



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

MISSION STATEMENT

Actively confronting the issues posed by bullying plays a key role in implementing the School's Mission Statement:

"Learning, Caring, Preparing for Life"

PRINCIPLES

Limavady Grammar School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain a number of individuals with the potential for bullying behaviour. We believe that our school is well disciplined and organised and it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. We have a clear policy on the promotion of Positive Behaviour, wherein it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is WRONG and will not be tolerated.

We have a clear written policy to promote these beliefs, where both pupils and parents/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

All those involved in an alleged bullying incident will be listened to. In resolving any such incident, the needs of the victim will be paramount.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

In accordance with the definition adopted by EA and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum, Limavady Grammar School defines bullying as:

"the repeated use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others."

FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:-



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a). PHYSICAL

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

b). VERBAL

Verbal abuse can take the form of insults or name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.

c). EXCLUSION

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities with those they believe to be their friends.

d). DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.

e). ELECTRONIC

Technology (such as the internet or mobile phones) can be misused to hurt or humiliate another person.

LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

The Anti-Bullying Policy is supported by other School policies:

Pastoral Care; Child Protection; Positive Behaviour Policy; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy; Mobile Phone Policy.

PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS

In the formulation of this policy, the views of pupils, parents and staff have been actively canvassed.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our Staff will:

- Help to foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Create a caring society within the school community in which staff and pupils learn to live and work together in mutual respect, and in which the problems of others will receive a sympathetic and understanding hearing.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour which we expect of our pupils.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Deal immediately with any observed instances of bullying.
- Listen attentively to the victims of bullying, reassuring them that their complaints are being taken seriously.



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- Act promptly to report any allegation of bullying to the Form Teacher, Head of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent or guardian about bullying, and report back on the action which has been taken.
- Provide ongoing support to all those involved in a bullying incident.
- Treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our School.

It may not be possible for us to take action in an alleged bullying incident if there is no direct link with the School. This is particularly applicable to alleged cyberbullying incidents which occur outside the School setting. However, in such cases, the School will cooperate fully with the PSNI if an external complaint has been made to them.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

Pupils are expected at all times to:

- Treat all other members of the school community with respect.
- Avoid becoming directly involved in any form of bullying.
- Avoid giving the impression of supporting bullying by their silence or inaction.
- Intervene promptly to support the victim of bullying, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report the incident as soon as possible to a member of staff.

An advice sheet for pupils is included as Appendix 1- this can be posted in classrooms or shared as part of the PD programme.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask parents to help us to combat bullying by:

- Looking out for unusual behaviour in their children. For example, a child who is being bullied may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to his/her normal standard.
- Actively enquiring about their child's education. Enquire how his/her day has gone, who he/she has spent time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- Informing the School immediately that bullying is suspected. All such complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. The first point of contact will normally be the Form Teacher but it could be the Head of Year, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Vice Principal or Principal.
- Advising children not to fight back physically unless they are being assaulted. It can make matters worse.
- Encouraging their child to report any bullying incident to a member of staff- it is important to reassure him/her that he/she does not have to suffer in silence: speaking out will not only help to end his/her own distress but will also help to protect other potential victims.
- Telling their child that there is nothing wrong with him or her; that it is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.



PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- All members of the school community are expected to promote an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance.
- Pupils are encouraged to share their concerns promptly with their Form Teacher or any other member of staff in the knowledge that those concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- The promotion of positive behaviour is one of the cornerstones of the Personal Development Programme throughout the School.
- Good classroom management will help to deter instances of bullying.
- The effective supervision of pupils outside of lessons will help to minimise the incidence of bullying.
- Senior pupils have a valuable role to play in supporting younger students.
- All pupils are made aware that bullying is a serious offence.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INSTANCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given, as appropriate, to both the victims and the bullies.

We support the **victims** in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their Form Teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- by informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- by informing the bully's parents/guardians.
- by continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below, depending on the severity and frequency of the bullying behaviour.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

1. The bully will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. The bully's parents/guardians will be informed.
3. The bully may be detained in School or excluded from the School premises at break and/or lunch times.
4. We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
5. The bully may be suspended for an initial period.
6. If they then carry on bullying they will be recommended for a longer period of suspension.



CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

The School is committed to providing relevant training and support for all staff in the implementation of this policy. This may be provided on a group basis or at an individual level.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The policy will be monitored continuously by the Senior Leadership Team in order to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. It will be reviewed at least every two years.

This policy reflects the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted as legally binding in 1999.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 28

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Staff were consulted on this Policy in August 2011

The School Council was consulted on this Policy on 25/09/13

Signed _____ *R. Alcorn* _____ (Chairman of the Board of Governors)

Date _____ 200618 _____

Signed _____ *N. Madden* _____ (Principal)

Date _____ 200618 _____

Superseded document(s): 240615

Date for Review June 2020



Appendix 1 Advice to Pupils

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG!**
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Although you have a right to defend yourself, fighting back may make things worse. Always try and talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- h) Keep a record of any instances of bullying along with the names of any witnesses. Show any evidence to a parent/guardian/teacher. This is particularly important if internet or mobile phone bullying is involved.

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will help to end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:-

- a) **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. Let the victim know that they have your full support.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.