedback on agreed actions is given to all parties (staff, pupils and parents/carers).

### **Level 3 – Complex Group Dynamics and/or Multi-Agency Interventions**

Interventions at this level, address situations of more complex bullying behaviour. These situations may have been ongoing over a longer period of time, or as a result of previous interventions being ineffective in resolving the situation. Responses to bullying behaviour at this level may involve the Pastoral Coordinator, Learning Support Coordinator, Designated Teacher for Child Protection and other senior managers, working in partnership with the pupils, and their parents/carers, to determine the way forward in affecting change.

It is important that all interventions at this level are planned in advance. Schools should also use their risk assessment and planning procedures to assess and manage any risks of further bullying concerns. All those involved with the pupil must contribute to both the risk assessment process and the Risk Reduction Action Plan (RRAP) and be clear about their

individual ongoing role in the implementation, evaluation and review of the plan. Planning may require multi-agency discussion, with involvement of Education Authority services and other external support agencies, in line with the Code of Practice procedures.

Bullying at this level can involve complex group dynamics where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying behaviour. Consequently, interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement, along with individual support and strength building programmes.

#### **Level 4 - High Risk Interventions**

Bullying behaviours assessed as requiring intervention at Level 4 are complex and severe, involving a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to ongoing interventions and therefore assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved. As such, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures must be invoked, including the involvement of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and the Safeguarding Team. Advice and support is available to schools through the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

Responses to incidents at this level will require a multi-disciplinary approach, involving a range of partner agencies including the Education Authority, Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services CAMHS, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and other relevant support agencies contributing to a multi-agency RAMP and/or UNOCINI.

In addition to safeguarding procedures and practices, including referral to external support services, the school's interventions at Level 4 should also continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

Where an incident has been high profile, the impact may be experienced beyond those immediately involved. In such cases, it is important that support is provided to help restore

the wellbeing of all pupils in the school and within the community. In such instances the school should refer to its Critical Incident Policy and if appropriate contact EA's Critical Incident Response Team.

Link <https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/in-an-emergency-school-information/managing-a-critical-incident>

## **Appendix 5 (Parent Letter re. social Media)**



Acting Principal: Mrs L Weir

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we begin a new school year, we are writing to remind all parents and carers about the importance of closely monitoring your child's mobile phone use and the messaging or social media groups they may be part of outside of school hours.

Over the last number of years, we have been made aware of issues involving children being part of WhatsApp, TikTok and other online group chats where inappropriate content has been shared or unkind messages and behaviour have been exchanged. These incidents, although taking place outside school hours, can have a significant impact on pupils' wellbeing and relationships during the school day.

### **Please be aware that:**

- The school cannot regulate or intervene in private social media groups or messaging apps.
- Parents are expected to supervise their child's phone usage, know which platforms they are using, and ensure their online conduct is appropriate.
- Where the school receives complaints about harmful or inappropriate online behaviour, the matter will be passed directly to the PSNI, as this falls under their jurisdiction.

### **We would also like to draw your attention to the legal age requirements for some of the most commonly used apps:**

- WhatsApp – minimum age 16
- TikTok – minimum age 13
- Snapchat – minimum age 13
- Instagram – minimum age 13
- Facebook – minimum age 13

Children of primary school age should not be using these platforms, and we strongly encourage all parents to ensure these age restrictions are being respected.

**To help keep your child safe online, we urge you to:**

- Check your child's phone regularly
- Be aware of the apps they are using and who they are communicating with
- Discuss and encourage respectful, kind and safe online behaviour
- Remove access to apps that are not age-appropriate
- Ensure that age restrictions on apps are being followed

We would strongly advise you click on the EA link below and read these three documents along with any others you might find useful. These provide a wealth of resources and advice for parents to keep our children safe and appropriate online:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/safeguarding-and-child-protection/resources/online-safety>

- \* TikTok Guides for Schools, Parents and Carers
- \* SBNI Online Safety Hub
- \* Digital Wellbeing at school SWGfl

Additional guidance can also be found within these two links below:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>  
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/>

Our shared priority is the safety and wellbeing of every child at Londonderry Primary School, both in and out of the classroom. We need to work together to ensure the children are engaging with each other in a positive and safe way. We greatly appreciate your continued support in helping us achieve this.

If you would like any advice on supporting your child's digital safety, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

*L. Weir*