

St. Patrick's College Maghera



Policy Name: **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Date of Issue: 22 / 06/ 2018

Review Date: 22 / 06 / 2019

Approved by Board of Governors:

Date of Approval:

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Rationale

St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a supportive, friendly and safe environment, free from bullying behaviours of any kind. We all have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way we can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Links with other school policies

This Anti-Bullying Policy complements other policies in the pastoral portfolio including Pastoral Care, Safeguarding & Child Protection, Discipline, Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones, Use of Reasonable Force and 'e-safety' and is designed to provide a secure and caring environment that promotes effective learning and teaching and ensures that everyone has the best opportunities to develop their full potential. Bullying of any kind is contrary to the ethos and values of our College.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote the importance of mutual respect and the development of positive relationships;
- Create and encourage a learning environment in which every pupil feels welcomed, safe and able to learn;
- Ensure that bullying behaviour is not acceptable within our schools;
- Have a shared and clearly understood definition of bullying behaviour;
- Create an environment where pupils, staff and parents are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour;
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to prevent and detect bullying;

- Outline roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents in recognising, reporting, recording and dealing with incidents of bullying;
- Support pupils who are bullied and help to restore lost confidence and self-esteem
- Detail the monitoring process and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as:

"The repeated and intentional use of physical, verbal, electronic, written or psychological acts or omissions, or any combination thereof, by one or more pupils against another or group of pupils with the intention of causing harm, hurt, fear, distress or adversely affecting the rights or needs of that pupil or group of pupils" (DENI: Addressing bullying in schools consultation Document Jan 2015)

Forms of Bullying

Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, making gestures, punching or any use of violence

Verbal: name calling, teasing, insulting, sarcasm, racial taunts or gestures, sexual harassment, homophobic or sectarian remarks, writing unkind notes, spreading rumours, threats;

Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, giving looks, pressurising anti-social behaviour, taking or hiding belongings/money;

Cyber: all areas of internet, such as email, internet chat room or social network misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging & calls and misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities. This includes incidents that occur both in and outside school and is in line with our college e-safety policies.

Key advice relating to the Law in Northern Ireland on Cyber Bullying and Sexting can be found on the NIABF site:

Cyber bullying and the Law - http://endbullying.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2014/05/cyber_bullying_and_the_law_in_northern_ireland.pdf

Sexting and the Law - <http://www.endbullying.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Sexting-The-Law-Leaflet-Trifold.pdf>

What is Bullying?

The Department of Education has issued guidance to all schools on developing policies and procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour.

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (DE 1999)
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE 2001)

Bullying is not the occasional, falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Pupils sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of pupils' development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the occasional name calling or childish prank. We all must learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

We will work very hard establishing with pupils, parents and staff the difference between bullying behaviour and 'harmless banter'. We acknowledge that people react differently to situations and it is not always possible to tell if someone is upset or hurt. However, when the pupil targeted is in distress or is hurt and the person responsible knows this and carries on, then the line between harmless teasing and bullying has been crossed.

Where does Bullying occur?

Although bullying may occur almost anywhere, some situations are more common such as:

- on the way to or from school or college, including buses;
- in corridors, classrooms, cloakrooms, changing rooms, toilets;
- in the playground, particularly in isolated areas;
- in the dinner queue and dining hall.

Minimising Bullying Behaviour

Emphasis is placed on the quality of relationships between all members, staff and between staff, pupils and parents to encourage an openness designed to allow pupils to speak out where potential problems are perceived. The Pastoral Programme provides opportunities for pupils to explore the issues surrounding bullying. The underpinning values of fairness, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness are encouraged in the Pastoral, Religious Education and Citizenship programmes.

At a practical level, classroom teachers strive to create a positive, well-ordered environment where each pupil feels valued and respected. It is important to create an atmosphere where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.

It is also important to involve all members of the school community in the identification and condemnation of bullying. Schools will identify the 'hot spots' where bullying is likely to occur and will ensure that supervision levels are adequate. Staff will supervise the main areas of the school before class, at break time and at lunch time and will be

particularly vigilant during these times since some pupils are more vulnerable and bullying is less easily seen. (Appendix 1)

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances;
- not to suffer in silence but to speak out.

