

Coleraine College



Anti-Bullying Policy

The Department of Education's publication Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection defines bullying as 'deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself' (1999, p4).

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as "The repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others.'

If unchecked, bullying can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn and develop. Bullying is in contravention of children's rights to protection from all forms of violence, both physical and mental.

It also infringes their right to an education and to freedom from torture and inhumane and degrading treatment under the Human Rights Act, 1998.

The form of bullying most commonly recognised is that perpetuated by one or more pupils against their peers. However, it is also important to recognise that bullying can take place not only between pupils, but between pupils and staff, between staff, by individuals or groups, face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber-bullying methods; and all of these are equally unacceptable.

Bullying is the abuse of power where the person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour or those involved in bullying behaviour have power over the victim, Some power imbalances can be subtle to build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger / stronger / older; have more acquaintances / friends; are more established in the school or simply care less about the consequences of their actions on others.

Bullying thrives on secrecy, the reluctance of the target to talk about it and the neglect of responsible adults to acknowledge its existence.

Schools have a responsibility to create a secure and safe learning and teaching environment for their pupils and staff.

Coleraine College is completely opposed to bullying in all its forms. Bullying will not be tolerated. It is contrary to our aims, values and principles.

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 positive, 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, drama, 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 and activities.

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

Aim 3. The school needs to build self-esteem within its population so that pupils can APPRECIATE and CONTRIBUTE to achievements within it.

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

Aim 5. The school aims to prepare RESPONSIBLE citizens.

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

- Positive Discipline Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Needs and Inclusion Policy
- ICT Policy and Acceptable Use of Internet Policy

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The main types of bullying are (this is not an exhaustive list):

1. Physical, e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, theft or damage to belongings. Using implements to cause deliberate injury to others;
2. Verbal e.g. threats, name-calling, sarcasm, directed spreading of damaging rumours, persistent teasing, swearing, ridiculing or demeaning others, insulting someone's appearance, taunting a pupil, his / her abilities / disabilities or achievements, or his / her family;
3. Indirect e.g. social exclusion or rejection, use of gestures, graffiti.
4. Religion based e.g. religious taunts, disability.
5. Sexual e.g. unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, name calling, use of sexualised language, sexting, homophobic name-calling.
6. Racist e.g. racist taunting or offensive name-calling
- 7, Cyber-bullying - In today's modern electronic age cyber-bullying is becoming more common place and involves the use of the internet or other means of electronic communication, e.g. text messaging (calls or images). tweets, blogs, forums chat rooms and use of social networking to hurt, embarrass, demean, harass, provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity

Mobile phones and social networking websites such as BBM, Askfm, Facebook, Bebo & YouTube can be used for negative purposes and misuse can lead to PSNI involvement.

HOW IS THE TARTGET/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 target/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;
- Avoidance, hanging back from Break / Lunch or staying late after school
- Nail-biting, flinching, jumpiness, forgetfulness, distractibility, easily distressed;
- Impulsive hitting out, out of character temper or restlessness, sudden aggressiveness
- Deterioration, damaged or incomplete work, 'mislaid' work, under-achievement
- Phantom / non-specific 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.
- Stresses manifested at home – bedwetting, insomnia, nightmares, restlessness and irritability
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(NB: these behaviours may be symptomatic of other problems, bullying may be one reason)

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 will 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 TARGET/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 offered 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;
- mediation between the pupils affected
- offer counselling e.g New Life Counselling

PROCEDURES

Within the Pastoral Care System all pupils have a Form Tutor who is well known to the members of the group. Any incident of bullying should be reported immediately to the appropriate Form Tutor, either by the victims, the victims' parents or by those who witness the incident. The Form Tutor will discuss the incident with the victims and offer comfort and advice. If pupils from another Tutor Group are involved, their Form 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) Form Tutor system
- (3) Discipline system
- (4) Parental contact
- (5) Prefect System
- (6) Taking into account the pupils' views on bullying
- (7) Pastoral Care Programme.

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH THE BULLY?

Anyone responsible for bullying behaviour will be interviewed and counselled by their Form Tutor and/or Year Head and/or Pastoral Head and/or Vice Principal and/or Principal. The sanctions used for the bully may involve Report, Detention, Withdrawal, Suspension, depending on the seriousness of the incident(s). Written apologies to the principal and to the victim/s may be requested.

In their apology to the Principal and to the victim/s 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 may inform the Board of Governors of any bullying which persists after due action has been taken by the school.

Please note

* 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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsibilities of staff (Teaching and non-teaching)

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 pupil being 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 pupils 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 the nature of the bullying;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Pastoral Head, 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:

- Follow school rules and classroom contract agreements;
- 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 prevent further instances;
- Help create a climate where bullying is not acceptable;
- Value and respect others;
- Help others achieve;
- Keep others safe.

