



Anti Bullying Policy

A small number of anti bullying videos and other material for use in P.D. class are available in school

Web sites such as Bebo, My Space & YouTube can be used for negative purposes and misuse can lead to PSNI involvement.

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself. If unchecked, bullying can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop.

Schools have a responsibility to create a secure and safe environment for pupils who are in their care.

Coleraine College sets out five aims and for each to be achieved an anti-bullying environment is essential.

Aim 1: To provide a broad, balanced, coherent and relevant curriculum which will help all pupils acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities in relation to everyday needs.

Aim 2: To create a supportive and disciplined environment which will foster the individual growth and development of caring and responsible young people.

Aim 3: To provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate, and contribute to, human achievements in art, music, sport, science and technology.

Aim 4: To promote close links between the school and

- (i) the home
- (ii) feeder primary schools
- (iii) other secondary schools
- (iv) tertiary education establishments and employers
- (v) the local community
- (vi) outside agencies
- (vi) former pupils.

Aim 5: To prepare pupils for their adult life, at home, at work, at leisure, and to act as responsible citizens.

Each of these aims has links to this policy.

Aim 1. Pupils can only ACQUIRE knowledge if they know they can safely concentrate on their studies/activities.

Aim 2. The school needs to provide a DISCIPLINED environment and the control of bullying is integral to this.

Aim 3. APPRECIATE and CONTRIBUTE to achievements: the school needs to build self esteem within its population.

Aim 4. LINKS, these can only be forged through an understanding environment.

Aim 5. We aim to prepare RESPONSIBLE citizens.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The main types of bullying are:

1. Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, theft or damage to belongings.
2. Verbal e.g. threats, name-calling, sarcasm, directed spreading of damaging rumours, persistent teasing.
3. Indirect e.g. social exclusion or rejection.
4. Religion based e.g. religious/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures./racist/disability/homophobic
5. Sexual e.g. unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, name calling.

In today's modern electronic age e – bullying is becoming more common place and involves the use of the internet or other means of electronic communication eg text messaging.

Mobile phones and web sites such as Bebo, My Space & YouTube can be used for negative purposes and misuse can lead to PSNI involvement.

HOW IS THE VICTIM AFFECTED?

Children who are being bullied at school will not always be prepared to tell those in authority. However, when a disclosure is made, it should always be treated seriously. Whilst others may not feel that certain actions or words are of a bullying nature, if the recipient feels they are being bullied that is sufficient evidence to treat the case as prima facie bullying.

The victim may have their capacity to learn and develop seriously disrupted by bullying.

For those pupils who are unable to inform staff about their problem, observations regarding specific behaviour patterns can be routinely established within the school.

Signs of bullying might include:

- Unwillingness to come to school;
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour;
- Complaining about missing possessions;
- Refusal to talk about the problem;
- Easily distressed;
- Damaged or incomplete work
- Phantom illnesses involving being sent home from school.
- Actual illnesses caused by stress, loss of sleep, changes in eating habits.
- Attempts to inflict harm on themselves.

Where these difficulties are associated with a special needs pupil, a pupil from a minority racial or cultural background, or where there are indications of sexual harassment, these indicators may well confirm bullying is occurring. Investigation should be undertaken, checking with colleagues and maintaining rigorous vigilance.

Staff will be able to use their knowledge of the pupils to identify changes in their behaviour that might indicate bullying.

HOW CAN WE HELP THE VICTIM

Coleraine College, recognising its responsibility, aims to create a supportive and disciplined environment which will foster the individual growth and development of caring and responsible young people.

This aim may be achieved by providing a pastoral system designed to help pupils in their personal and social development and by creating a structured disciplinary system within which pupils can feel secure and can enhance their self esteem.

Creating a supportive climate

- Bullying that impacts on pupils' social, emotional psychological and educational development will be taken seriously;
- Investigations into bullying incidents will be thorough and involve both the bully and the bullied;
- The bullied individual must be supported;
- The bully will be supported in recognising their unsociable behaviour and offering support to modify that behaviour;
- Bullying will not be eradicated if the behaviour of the bullies is not modified. Efforts will be made to identify why a pupil has bullied; support will then be offered to the bully to prevent reoccurrence;
- Ways of reporting bullying will be clearly established for both pupils and staff;
- Parents must be clear as to how they can ensure their concerns for their child are taken seriously;
- Consideration will be given to appropriate "assertiveness" training for the bullied and other vulnerable groups.

The school will:

- take all bullying problems seriously;
- investigate all incidents thoroughly;
- ensure that bullies and victims are interviewed separately;
- obtain witness information;
- keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcomes;
- inform staff about the incident where a pupil is involved;
- inform appropriate staff where a member of staff is involved;
- Ensure that action is taken to prevent further incidents.

Such action may include:

- imposition of sanctions;
- obtaining an apology;
- informing parents of both bully and bullied;
- provide appropriate training;
- Provide mentor support for both victim and bully.

Procedures:

Within the Pastoral Care System all pupils have a Tutor who is well known to the members of the group. Any incident of bullying should be reported immediately to the appropriate Tutor, either by the victims, the victims' parents or by those who witness the incident. The Tutor will discuss the incident with the victims and offer comfort and advice. If pupils from another Tutor Group are involved, their Tutor is informed. Pupils should be encouraged to befriend the victims and thus restore their confidence within the peer group. Prefects may be used to monitor situations at Break, Lunchtime and on buses.

A Senior Member of Staff will reassure the victim and keep them and their parents informed of the measures being used in the situation.

Positive counselling and support for the victim should be immediate and sustained if necessary.

The whole school system should provide this support e.g. in the form of

- (1) Supervision rotas
- (2) Tutor system
- (3) Open-door policy
- (4) Discipline system
- (5) Parental contact policy
- (6) Prefect System
- (7) Taking into account the pupils' views on bullying
- (8) Pastoral Care Programme.

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH THE BULLY?

Anyone responsible for bullying behaviour will be interviewed and counselled by their Tutor and/or Year Head and/or Vice Principal and/or Principal. The sanctions used for the bully may involve Detention, Withdrawal, Suspension or Expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the incident(s). Written apologies to the principal and to the victim/s will be requested. In their apology to the Principal the perpetrators will be expected to give an undertaking that this type of behaviour is not acceptable and will not happen again. In the case of suspension a pupil may be requested to return only with a parent/guardian* for interview before being re admitted to the school. In extreme cases the pupil may be required to complete a Governors' behavioural agreement and/or meet with the Chairman of the Board of Governors before returning to school.

In all cases the parents of the bully will be informed. Parents may be requested to attend school to discuss the behaviour and the way forward.

The Principal will inform the Board of Governors of any bullying which persists after due action has been taken by the school.

Useful Information

Kidscape: – 0207 730 3300: 152 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TR.

This charitable organisation provides free literature for parents, victims and schools.

Get Connected – 0800 096 0096: A free confidential helpline for young people that will help them get in touch with the right people to help them.

The Samaritans: - 028 3026 6366 or 08457 909090

ChildLine: - 0800 1111. Provides support/advice for children and parents.

Contact Youth Counselling Services: Free phone **Youthline 0808-8088000** or
028 9045 7848

NSPCC: - 028 9035 1135

NSPCC Helpline: - 0808 800 5000

NB

* Interviews will normally only be carried out with the people who have parental responsibility for the children concerned. This is to safe guard all individuals concerned in the incident. In exceptional circumstances a third party may attend the interview but only by arrangement with the Chairperson/Principal/Vice Principal or other staff member chairing the meeting.