Anti-Bullying Policy

Framework

At Our Lady Queen of Peace 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.

Section 2 – Context

Our Anti-Bullying policy has been developed alongside the following legislative and policy/guidance frameworks:

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

* We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
* We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and fees safes from bullying.
* We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity.
* We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
* We value the views and contributions of children and young people, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account.
* 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.

Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

Our policy was developed in consultation with our pupils, parents and carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Our consultation with pupils took the form of:

* Consultative workshops with pupil representatives ie- the School Council
* Class-based activities, lessons and discussions

Our consultation with parents/carers took the form of:

* Information shared via social media
* Consultation with parents/carers via Seesaw

Consultation with other stakeholders took place through:

* Staff consultation all teaching and non-teaching

staff
* A staff meeting discussing the draft and implementation of our anti-bullying policy

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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.—(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.

For the purposes of clarity, the Education Authority encourages school to make it clear that:

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.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that schools may consider as bullying.

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 types of behaviour, when repeated, *may* constitute bullying.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:
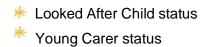
* ***Verbal or written acts***
  * ***saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others***
  * ***making fun of others***
  * ***calling another pupil mean and hurtful names***
  * ***telling lies or spread false rumours about others***
  * ***try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s***
* ***Physical 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 list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Various motivations can often be behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These 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

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 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.

<u>Emotional and Physical harm:</u>
The definitions of emotional and physical harm are set out in 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 for all anti-bullying work should be on prevention in the first instance. School will undertake a number of key actions 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 (eg. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
* Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health, wellbeing and self-image (eg. mindfulness training)
* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
* Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day
* 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 e.g. buddy benches and provision of a variety of play option 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 activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.
- Encouraging our families to support emotional behaviour and develop the skills of verbal communication with their children.

To help prevent bullying on the way to and from school, we will:

- Develop 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 and when in uniform outside of school eg- school trips.
- Take measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school as deemed appropriate for the age and stage of the child. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring systems for those walking (if required).
- Promote 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.
- Deploy staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (eg. staff duty at school gate/bus stops, where appropriate)

The new legislation also gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent 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. We will 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 through the following methods:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/PD/LLW, 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)

Section 7 – Responsibility

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities.

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:

* ensure their body language, visual expressions, words and tone of voice are friendly
* 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

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Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Children and young people have told 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. Our pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, (teaching and non-teaching) in a way that they feel most comfortable with:

* Verbally- talking to a member of staff
* By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. 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 taken forward under Section 6, we encourage our school community to focus on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils are encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

<u>Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern</u>

We encourage our parents and carers to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. We also acknowledge the importance in parents/carers encouraging their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher. The Class Teacher should formally record concerns and notify the Vice Principal.
* Where the parent/carer 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.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary 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 that 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

The focus of any intervention will be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. As such, any strategy for responding to bullying concerns must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

The processes outlined below provides 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 (Class folder/ previous teachers)***

* ***Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour (Consult appendix 1 – Flowchart)***
* ***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*

- *Keep parent/carer informed*

NIABF advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour. Interventions suggested in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School supports and uses this approach.

Where bullying behaviours are maintained, 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.

Appropriate interventions are detailed in the Positive Behaviour Policy and include the full range of interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion in accordance with the relevant protocols applicable in the school.

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers. The pupil directly affected by the bullying behaviour and his or her parents and the governors in an appropriate case.

Section 10 – Recording

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, requires schools to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

The school will centrally record 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.*

- *any interactions/updates/calls with parents*

A working document will be accessible on a private G-Drive folder for those monitoring the situation (normally class teacher/VP).

In most circumstances, the class teacher will be responsible for No. 1-3 on flowchart. Step 4 onwards will be the responsibility of the VP/Pastoral Team, in consultation with the class teacher.

Records will be kept in the 'Private 2' folder 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 and governors with a legitimate interest in having 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 and data protection 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

Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School is committed to:

* ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
* noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.

* ensuring that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching

* stating that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

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*

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before December 2023.

Section 13 – Links to Other Policies

The development and implementation of this Anti Bullying Policy will be conducted in conjunction with relevant 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*
* *Mobile Phone Policy*
* *Educational Visits*
* *Staff Code of Conduct*
* *Data Protection Policy*

* *The Board of Governors and relevant school staff shall exercise their duties pursuant to this Policy in furtherance of child safeguarding duties.*

* *The Board of Governors shall have access to such data as is necessary for the discharge of their statutory duties relevant to this policy.*

Step 1

PROCESS TO FOLLOW WHEN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING OR DISPLAYING BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOURS
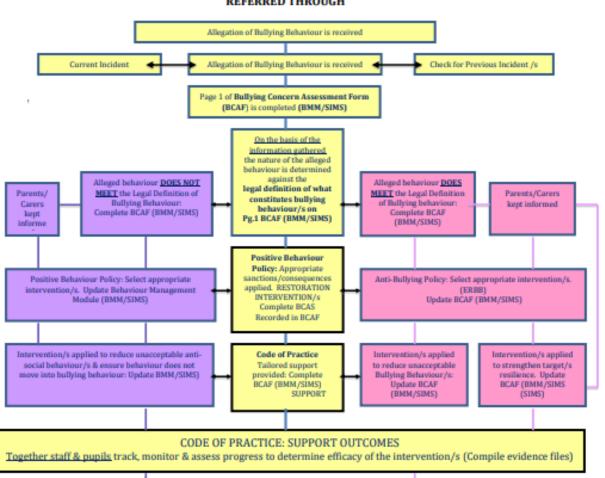
Behaviour reported as alleged bullying

In **all** cases a Bullying Concern Assessment Form is initiated and attached as a document to digital Behaviour Management System e.g. SIMs

Judgment made by appropriate Pastoral staff to determine whether situation constitutes bullying using legal 'bullying' definition and following processed on bullying Concern Assessment Form

Ensure staff plan of action complies with relevant legislation and guidelines such as: The Children (NI) Order (1995), Data Protection Act (1998), Code of Practice (1996), Freedom of Information Act (2000), Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001), Welfare and Protection of Pupils ELB (NI) Order (2003), SENDO (2005), SEND Act (NI) (2016), Addressing Bulling in schools Act (NI) (2016), Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (2017). Guidance in the Use of SIMs (2017) GDPR (2018)

REFERRED THROUGH

Allegation of Bullying Behaviour is received — **Step 1**

| Current Incident | ← Allegation of Bullying Behaviour is received → | Check for Previous Incident /s | **Step 2** |

Page 1 of **Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)** is completed **(BMM/SIMS)** — **Step 3**

On the basis of the information gathered the nature of the alleged behaviour is determined against the **legal definition of what constitutes bullying behaviour/s on Pg.1 BCAF (BMM/SIMS)**

Parents/Carers kept informe~~d~~

Alleged behaviour **DOES NOT MEET** the Legal Definition of Bullying Behaviour: Complete BCAF (BMM/SIMS)

Alleged behaviour **DOES MEET** the Legal Definition of Bullying behaviour: Complete BCAF (BMM/SIMS)

Parents/Carers kept informed

Step 4

Positive Behaviour Policy: Select appropriate intervention/s. Update Behaviour Management Module (BMM/SIMS)

Positive Behaviour Policy: Appropriate sanctions/consequences applied. RESTORATION INTERVENTION/s Complete BCAS Recorded in BCAF

Anti-Bullying Policy: Select appropriate intervention/s. (ERBB) Update BCAF (BMM/SIMS)

Step 5

Intervention/s applied to reduce unacceptable anti-social behaviour/s & ensure behaviour does not move into bullying behaviour: Update BMM/SIMS

Code of Practice Tailored support provided: Complete BCAF (BMM/SIMS) SUPPORT

Intervention/s applied to reduce unacceptable Bullying Behaviour/s: Update BCAF (BMM/SIMS)

Intervention/s applied to strengthen target/s resilience. Update BCAF (BMM/SIMS (SIMS)

Step 6

CODE OF PRACTICE: SUPPORT OUTCOMES
Together staff & pupils track, monitor & assess progress to determine efficacy of the intervention/s (Compile evidence files) — **Step 7**

Record PROGRESS on BMM/SIMS

Record PROGRESS on BCAF (SIMS)

BoG
Bullying statistics discussed regularly at BoG Meetings
Macro tracking = statistics used to identify patterns to inform policy review to meet the needs of the young person more

Implement appropriate intervention to meet the needs of **both** those Experiencing Bullying Type Behaviours & displaying Bullying Type Behaviours using NIABF Resource (or other social emotional and behavioural needs if appropriate). Proceed through stages in the bullying concern assessment form (attached documents on SIMs) or behaviour plan if appropriate via Positive Behaviour Policy/Code of Practice

Maintain clear chronological digital Record Keeping = follow EA Guidance Documents on the appropriate use of SIMs? = Where a young person is educated on a different site ensure there is effective information share processes in place for accountability

Left margin (vertical): Enhanced Accountability for BoG, schools and supporting agencies to work with appropriate multi-disciplinary team to identify & address need

Right margin (vertical): Child Centred approach – Pupil and parent voice valued. Young Person and Parent/ Guardian engaged in the process

Appendix 2

Bullying Concern Assessment Form