



Anti-Bullying Policy

January 2017

Review Date: January 2019

Chair of Board of Governors	Date
Principal	Date

We care ~ We share ~ We learn

We care – We share – We learn

Our vision is to enable independent and happy pupils to acquire a capacity for lifelong learning

in

a Christian atmosphere that translates into daily life

by

promoting a learning environment which motivates creativity and achievement in an atmosphere of respect and responsibility

while

highlighting and nurturing strengths and celebrating successes

through

fostering successful, productive and enjoyable partnerships:

within school,

between home and school,

and

with the community in which our school belongs

Rationale

At New Row PS we are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles by which we work and live. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

RATIONALE

DE Circular 2003/13 and Article 19, The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 outline the requirement for all schools to have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils and determine policy details in consultation with staff and pupils.

Human rights issues as highlighted in 'Human Rights Awareness for School Managers' (Children's Law Centre booklet), and the most recent publication from Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour' have shaped this updated policy.

Aims of this policy

This policy aims to:-

- Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- Promote a 'whole school' approach, where signs of bullying are identified and swift and effective action is taken
- Show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance
- Promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure all school community, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is, and what they should do if bullying arises
- Inform children and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Assist in the provision of a positive and supportive atmosphere - for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour
- To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

Following consultation with governors, staff, pupils and parents, the following definition of bullying has been agreed:

Bullying is a form of hurtful behaviour which is wilful, persistent and unprovoked. It involves actions which demean, belittle or take control over another person. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal, emotional and cyber bullying. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of pupils.

Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum Definition of Bullying:

NIABF defines bullying as the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

To avoid labelling individuals we will strive to report situations as 'alleged bullying incidents' and perpetrators as 'displaying bullying behaviour'.

The term 'bullying behaviour' refers to a range of harmful behaviour, physical or psychological and usually has the following features

- It is repetitive and persistent.
- It is intentionally harmful.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone helpless to prevent it or stop it.
- It causes distress.

Prevention

Bullying is a complex and emotive issue and can never be eliminated and no school, however hard staff try, can guarantee that a child in its care will not be subjected to it. Active promotion of the school aims, Code of Conduct and promotion of a positive and secure ethos can reduce incidents and build resilience in pupils and staff. This school actively promotes well-being and anti-bullying strategies throughout its curricular and extra-curricular provision. This school will take reasonable steps to minimise incidents of bullying in a proactive manner.

Forms of Bullying

PHYSICAL BULLYING–

- hitting; pushing; kicking; tripping; spitting; hair pulling; throwing things;
- interfering with another's property by stealing/hiding/damaging/intruding upon it; extortion/threatening demands for money or other items
- writing or drawing offensive notes/graffiti about another

VERBAL BULLYING

- name calling; insulting or offensive remarks; accusing; taunting; put downs
- ridiculing another's appearance/way of speaking/disability/personal mannerisms/ race/colour/religion; humiliating another publicly
- spreading malicious or nasty rumours; threatening; intimidation; mocking; sarcasm

EMOTIONAL BULLYING

- excluding/ shunning others from group activity/ social setting or play;
- belittling another's abilities or achievements; mobbing the individual
- menacing looks, stares; rude signs or gestures; negative body language

CYBER BULLYING

- misuse of e-mails, images, text, blogs, tweets, forums and chat rooms to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- misuse of mobile phones by text messaging/ calls or images – again to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information; impersonation
- publishing threatening comments pictures or videos online

Links with other school policies

The policy forms part of the overall pastoral care provision in school and therefore links and works with the:-

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- ICT Policy and Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- PDMU Policy

Participation and consultation process

We in New Row Primary School have met the requirement to consult with all our stakeholders in the following ways:

- All stake holders will be consulted during the completion of this policy – parents (QUESTIONNAIRES), staff (discussions in staff meetings), pupils (circle time, class council and school council) and governors (at meetings).
- The policy can be accessed via the school’s website. In addition parents and pupils receive information leaflets stating the school’s definition of bullying and outlining the school’s procedures for dealing with it. Information and training for parents will be included in parents’ evenings at the school :
- Awareness-raising programmes e.g. School Information Booklet issued, Posters in Reception area of school, Newsletters, Involvement in NIABF Anti-bullying Week annual events, School Council Issues, Website.
- Class based lessons will negotiate and agree a Code of Conduct for Positive behaviours within the class.
- Awareness-raising programmes through Curriculum and involvement in NI Anti-bullying Week.
- Consultation with teaching and non-teaching staff
- Awareness-raising training of all staff in October 2017 in understanding what is bullying, developing the school’s definition and levels of intervention in responding to bullying behaviour.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- foster in our pupils self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
- discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously, record, and act to support and protect them;
- talk with the child accused of bullying to determine nature of bullying;
- record suspected cases of bullying
- report continued cases of bullying to the head of Key Stage/ Vice Principal or Principal
- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- follow school rules and classroom contract agreements;
- 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;
- help create a climate where bullying is not accepted;
- value and respect others;
- help others achieve;
- keep others safe.

Anyone 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.

What Pupils Need To Recognise About Bullying.

