Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: September 2022

Ratified by the Governors: October 2022

Next review date: September 2025

Mission Statement

Loughries Integrated Primary School fosters a nurturing environment which encourages, supports, develops and challenges each child to reach their full potential. We endeavour to equip our pupils with the skills and qualities needed to work together for a shared future.

INTRODUCTION.

At Loughries Integrated 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 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 from the children and will actively respect their views. 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.

RATIONALE.

Loughries Integrated Primary School recognises that for effective learning to take place pupils must be free from the fear of bullying. To this end we encourage the pupils to display the best possible behaviour in school and have established a clear Code of Conduct within our Positive Behaviour Policy. We do our best to prevent bullying behaviour and our Anti-bullying programme is grounded in personal development and the enhancement of protective factors. However, incidents of bullying behaviour may be reported and it is important that a consistent and clear approach is taken when dealing with these reported incidents.

THE SCHOOL'S ANTI-BULLYING AIMS

- To create a caring community
- To take a whole school pro-active approach to the prevention of bullying
- To have a consistent approach for dealing with incidents of bullying
- To set a good example to encourage children to show respect for themselves and others
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of this Policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success

Consultation and Participation

This Policy has been developed in consultation with registered pupils and their parents/carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Representative members of staff involved Mrs Thompson, Mrs Rea, Mrs Bowers, Miss Cullen and Mr Stewart.

Pupils: Class-based activities.

Parents/Carers: Engagement with the PTFA and an email sent to all families within the school stating that the reviewed Policy is available on the website for them to read and to offer feedback.

All members of the school community have been made aware of the reviewed Policy through:

Teachers: Staff Meeting (25/8/22).

Non-teaching Staff: Reviewed Policy available on the school website.

Governors: Reviewed Policy on the school website.

What is Bullying?

The school uses the legal definition of bullying for Northern Ireland as defined in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

(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.

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.

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 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 (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Motivating Factors

There are many factors, and combination of factors, which may motivate a pupil to display bullying behaviours towards another pupil. 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 child by 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

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.

Preventative Measures

The school has in place a number of measures to prevent bullying behaviours and creating a safe learning environment for everyone. 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 e.g. 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
* Involvement in meaningful and supportive projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness training)
* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
* Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc
* Development of peer-led systems (e.g. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
* Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors and P7 Buddies, the front playground P1-P4 and the back playground for P5-P7, Resource box at lunchtime.
* Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
* Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. Play before school and break time)
* Provision and promotion of extra- curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of positive relationships

Preventative measures to prevent bullying behaviour on the way 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, attending the Leisure Centre and School Trips.
* Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school.
* Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (e.g. local shops, cafes, service providers, residents, etc), 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. P1-P7 teachers dismiss the children to their parent/guardian.)

Preventative measures of bullying through 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.

The school will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support the pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This may include:

* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU, 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, NICIE, 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, Mobile Phone Policy)

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.

Responsibility

The Anti-Bullying Policy should make clear that 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:

* 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

Reporting a Bullying Concern

PUPILS SHOULD…

- Report Bullying concerns by: A) Verbally- talking to a member of staff

  B) By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)

  C) By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

- Raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour

  Act in a respectful and supportive manner to fellow pupils

- Adhere to and promote the school's Anti-Bullying Policy/Procedures

PARENTS SHOULD…

- Stress to their children the importance of good behaviour

- Raise any concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity with the class teacher. Where a parent 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 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.

- Actively support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy

- Stress to children that retaliation is not helpful

STAFF WILL…

- Encourage pupils to get help if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another pupil
- Take all reports of bullying seriously
- Log all incidents in line with agreed procedures, give feedback to all concerned
- Participate in regular training
- Celebrate good behaviour

GOVERNORS WILL…

•   Participate in regular training

•   Be informed in general terms of bullying incidents on an annual basis

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.

Responding to a Bullying Concern

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible Mrs Thompson shall…

* *Clarify facts and perceptions*
* *Check records (SIMS)*
* *Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour*
* *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 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.

Recording

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.*

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, 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.

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 the Anti-Bullying Policy and practice within the school.

Professional Development of Staff

Appropriate Staff training will take place including teaching and non-teaching staff.

- ✳ All staff will be provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development.
- ✳ Record the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
- ✳ Ensure that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
- ✳ Continuing Professional Developments will be kept and updated regularly

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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 September 2025.

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*
- *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*

Appendix 1: Legislation

Legislation & Guidance:

This policy is informed and guided by current legislation and DE Guidance listed below:

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)

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Insert the flow diagram