



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

Limavady Grammar School promotes difference, inclusion and diversity and has a zero tolerance attitude toward bullying behaviour. 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, online 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.

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 behaviour. 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 concerns 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 pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour will be paramount.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

In accordance with the definition adopted by EA and the legal definition as outlined in the Addressing Bullying In Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (not yet in operation), Limavady Grammar School adopts the following guidance in defining bullying:

“(1) In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of –
a) Any verbal, written or electronic communication
b) Any other act, or
c) Any combination of those,
by a pupil or group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour

- on school premises
- travelling to and from school during the school term
- when a pupil is in lawful control of a member of staff of the school



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- education arranged on behalf of the school and provided away from the school premises

Examples of bullying behaviour include, but are not restricted to:

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 (OMISSION)

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 pupil displaying bullying behaviour 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.

Note: The 2016 Act (which has not come into effect yet due to temporary pause in the planned implementation process on 29 August 2019) gives schools the explicit power to take action to prevent cyber bullying which is taking place outside school, but which is likely to have an impact on the pupil's education in school. While this gives schools the option to take action, it does not place a duty on schools to do so.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our Staff will:

- Help to foster in our pupil's 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, preventative measures and the appropriate way to behave towards each other. This includes delivering information through the Personal Development programme as appropriate.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Deal immediately with any observed instances of bullying.
- Listen attentively to the pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour, reassuring them that their complaints are being taken seriously.
- Act promptly to report any allegation of bullying to the Form Teacher, Head of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team.



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- 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.
- Effectively record instances of bullying behaviour.

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 pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour, 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.
- Actively monitor their child's online presence and activity



PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- All members of the school community are expected to promote an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance.
- Consistent implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- 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.
- Mentoring support from the Pastoral Team, SENCo and other appropriate staff.
- The promotion of positive behaviour is one of the cornerstones of the Personal Development Programme throughout the School.
- Active involvement of the Student Council in the development of pastoral/preventative curriculum.
- Active whole-school participation in NIABF's Anti-Bullying Week activities and promotion of key topics in assemblies.
- Good classroom management will help to deter instances of bullying.
- The effective supervision of pupils outside of lessons and arrangements for 'hot spots' 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 and who to speak to if they have any concerns.
- Collaboration with transport providers, e.g. Translink.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INSTANCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

If bullying is suspected relevant members of staff talk to the suspected pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour, the suspected pupil displaying bullying behaviour 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 pupils displaying bullying behaviour.

We support the pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour 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 pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour parents/guardians.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- by taking one or more of the sanctions described below to prevent more bullying.

We also use appropriate sanctions, yet try to help the pupils displaying bullying behaviour in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- by informing the pupil displaying bullying behaviours' parents/guardians.
- by continuing to work with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- by taking one or more of the school sanctions described in the Positive Behaviour Policy, depending on the severity and frequency of the bullying behaviour.



SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS

The ethos within the school will encourage all pupils to report incidents of bullying to an appropriate adult or another pupil.

When children and young people are involved in incidents of bullying behaviour, adults need to intervene. In practice there is a wide range of possible interventions available and there are significant differences in these in terms of purpose of the intervention and the needs being addressed. There is no one best method that is preferable.

The main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying behaviour that has taken place, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all those involved.

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (2013) suggests four levels of intervention, however it must be remembered that every incident should be individually assessed and the intervention strategies chosen must be best suited to the pupils involved and the unique circumstances of the incident.

Level 1 Intervention – Low Level Bullying Behaviour

To help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and “get them back on track” while listening to and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour.

Level 2 Intervention – Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour

While continuing with Level 1, there is a shift from individual support to group interventions.

Level 3 Intervention – Complex Bullying Behaviour

This will often involve the VP, Pastoral Heads, SENCo or other Senior Leaders, pupil support/counselling in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents to determine the way forward in affecting change.

Level 4 Intervention – High Risk Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviours assessed at Level 4 are severe and involve 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 earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk.

RECORDING

Staff will record incidents of bullying behaviour when an incident is reported to them. This will be passed to the Head of Year, Senior Teacher in charge of Junior Behaviour Management and the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) who will use this to continue to monitor incidents and report to the Principal.

SANCTIONS

It should be remembered by all that bullying is not fixed by a sanction - pupils on both sides require support (DE, May 2019).

However, pupils who display bullying behaviour need to be shown clearly that their behaviour is wrong. The sanctions will be fair, consistent and reasonable and will take into account the motivation behind the bullying behaviour. The purpose of the sanction is to stop the bullying behaviour with immediate effect. The sanctions will focus on the bullying behaviour and not refer to the pupil as a bully. See the Positive Behaviour Policy for the range of sanctions that may be used.



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 four years.

THIS POLICY INFORMED AND GUIDED BY –

DE Guidance:

- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order (1998) Article 3 - see DE 1998/25
- Pastoral Care in Schools: PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR DE, 2001
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order, 2003 - see DE 2003/13
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools DE 2017
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019 (DE notified schools of a temporary pause in the planned implementation process on 29 August 2019. The Act therefore did not come into effect on 2 September 2019, awaiting further guidance from DE)
- The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: *Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour*.

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

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.

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.



PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS

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

Staff were consulted on this Policy in August 2019

Pupils were consulted on this Policy in September 2019

Parents were consulted on this Policy in September 2019

Signed _____ *G Hill* _____ (Chairman of the Board of Governors)

Date _____ *201119* _____

Signed _____ *N Madden* _____ (Principal)

Date _____ *201119* _____

Superseded document(s): 200618

Date for Review June 2022 (awaiting guidance from Department of Education)



Appendix 1 Advice to Pupils

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be experiencing bullying behaviour, 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 pupil displaying bullying behaviour 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 behaviour along with the names of any witnesses. Show any evidence to a parent/guardian/teacher. This is particularly important if the use of the internet or a mobile phone is involved.

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

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:-

- a) TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour. 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 pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour.