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|  | **Ballynure Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy** |

**SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT**

At Ballynure 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. We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school. We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all. Everyone in our school community has a right to be safe and a responsibility to behave appropriately.

**SECTION 2 - CONTEXT**

This Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of the school’s overall Pastoral Care Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safe Guarding Policy and is set in the context in the following legislative and policy/guidance:

**The Legislative Context**

* [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/25/contents)
* [The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2003/424/contents/made) (A17-19)
* [The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/annex-a-school-development-plans-regulations-2010.pdf)
* [The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)
* [The Human Rights Act 1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents)
* [The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1039)

**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)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf)
* [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-in-Schools-A-Guide-for-Schools.pdf)
* [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland)
* [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)](https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/)

**The International Context**

* [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.109765637.1827233515.1552648186-274690600.1552648186) (UNCRC)

**SECTION 3 - ETHOS & PRINCIPLES**

We aim to create a warm, welcoming school where each child feels happy, safe, self-confident and valued; and strives, with the help of caring, committed staff, to fulfil his or her potential.

Ballynure Primary School is a rural, child-centred school with a family atmosphere. High standards of pastoral and academic provision are both important and integral parts of the school’s daily routines, curriculum and extra-curricular activities, and provide each child with a holistic education, by developing their social, spiritual, moral and personal values alongside their academic and physical development.

**AIMS**

**Our school aims which reflect the general ethos of the school are:**

1. To create a happy, caring and secure learning environment
2. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will develop in each child the skills, attitudes and dispositions required for life and his/her responsibilities and opportunities
3. To teach each child to be a safe and responsible user of technology
4. To encourage the personal qualities of self-confidence, self-discipline, perseverance, resilience and independence
5. To encourage each child to develop self-respect, respect and concern for others, tolerance, integrity and moral courage
6. To take responsibility for themselves in what they do and how they behave
7. To enable each child to appreciate the environment and his/her opportunities and responsibilities for its conservation
8. To promote good relationships with parents, other schools and the wider community

**SECTION 4 - CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION**

1. Consultation with parents/carers

We value the views and contributions of parents. This Policy in draft form was circulated to all parents with the school newsletter 13 May 2021 – comments were invited to be returned to the school office.

1. Consultation with pupils

In Ballynure Primary School we value the views and contributions of the children, which, in relation to the formulation of this policy, we actively sought, through class-based activities and discussion with the pupil council in May 2021. Whole school assemblies and class PDMU activities during September 2021 will provide opportunities to teach the pupils about the anti-bullying policy revisions.

1. Staff

Following viewing the DE training video, the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016 in relation to the revision of Ballynure Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy was presented at the staff meeting held on 29 August 2019 in the school staff room to all staff, teaching and non-teaching. The Act, in relation to school policy was thoroughly discussed.

1. Governors (which includes parents, representatives of local clergy and community representatives)

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016 in relation to the revision of the draft Ballynure Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy was presented to the Governors for consultation on 12 May 2021. Governors were invited to view the DE on-line training video, regarding the implementation of the 2016 Act. The policy was discussed and adopted at the Governors meeting on 19 May 2021.

**SECTION 5 - DEFINITION OF “BULLYING”**

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which **must** be used and applies only to pupil-to-pupil bullying.

**“Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:**

**1.— (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.”**

The Department of Education (DE) statement to support understanding is:

***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.***

DE policy has directed schools to state within their policy, “While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying”. The Ballynure Primary School policy uses the DE suggested wording in relation to one-off incidents:

*When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria in order to make a fair, balanced and objective consideration of the facts:*

* *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.*

*SEN and other factors which may impact on a pupils’ behaviour will also be taken into*

*consideration.*

Examples of the types of behaviour according to DE, that, when repeated, may constitute bullying:

*The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally harmful or 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 (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour. Conflict is part of normal relationship development and everyone needs to understand the difference between conflict and bullying. Bullying does not occur when the intention for teasing is done in a friendly and playful way. Not all unacceptable behaviour is bullying behaviour and consequently may be addressed through the Positive Behaviour Policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and/or the Suspension and Expulsion Procedure.

Various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act, include, but are not limited to: age, appearance, breakdown in peer relationships, community background, political affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, race, religion, disability/SEN, ability, looked after child status, young carer status. It is a long-standing element of bullying behaviour that there is an imbalance of power which can manifest itself in several ways:

* *physical*
* *psychological (knowing what upsets someone)*
* *intellectual*
* *group/more than one individual*

According to DE, when discussing bullying behaviour, the use of the terms ‘bully’ and ‘victim’ should be avoided. Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussion 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 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 discussing bullying incidents.

**DEFINITIONS OF EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL HARM** (as set out in the DE Guidance)

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.

**SECTION 6 - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

The focus of this section is to set out the measures to be taken by the school to prevent bullying behaviour, as defined in the section above to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community.

Under the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work should be on prevention. As such, this section is the key linchpin of the policy document.