We endeavour to create a supportive ethos and seek to break down the culture of secrecy by encouraging pupils to speak out. We encourage discussion to open up at all levels and hence to break the silence in which aggressive behaviours thrive. A pupil who becomes the target of bullies should not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets. We all need to work together to combat bullying behaviour as we strive to eradicate bullying. (Appendix 2)

Parents

- We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:
- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying (Appendix 3);
- advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;

- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying including text messages and online communications;
- inform the school promptly of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

Parents are encouraged to reassure their child that we will deal with all forms of bullying sensitively but firmly. If a child tells us, or we discover that he/she is being bullied, or they are bullying others, we will deal with the matter appropriately. All such disclosures will be acknowledged quickly and dealt with firmly but sensitively.

Procedures for reporting and recording bullying concern/behaviour

Most bullying incidents reported will be noted using the 'Bullying Incident Log (Appendix 4) and investigated by either Form Teachers and/or Head of Year. The incident will be discussed and appropriate action agreed. Pupils reporting bullying behaviour will be commended for behaving responsibly. All pupils should gain confidence in 'telling' which is important. Serious incidents will be referred immediately to the Head of Year/Vice Principal/Principal. After investigation, appropriate action will be taken in line with the school's Discipline Policy.

Parents/Guardians of pupils who have been bullied and those who displayed bullying behaviour will be informed by the Head of Year/Vice Principal and given an opportunity to discuss the

matter/support their children. Parents can contact the Form Teacher/Tutor/Head of Year to report incidents of bullying which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians. Non-teaching staff are encouraged to note and report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to a Teacher as soon as possible.

Our response to a Bullying concern/behaviour

1. In any incident of a bullying concern the teacher should speak separately to the pupils involved. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and pupils should be reassured that their concerns will be listened to.

2. Bullying concerns are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the person subjected to bullying or the pupil engaged in bullying behaviour.

3. When investigating incidents of bullying teachers should seek answers to the following; Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? If a bullying incident is reported that has occurred outside school hours and premises, parents/guardians may be advised to seek assistance from PSNI or other relevant agencies.

5. At the time teachers should keep a written record of their discussions. It may also be appropriate/helpful to ask any others involved to write down their account of the incident.

6. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying as defined in our policy, it should be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the Code of Conduct. Appropriate sanctions, in accordance with the school's Discipline Policy, should then be taken. This is likely to involve contact/meeting with parents. If the matter is deemed to be serious. A follow-up meeting with the two parties involved should be arranged either separately or together soon after the incident to see if progress has been made.

7. If the matter is deemed to be serious PSNI or other relevant agencies may be contacted for support and guidance.

8. Pupils involved in bullying may require additional support in order to prevent any future incidents. This includes the pupils who have been bullied and those who displayed bullying behaviour. Examples of support include: Friendship skills / Buddy support / assertiveness training / conflict management / counselling / anti-bullying personal journal / bullying workshops / assemblies / external agency support / Anger management programme.

Where to find help

A list of external support agencies are set out in Appendix 5.

Strategies and procedures to deal with reported incidents of bullying behaviour -

- devise strategies that actively promote a welcoming, positive learning environment for all;
- recognise equally the culturally diverse nature of the pupils and staff within the schools;
- ensure that all provision is open and accessible to all pupils, regardless of identity; background and in a manner that takes account of their abilities.

The college will address the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of the Induction process prior to the new academic year. Mechanisms such as the 'buddy system' 'The Angel Guardian Programme' will provide support as they embark on their studies in the college

Evaluations

Regular questionnaires and surveys are conducted to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy. (Appendix 7)

Appendix 1

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies can be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These can include:

- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters around the school
- LLW Scheme of Work used to support this policy
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of pupils volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Using circle time and restorative dialogue
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help pupils be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Using teaching methods, which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings, so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
- Development of a Mentoring/Buddy scheme
- Dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving, and dealing with difficulties.

- Availing of the Counselling Service
- Increased use of Active Learning Strategies in the classroom
- A commitment to consult with and to inform pupils and parents fully about the policy and procedures in place to combat bullying.
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy (Appendix 7 a, b and c).