Pupils need to understand:

- that they have a right not be bullied at school;
- that they are not to blame if they are bullied;
- that they need to speak out and should trust the teachers to take their concerns seriously and to help them;
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The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask 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;
- advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher 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;
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- co-operating with the school, if their child/children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- work together to create a safe, happy and anti-bullying environment within our school.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES TO CREATE AN ANTI-BULLYING ETHOS

Proactive Strategies:-

- Promote School Ethos at all times
- Recognise and Reward Good Behaviour
- School Assemblies – addressing Bullying and providing Anti-Bullying Strategies
 - Including reinforcement of anti-bullying message
- Vigilant supervision - playground / general school environment
 - Including use of 'Wheel of Choice'
- Consultation with School Council
- Use of Alive O programme
- Use of PDMU lessons / Circle Time
- Good Parental Communication
- Awareness of Anti-Bullying Week (in November each year)
- Use of Outside Agencies – NSPCC, Childline, PSNI, Behaviour Support Team

Intervention Strategies

The aim of any intervention applied is to RESPOND to the alleged incidents, RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the well-being of all involved. Low level bullying must never be ignored; early intervention can diminish problems and reduce potential risk.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- Attempts will be made to resolve situation quickly
- Reports will be taken seriously
- Steps taken to ensure child feels safe and secure
- Significant incidents will involve further investigation and recording
- A clear account (reported to class teacher/ head of Key Stage/ Vice Principal / Principal) Significant or repeated incidents will require parents to be informed
- Disciplinary measures / sanctions, which are proportionate, will be explained and used

PROCEDURE for dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Identification

The NIABF document promotes identifying bullying across four levels Low, Intermediate, Complex and High Risk . Assessing the level of risk an individual pupil faces will help determine the level of severity as will taking account of the nature, frequency and duration of the bullying behaviour and the perceptions of the child being bullied. A pupil may not wish to disclose incidents so staff should be vigilant in observing symptoms such as,

- Deterioration of work
- Spurious (fake) illness and /or erratic attendance
- Isolation/desire to remain with adults
- Problems reported from home (e.g. bed wetting, nightmares)
- Childhood depression/anxiety
- Unexplained damage or loss of property
- Unwillingness to talk about school/friendships
- Unexplained bruises or marks

Response

- When an alleged incident of bullying is witnessed by school staff, reported to staff by a pupil/pupils or a written or verbal complaint is given by a parent the incident(s) will be fully and sensitively investigated to clarify the facts and check if it constitutes bullying as defined in this policy. This may include incidents reported happening out of school e.g. cyber bullying, etc.
- The confidentiality and sensitivities of the child who has been bullied or engages in bullying behaviour will be considered.

- Staff must alert pastoral staff of incidents of reported bullying either orally or in writing using the appropriate concerns form for confidential filing by DT/principal.
- Staff should be calm, positive, assertive in seeking resolution and restitution and confident in believing that early intervention will impact future pupil behaviour. The pastoral team and principal will work with all staff to support the pupils and parents involved.

Resolution

- If proven, action will be taken to protect the 'child who has been bullied' and deal with the 'child who is displaying bullying behaviour' in line with the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy sanctions and involving all relevant staff on a need to know basis. Additional and complimentary levels of intervention are outlined in the (NIABF) file 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour'
- If parents/guardians are involved (depending on level of severity) they will be given feedback using the school diary, by phone call or via a parent – teacher meeting as guided by the pastoral team /principal. If the parent was the initial complainant a report back will be made (by phone call/interview) in line with the school complaints policy. Parents will be informed that they can contact the school again at any time if concerns are still evident.
- Procedures for monitoring and recording incidents are ongoing and further notable incidents recorded by the teacher will be retained in the Record of Concerns folder.
- Contact will be made with the parents /guardians of the child exhibiting bullying behaviour (if proven and within reason) but not simply because another parent so wishes. The school will only contact a parent if the alleged incident(s) conform to the above definition of bullying.
- The school is happy to direct parents, after consultation, towards appropriate counselling through internal/external agencies

RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Principal, in conjunction with Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and training of staff is arranged and updated as necessary. Material resources will be budgeted for accordingly.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Designated Teacher for child protection. A report on implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on Pastoral Care provision.

This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed with the whole staff every 2 years. Consultation and valuable input will be sought from the whole school community, parents/carers and pupils.

The school's Policy details the behaviour standards set within the school.

Pupils are encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. However, children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help, so pupils can report their concerns so they need a number of other options to get that help.

Assemblies and class Circle Time will be used to reinforce positive anti-bullying messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of the school ethos. . Activities across the curriculum and visits from representatives of outside agencies will also be used to develop pupils' understanding of bullying. Children are taught that each person is unique and to be valued. Differences are to be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour. In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils are coached and guided in developing coping strategies and how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to report their concerns for others.

Bullied pupils will be reassured that they are not in any way to blame (unless there is good reason to think otherwise). Support and protection will be given. As regards the playground, this can usually be done by approaching the adults on duty and Peer Mediators.

A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for their actions. The reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. They will be encouraged to think and talk about the implications of their behaviour for the pupil who was their target. Discussion should also involve the pupils' parents to identify any relevant background information and to secure their support. It may also be necessary for the involvement of the Special Needs Co-Ordinator to address any behavioural problems through a behavioural programme. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age-appropriate ways and any sanctions will be in line with the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.