**Positive measures to create an anti-bullying climate**

The values outlined in this policy will be maintained within the curriculum and in the daily life of the school. This programme will include:

* PDMU lessons – to develop pupils’ social and emotional skills and build resilience - addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU (e.g. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
* Circle-time activities related to friendship and bullying to develop emotional intelligence; the development of self-esteem, self-confidence and assertiveness
* Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying - using golden rules or specific anti-bullying teaching/reminders
* Visitors e.g. PSNI, Rising Stars
* Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion - writing, artwork anduse of a range of teaching strategies to encourage discussion, group work and cooperative learning
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness training) - through classroom rules and through personal and social education
* Teaching the appropriate use of ICT, Cyber-bullying, staying safe on-line; participating in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day,
* Child Protection
* Development of peer-led systems (e.g. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
* Worry boxes
* Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.
* Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches, friendship stops) and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils.
* Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch)
* Involvements in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.

Curriculum Resources

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| * PDMU | * niABF Support materials |
| * Living Learning Together | * Something to Say Resource |
| * Rights Respecting Schools Programme * Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource (Restorative strategies) | * Let’s Stop Bullying CD – C2k Resource |

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, there are a number of ways schools 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.
* Promoting resilience and self-regulation.
* 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 (e.g. EA Transport, 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, 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 (e.g. staff duty at school gate/bus, where appropriate)

The new legislation also gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent cyber 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. In Ballynure Primary School we raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support our pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This includes:

* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/ICT, 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 (e.g. 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 (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Use of C2k systems, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy, etc.)

It is important to remember that the Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. As such, it is essential that these policies align and provide a consistent message. For example, the measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, should also be included in the school’s e-Safety Policy and/or Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy - set out in Section 13 of this policy.

Given the nature of technology, as constantly changing and developing, we monitor policies and messages, and make changes when necessary.

**SECTION 7 – RESPONSIBILITY**

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community. Everyone in the school community, including Governors, 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 – internal and external
  + resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

**SECTION 8 - REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN**

**Pupils Reporting a Concern**

Pupils are regularly reminded in assemblies to inform the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Doherty or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Galashan, or any member of staff teaching and non-teaching when they have a concern about a potential bullying situation. Pupils can report bullying concerns by:

* Verbally talking to a member of staff
* By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
* By posting a comment in a ‘worry box’

Any pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Through the preventative work, pupils should be aware that this message should focus on ‘getting help’ rather than ‘telling’. As such, all pupils should be encouraged to ‘get help’ if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

**Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern**

This section lays out the responsibilities of parents and carers to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. While initial feelings may include isolation, anger, sadness and guilt, it is important to remember that there is a way forward. In keeping with DE advice we expect parents to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to ‘hit back’.

The process of parents/carers reporting bullying concerns:

* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, concerns should be reported to the 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. A copy of the Complaints Policy with the procedure for making a complaint is provided for parents/carers of all new pupils with their admissions pack; a paper copy can be provided on request form the school office.

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

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

**SECTION 9 – RESPONDING TO A BULLYING CONCERN**

This section provides the framework for how all reports of alleged bullying behaviour, or any concerns identified, will be responded to by the school. This includes the outline process that will be employed, as well as the approach the school will take in its response. The focus of any intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. As such, any strategy for responding to bullying concerns will concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

**Processes:**

The member of staff responsible shall:

* Clarify facts and perceptions
* Check records for previous incidents
* Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour (minimum of 2 staff)
* Create an evidence file
* 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
* 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 within the resources available and if appropriate in liaison with other agencies, 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.

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

**SECTION 10 – RECORDING**

In accordance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, the school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

* the motivation for the behaviour;
* method - how the bullying behaviour was displayed;
* how the incident was addressed by the school;
* the outcome of the interventions employed.

Department of Education guidance to schools encourages the use of the SIMS Behaviour Management Module for record keeping. Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Form (BCAF), 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, but may be shared with parents/carers, other staff, Social Services, PSNI, etc.

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**

Appropriate training for staff, teaching and non-teaching will be provided within the resources of the school. This may include:

* provision of appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school’s ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
* impact of the training given on policy and procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
* opportunities for safeguarding training afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
* CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

**SECTION 12 – MONITORING AND REVIEW OF POLICY**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying 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

It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. However, the policy should be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review. It 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 September 2025.*

**SECTION 13 – 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
* E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
* Social Media Policy
* Educational Visits
* Staff Code of Conduct

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**Addressing the Anti-Bullying Act 2016 key points to note are:**

* **The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:**
  + **Provides a legal definition of bullying.**
  + **Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.**
  + **Boards of Governors must be involved in developing and ensuring implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.**
  + **Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.**
  + **Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:**
* **In school, during the school day**
* **While travelling to and from school**
* **When under control of school staff, but away from school (e.g. school trip)**
* **When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the ALC)**
  + **Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.**
* **The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:**
  + **‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)**
* **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child’s right to:**
  + **Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)**
  + **Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)**
  + **Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)**
  + **Education. (A.28)**

**Principal Elaine Doherty Chair of Governors Roger McMullan**

**Date 19/05/2021 Date 19/05/2021**

**Review Date: *September 2025***