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Guidelines for Pupils Appendix 2

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.
- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive - stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group; bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust - it can be a teacher, a learning support assistant, a canteen supervisor, a parent, a friend, another pupil, a mentor, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- Ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- Keep a record of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Save as evidence copies of electronic forms of bullying eg text messages/Facebook conversations.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.

- Don't suffer in silence. Remember your silence is the bully's greatest weapon
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening
- You could call CHILDLINE (Tel. 0800 1111). They provide a 24-hour confidential counselling service for young people in trouble or in danger. These calls are free and do not show up on your phone bill.

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied?

- Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the person being bullied. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger.
- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
- Shout for help.
- Let the person being bullied know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and pass it on.
- Do not contribute to on-line communications where cyber bullying is occurring.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs.

- Unwillingness to attend School/truancy.
- Anxiety about travelling to and from School/avoiding regular travelling times.
- Underachievement.
- Loss of concentration/enthusiasm/interest in School/changed behaviour.
- Repeated non-specific reasons for Surgery visits - headache/stomach ache.
- Unexplained changes in mood especially before returning to School after holidays/weekends.
- Physical signs of anxiety - stammering/nightmares/sleep difficulty/loss of appetite / nausea/withdrawal.
- Physical bruising/torn clothes.
- Loss of self- esteem/confidence/mood swings.
- Books torn or destroyed/missing possessions.
- Reluctance to say what is wrong.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Useful Contacts Appendix 5

The following is a list of support for teachers, parents and pupils.

Childline (www.childline.org.uk/Bullying) 0800 1111 (helpline for children)

Lifeline (www.lifelinehelpline.info) 0808 808 8000

NI Anti-Bullying Forum (www.niabf.org.uk/cms/) advice for teachers, parents and young people.

Anti-bullying Network (www.antibullying.net/) advice for teachers, parents and young people.

Kidscape (www.kidscape.org.uk/) provides advice for teachers, parents and young people.

08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)

NSPCC (www.nspcc.org.uk) Tel: 0808 800 5000

urzone website, (www.urzone.com/) is sponsored by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and provides advice and help on a range of issues affecting young people in Northern Ireland, including guidance on how to stay safe online.

Centre for Exploitation and Online Protection (www.ceop.gov.uk/) also provides a facility for reporting abuse on the Internet.

Kidsmart (www.kidsmart.org.uk/) is a website, dealing with Internet safety programmes.

BBC www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/bullying.

Kidscape

152 Buckingham Palace Road LONDON, SW1 9TR

Helpline for Parents:

0171 730 3300 [10.00 am - 4.00 pm Monday-Friday]

They provide free leaflets and booklets for parents, children and teenagers about bullying.

National Child Protection Helpline

Freephone: 0800 800 500

A 24-hour helpline for anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse [including bullying]. Children may use this facility themselves.

Parents' Advice Centre

Franklin House 12 Brunswick Street BELFAST, BT2 7GE

Telephone: 028 9023 8800 [a 24-hour helpline]

This is a service for parents and young people in Northern Ireland. It offers listening support, in addition to guidance and counselling relating to any family problem.

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Procedure for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Anti-Bullying Culture - Staff Questionnaire Appendix 7

Statements refer to specific quality indicators. (QI) Strongly

Agree Disagree Strongly

Disagree

Don't

Know

1 All members of staff are fully committed to creating an environment of care and trust within the school.

2 There is adequate staffing of play areas at break/lunch times and when classes are changing over.

3 Bullying behaviour is being reduced.

4 All staff are fair, firm, consistent and compassionate in their approach to keeping good order in the school.

5 All staff model non-aggressive behaviour.

6 Pupils feel able to express concerns about bullying to any member to staff, knowing that these will be received sympathetically and that appropriate action will be taken.

7 Pupils are aware of clear defined procedures for reporting and staff take action and record bullying behaviour.

8 The pupils are encouraged to value one another and to express their own views while appreciating the views of others.

9 The achievements of all pupils are recognised, valued and celebrated so that pupils' self esteem is enhanced.

10 Within each year group, pupils have the opportunities to learn to work together in a cooperative manner.

11 All members of staff are informed about and are able to detect sign of pupil distress in relation to bullying.

12 There is frequent and effective liaison with parents and incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in partnership with parents.