Anyone who becomes a 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 the right not to be bullied at school;
- That they are not alone;
- That they need to speak out and should trust the staff to take their concerns seriously and to help them

The Responsibilities of the Parents / Guardians

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 their 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 child is not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the pupils who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to create a safe, happy, positive anti-bullying environment in our school.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES TO CREATE AN ANTI-BULLYING ETHOS

Proactive Strategies

- Promote school ethos at all times (as regards anti-bullying – to promote and value being a Caring / Positive / Proactive/ Listening / Responsive school;
- Promote awareness of the Rights and Responsibilities of all members of our school community
- Recognise and reward positive, good and expected behaviours
- Hold regular School Assemblies – addressing bullying and providing pupils with anti-bullying strategies/
- Provide vigilant supervision of pupils – in class, between classes, in the general school environment
- Consult with the School Council on creating a positive learning and teaching environment
- Use PD / LLW sessions to promote school ethos and address behavioural issues
- Use questionnaires for feedback on anti-bullying strategies and policy to help monitor, evaluate and review the Anti-Bullying Policy (pupil, staff, parent / guardian
- Establish and maintain good parental communication – consultation / questionnaires
- Use of outside agencies to provide support – NSPCC, Childline, PSNI, Behaviour Support team, Vineyard, Social Services, CAMHS.
- Provide staff training and promote effective staff communication
- Provide written guidance and support for parents on the signs of bullying and what to do if they suspect their child is being bullied at school
- Provide written guidance to all our pupils to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another pupil being bullied.

REACTIVE STRATEGIES

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with as quickly as possible by the member of staff who has been approached;
- Attempts will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible;
- All reports and incidents of reported bullying will be taken seriously;
- Steps will be taken to ensure the targeted pupil(s) feel(s) safe and secure;
- Significant incidents will involve further investigation and recording;
- A clear account will be recorded, it may be reported to ...the Form Tutor, Year Head, Pastoral Head, Vice-Principal or Principal;
- Significant and / or repeated incidents will require parents / guardians to be informed;
- Disciplinary measure or sanctions, which are proportionate, will be explained to pupils concerned and used.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

STEP 1

REPORTING OF AN INCIDENT (significant / repeated / intentional incidents or serious one-off incident)

- When such a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the appropriate staff – Form Tutor / Year Head / Pastoral Head / Vice-Principal or Principal.

STEP 2

INVESTIGATION OF AN INCIDENT

- This will be carried out by the appropriate member of staff following on from Step 1;
- Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's incident form;
- Parents / Guardians of all pupils involved will be informed of the school's action up to this point and kept informed of subsequent action.

STEP 3

AGREEING A PLAN FOR RESOLUTION

- The designated member of staff will devise a plan for resolution of conflict;
- Targets for acceptable behaviour will be set out including support measures for ALL pupils concerned;
- Any disciplinary action will use the system of sanctions as set out in the school's Positive Discipline Policy.

STEP 4

REVIEWING THE SITUATION

- The situation will be monitored and formally reviewed within one month of the initial report;
- This will involve the designated member of staff, other staff members as necessary, pupils and parents concerned.

STEP 5

INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER AGENCIES

Where necessary the school will draw on the support of the Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, Educational Psychology Services etc.

RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Principal, in conjunction with SLT, will ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and arrange training for staff when it is reviewed and provide updated training as necessary. Material resources will be budgeted for accordingly.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Pastoral Head (as Designated Teacher for Child Protection). A report on the implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors y the Principal.

This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed with the whole staff every two years.

Consultation and valuable input will be sought form the whole school community, parents / guardians and pupils.

APPENDICES

NIABF – framework for your written ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Advice leaflets for pupils / Parents / Guardians

The Legislative and Policy Context

TO BE REVIEWED FOLLOWING REVIEW OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY:

- **This Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Questionnaires – pupil, staff, parent / guardian**
- **Incident Form**
- **Develop a Code of Conduct for Pupils**
- **Develop a Code of conduct for Staff**
- **List resources available and when used e.g. Anti-bullying week November, Start of Year Assemblies – September**
- **School Information leaflet for Pupils and Parents/Guardians**

The Legislative and Policy Context

Guidance from the Department of Education

Pastoral Care in Schools Child Protection (1999)

Pastoral Care in Schools; Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001)

Relevant Legislation

Education NI Order (2003) – requires schools to have a written anti-bullying policy

Children NI Order (1978)

Health and Safety at Work NI Order (1978)

Anti-bullying and Harassment of Staff

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974, the school has a duty to provide its employees with a safe place and system of work. This includes a workplace free from bullying and harassment which may, in certain circumstances, also amount to unlawful discrimination. CF: NEELB HR Department.

Human Rights Act (1998) came into force in NI in 2000

UN Convention on The Rights of the Child

Resources / Useful Information

NIABF – Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum – 02890431123. This charitable organisation provides free literature for parents, victims and schools.

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

www.tes.co.uk – anti-bullying materials for assemblies, PD classroom teaching

KS3 LLW Scheme of Work – PD Section

Staffroom Notice board

Safe-guarding Children Notice board – a board presenting information for pupils clearly displayed and referring to Positive Discipline Procedures and Anti-Bullying Strategies, to be referred to and updated throughout the academic year in Anti-Bullying Assemblies, (November – Anti-bullying week)