



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date approved by Board of Governors: 24.6.21

Review: 4 years

Signed: *L. Simpson*

Date: 24.6.22

Anti-Bullying Policy

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

At Phoenix IPS 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.

Section 2 – Context

This policy has been developed in line with the legislative and policy/guidance framework applicable. This includes:

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 \(UNCRC\)](#)

The key points to note are:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:
Provides a legal definition of bullying.
Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.

Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.

Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:

In school, during the school day

While travelling to and from school

When under control of school staff, but away from school (eg. school trip)

When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (eg. in another school)

Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:

‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child’s right to:

Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)

Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)

Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)

Education. (A.28)

Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

We, at Phoenix Integrated Primary School, aim to provide a safe school where bullying will not be tolerated, where children will be kept safe, where we will record incidents of bullying behaviour and monitor interventions.

1. Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
2. The welfare/well-being and needs of all children and young people are paramount and pupils’ needs, whether bully or targeted pupil, need to be separated from their behaviour.
3. When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a restorative and solution focused way to achieve the necessary change.
4. Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
5. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.
6. Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention including effective, appropriate strategies for intervention.
7. Where a concern arises, staff will receive ongoing support from Pastoral Care Coordinator, Senior Leadership Team and Principal Mrs Watson.
8. Parents will be made aware of our school’s practice to prevent and to respond to concerns through consultation processes and where necessary, their active participation in partnership with the school to resolve concerns involving their child.

Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

In compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, this policy has been developed in consultation with members of the school community.

Pupil consultation took place in the following ways:

- Class-based activities
 - School Council meetings
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- The policy was shared with parents/carers and their opinions sought
 - School staff were also consulted

(see appendix 1)

Section 5 – What is Bullying?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 act provides the following definition;

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:

1.—(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.

The school accepts the following NIABF definition of bullying behaviour:
(in consultation with parents and staff)

“Bullying is the persistent use of power by one or more individuals to intentionally target, harm, hurt, threaten, intimidate or adversely affect the rights of 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 (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

This list is not exhaustive and we recognise other unacceptable behaviours not listed can be classified as bullying.

DE Guidance defines emotional harm or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.

DE Guidance defines physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Motivations behind bullying, include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Age | * Sexual orientation |
| * Appearance | * Race |
| * Breakdown in peer relationships | * Religion |
| * Community background | * Disability / SEN |
| * Political affiliation | * Ability |
| * Gender identity | * 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.

Section 6 – Preventative Measures

To promote a strong anti-bullying ethos, the focus of work carried out will be on prevention. A number of key actions will be taken, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment, 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 eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
- Participation in the Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassador Scheme
- Participation in the PATHS programme
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, through PDMU (eg. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.

Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (eg. mindfulness training)

Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities

Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc.

Development of peer-led systems (eg. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school

Development of effective strategies for playground management, eg. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches, play bus stops) and provision of a variety of play option to meet the needs of all pupils.

Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.

Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (eg. break time, lunch)

Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

Positive behaviour strategies to create a caring ethos e.g. Golden Time, Pupil of the Week, Celebration Assemblies are a few of the strategies used.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, we will endeavour to further build upon this, specifically with regards to the journey 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.
- * Participation in Sustrans initiatives to make pupils more aware about how to travel to and from school safely and involve parents in these discussions.
- * Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers e.g. anti-bullying ambassadors

To to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and to encourage pupils to use the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way the school will:

- * Issue parents and pupils with a code of conduct for using digital technologies
- * Address key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/ICT, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- * Participate in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- * Engage with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.

- ✳ Participate in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- ✳ Develop and implement robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, etc.)

The Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. The measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, also link to the school's e-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Section 7 – Responsibility

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

Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

The school has key staff with responsibility for bullying, however, pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

Pupils can report bullying concerns:

- ✳ Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- ✳ By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. in a homework diary)

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Staff will encourage pupils to ‘get help’ if they have a concern about bullying.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents/carers should encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to ‘hit back’.

Parents if you are concerned about a bullying incident:

Talk to your child about positive strategies they could use to stand up to the bully e.g. stay calm, act confidently, walk away, change the subject, ignore them, stay with a crowd, avoid being nasty back

If this does not resolve the situation.

Contact your child’s class teacher.

If this does not resolve the situation.

Contact the Vice Principal Mr. Kelly or Mrs. Watson our Principal.

If this does not resolve the situation.

Contact the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Mrs. Liz Simpson by sending a letter to the school

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school is open to receiving such reports from others.

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, no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall...

- * Clarify facts and perceptions
- * Check records
- * 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.

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 10 – Recording

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, requires schools to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour. This should be expanded to outline where these records will be kept, who will have responsibility for their maintenance and what the purpose of these records will be.

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.

The school will use a Bullying Concern Assessment form to keep records. These documents will be saved on the school intranet (private network) and can be accessed by Leadership Team and Executive Officer.

A summary of investigations into bullying incidents is saved in the school intranet. This summary document does not name any individuals involved.

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 anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

To provide adequate training for staff the school will:

- * ensure that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
- * note 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
- * ensure that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

Section 12 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying 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

The Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. However, following an incident which highlights the need for a review, one will take place.

The policy will also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

Section 13 – 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
- ✳ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ✳ Special Educational Needs Policy
- ✳ Health and Safety Policy
- ✳ Relationships and Sexuality Education
- ✳ E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- ✳ Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix 1

Summary of Consultations