13 All members of the school community have been consulted in order to arrive at an agreed definition of bullying behaviour and an agreed whole school anti-bullying policy.

14 Teachers plan for the promotion of pupil's self-esteem, recognising that all opportunities should be availed of.

15 Through group work pupils are helped to learn to respect and appreciate difference.

16 The curriculum provides opportunities to address the issue of bullying behaviour.

17 Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings in ways which are not aggressive.

18 Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop skills of assertiveness and self -protection.

19 Pupils are taught how to protect themselves from bullying both in and out of school.

20 Pupils are taught how to cope with bullying behaviour coming from social networking and mobile telephones.

Priorities for Improvement

1-----

2-----

3-----

Please note: All questionnaires are returned anonymously and treated confidentially.

Anti-Bullying Culture - Parents' Questionnaire Appendix 8

Please answer all questions with your child/ren in mind.

Statements refer to specific quality indicators. (QI) Strongly

Agree

Agree Disagree Strongly

Disagree

Don't

Know

1 The school is fully committed to creating an environment of care and trust for all pupils.

2 Teachers and supervisors help my child to feel safe in the playground.

3 I know that the school is working hard to reduce bullying.

4 High standards of behaviour are expected and are evident in the school.

5 All staff are fair, firm, and compassionate in their approach to keeping good order in the school.

6 My child feels able to express their concerns about bullying to any member of staff, knowing that these will be received sympathetically and that appropriate action will be taken.

7 My Child knows what to do if he/she witnesses, or is the victim of bullying.

8 Good relationships between teachers and pupils exist in and out of the classroom.

9 Through group work pupils are encouraged to value one another and to express their own views while appreciating the views of others.

10 The achievements of all pupils are recognised, valued and celebrated so that pupils' self-esteem is enhanced.

11 If a child is involved in bullying there is effective liaison between the school and the parents.

12 I am confident about discussing any worries my child has about bullying with the appropriate teacher.

13 The school has consulted with parents in agreeing a definition of bullying behaviour and an anti bullying policy.

14 I am aware of clearly defined procedures for reporting and recording bullying incidents in school.

15 Pupils learn to respect and appreciate differences.

16 Pupils are given opportunities to express their feelings in ways which are not aggressive.

17 Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop skills of assertiveness and self-protection

18 My child feels safe from bullying both in and out of school.

19 My child is taught how to cope with bullying behaviour coming from social media and mobile telephones.

Please note: Questionnaires are anonymous and are treated confidentially.

Anti-Bullying Culture – Pupils' Questionnaire Appendix 9

Questionnaire to be completed during Anti-Bullying Week Year:
8/9/10/11/12/13/14 {Circle}

Statements refer to specific quality indicators. (QI) Strongly

Agree

Agree Disagree Strongly

Disagree

Don't

Know

- 1 Teachers and supervisors help me to feel safe in the school.
- 2 I feel safe from all forms of bullying behaviour on the way to and from school.
- 3 I feel confident going to school knowing what to do if I am bullied.
- 4 Pupils in our school are well behaved.
- 5 Teachers in my school think that bullying is wrong.
- 6 If I tell a teacher/adult that I'm being bullied I know that he/she will listen and do something to help.
- 7 In school we are given advice on how to cope with someone who is bullying us.
- 8 I understand that it is my responsibility to tell an adult if I know that a bullying incident is going on in this school.
- 9 I know that the only way that bullying can be stopped is to report all incidents.
- 10 In group work we learn how to value others and respect difference.
- 11 When we do well in school we are praised and it is acknowledged publicly.

12 Teachers talk to my parents if I have concerns about bullying.

13 We talk from time to time about the school rules on bullying.

14 In school we are given opportunities to discuss bullying and raise our own concerns.

15 We have opportunities to explore the feelings and emotions surrounding bullying behaviour in different subjects.

16 I am taught how to stand up for myself without being aggressive.

17 I am taught how to cope with bullying from social media and mobile telephones.

Three things I think would make Anti-Bullying Culture better in my school

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Thank you for your help