

Ballykeel

Primary School and Nursery Unit



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed September 2023

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others.

It can take a number of forms: verbal, physical, cyber, social and psychological. It involves the use of power in relationships. It involves all forms of harassment (including racist, homophobic, sectarian and the disabled). It can be planned and organised. It affects an individual's ability to achieve and can have long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subject of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders. Although in the vast majority of cases bullying can be seen as repeated behaviour over a period of time, a one off incident may be deemed as bullying if viewed as serious or significant.

Forms/Categories of Bullying

- **Verbal** – name calling, teasing, abuse, put downs, insults, threats, sarcasm.
- **Physical** - hitting, pushing, punching, kicking, scratching, biting, tripping, spitting.
- **Social** – ignoring, excluding, alienating, making inappropriate gestures.
- **Psychological** – being unfriendly e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, stealing, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious notes of graffiti, ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- **Racist** – racial taunts.
- **Xenophobic** – taunting of foreigners.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic/Transgender** – because of, or focussing on the issue of gender or sexuality.
- **Sectarian** – unwanted religious, political differences.
- **Cyber** – unwanted/inappropriate comments, photos or videos in chatrooms, on social networks, online games, emails, texts, tweets and blogs to hurt/embarrass/ demean/harass or humiliate another.
- **Disablist** – related to special educational needs and/ or disabilities.

The motivation behind the bullying behaviour must be recorded by the school.

Motivations behind bullying behaviour are wide ranging. Motivations include, but are not limited to:

- Age
- Appearance
- Breakdown in peer relationships
- Community background
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Ability
- Child Looked After
- Young Carer status

Ballykeel Primary School and Nursery unit is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning in the school and interferes with the wellbeing of the pupils cannot be accepted.

Pupils, teachers, ancillary staff, parents and caregivers have a shared responsibility to create a safe, caring and happy environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute in whatever way they can to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

The language of bullying

It is important to avoid labelling individual pupils and instead to describe the pupil's behaviours. Instead of the term '*bully*' it is recommended that 'pupil displaying bullying behaviour' is used and instead of the term '*victim*' it is recommended that 'target' or 'pupil experiencing bullying behaviour' is used.

The Responsibilities of the School

Our school will:

- develop an Anti-Bullying Policy through consultation, which clearly identifies the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with bullying on the school premises, while the pupil is travelling to and from school and while the pupil is in the charge of a member of staff eg school trip.
- inform pupils, parents, caregivers, ancillary staff about the school Anti-Bullying Policy.
- provide clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
- record all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour that is reported in accordance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016.
- Detail the motivation behind the behaviour, the method of bullying (eg. verbal, physical, etc.) and how the situation was addressed in the record.

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:-

- foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- understand the meaning of bullying
- model appropriate behaviour and demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- closely supervise pupils in all areas of the school and playground.
- 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 child presenting with the bullying behaviour, and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying and stop it when it happens.
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- report suspected cases of bullying to the class teacher, the designated teacher for child protection and the 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 sensitively, in accordance with agreed procedures – **A**ffirm / **A**sk / **A**ct
- Complete the ‘Bullying Concern Assessment Form.’

The Responsibilities of Parents and Caregivers

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:-

- Making sure they are aware of the school’s definition of bullying and understand the meaning of bullying.
- Supporting their children in all aspects of their learning.
- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children which might be evidence of bullying.
- Being aware of the school Anti-Bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher and/or principal and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Supporting their children and developing positive responses to incidents of bullying and advising them 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 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 child presenting with the bullying behaviour themselves.
- *see Appendix 1 – Guideline for Parents and Caregivers*

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- treat each other respectfully, including when travelling to and from school when they should follow the school’s code of conduct.
- understand the meaning of bullying.
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out.

- 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.
- support the pupil who is the recipient of hurtful behaviour.

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 *See Appendix 2 – Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy*

The Responsibilities of Governors

Whilst it is a statutory requirement under the Act to review anti-bullying policies at least every 4 years, it is important to note that safeguarding arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to set out how the school’s anti-bullying policy and practice will be reviewed.

To inform this review, Governors should review the records of alleged bullying incidents, including:

- The number of bullying incidents and the number of alleged bullying incidents not progressed under the Anti-Bullying Policy
- The type of bullying
- The motivation behind the bullying incidents
- How long the bullying went on
- The responsive intervention(s) employed
- The effectiveness of the intervention(s)
- The proportion of bullying situations which were successfully resolved

Anti Bullying is a standing item on the agenda of every meeting of the Board of Governors and a report on bullying incidences is presented if required.

The Responsibilities of All

- work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.
- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community.
- contribute to the development of the Anti-Bullying Policy and support it.

Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

1. Dealing with bullying as it happens:

When dealing with instances of bullying witnessed by a member of staff – teaching or non-teaching – staff should:

- a) defuse the situation by separating the target from the child/children presenting with the bullying behaviour;
- b) disperse any bystanders;
- c) act firmly in a measured manner, avoiding any sudden movements which might be construed as aggression. If physical restraint is necessary, it should be applied in accordance with the guidelines set out in Circular 1999/9;
- d) indicate clearly to the child/children presenting with the bullying behaviour that Ballykeel Primary School does not tolerate bullying under any circumstances.
- e) Provide reassurance, support and protection for the pupil who was the target, and set the soonest possible time (if not immediately), for a responsible teacher to discuss with him or her what happened, the background, and to reach agreement on what should now happen to make things better.
- f) Follow procedures laid down in point 3 below ('Following the Incident').

2. Dealing with Bullying whether Suspected, Reported or Witnessed

- a) Discussion at length with the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – listen, believe, act. Provide reassurance, support and protection for the pupil who was experiencing bullying behaviour and discuss with him or her what happened, the background, and reach agreement on what should now happen to make things better.
- b) Identify the child/children presenting with the bullying behaviour. Obtain witnesses if possible. Indicate clearly to those presenting with the bullying behaviour that the school does not tolerate bullying under any circumstances. If they own up follow the procedure outlined below. If they do not own up investigate further. If it is clear they are not telling the truth, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts.
- c) Where bullying is reported to the school by parents/caregivers such complaints will be dealt with promptly and thoroughly, and a response from the school will be made within 10 working days.
- d) Follow procedures laid down in point 3 below ('Following the Incident').

3. Following the Incident

Actions subsequent to the incident, (consistent with the SEN Code of practice), will include:

- a) School must record all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour that is reported on the 'Bullying concern assessment form part 1' (appendix 3) The record must include the motivation behind the behaviour, the method of bullying (eg. verbal, physical, etc.) and how the situation was addressed.
- b) This form is then discussed with the Principal and relevant staff to ascertain if the criteria has been met and bullying behaviour has occurred. If deemed yes then parts 2, 3A, 3B and 4 will then need to be completed. (appendix 4)
- c) Sanctions will be administered in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy when unacceptable behaviours are not determined to constitute bullying behaviours. Sanctions for the child presenting with the bullying behaviour may include withdrawal from favoured activities, detention, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s).
- d) In addition to administering sanctions to those responsible in accordance with agreed procedures, the instigation of Stage 1, or, with the SENCO, Stage 2 of the Code may be appropriate. In either case, this should include the appropriate teacher (for example, class teacher, Head of Key Stage, Principal), talking through with the child/children presenting with the bullying behaviour the nature and implications of their behaviour, and encouraging them not to take part in any form of bullying in the future.
- e) Arranging for pastoral support from a sympathetic teacher, the school welfare support teacher or family worker to be provided for the pupil who was the target, and for the child presenting with the bullying behaviour (if they so wish).
- f) In serious cases, offering the target pupil and the child presenting with the bullying behaviour counselling, either from a trained teacher, the family worker or from an outside body.
- g) Consulting with parents (of both the pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour and the child presenting with the bullying behaviour) and informing them of any action taken or contemplated.
- h) Continue monitoring the situation by observing and having discussions with the pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour to ensure no repetition.
- i) As the behaviour of the child presenting with the bullying behaviour (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities, etc. can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good

behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.

4. Unsuitable Responses to Bullying

When confronted with evidence of bullying, staff should not:

- a) Minimise its importance or ignore it.
- b) Assume the matter will resolve itself in time.
- c) Allow or encourage the pupils to attempt to sort things out by themselves.
- d) Challenge or threaten the child presenting with the bullying behaviour with physical violence.
- e) Act in a manner which might appear aggressive and escalate the situation.

5. Pro-active Strategies

In order to minimise incidents of bullying, at Ballykeel Primary School we have agreed that some of the following pro-active strategies will be used:

- All staff are vigilant for early signs of distress in pupils on the playground and general school environment.
- All staff listen, believe, act.
- A "Helping Hands" information board is clearly displayed at all times with details of the safeguarding team in school and other agency contact details that the children may find useful.
- The designated and deputy designated teachers for child protection are clearly displayed on signs throughout the school.
- Awareness of anti-bullying week in November and activities to support it.
- Posters in school advertising promoting positive behaviour and dissuading children from bullying.
- Inclusion of school rule cards with an anti bullying message to all children.
- Times set aside, at lunchtime, for children to talk with the 'Talk to me' teacher by self referral using the "Talk to me" red box.
- Inclusion of anti-bullying lessons into the PDMU programme.
- Special events held such as 'Be Loving and Understanding to Everyone' day (BLUE day), Kindness day, special confidence boosting club for P.4s and outside agencies such as Childline, P.S.N.I and Women's Aid delivering "Bully busters" to classes.
- Involvement in 'Take 5 steps to wellbeing' and Pupil Champions from P.4 – 7.

- Close links are very much encouraged between school and home to ensure good parental communication.
- Circle time is regularly used in every class throughout the school.
- The Childline telephone number is displayed clearly around the school.
- The School Council used as an open forum for the sharing of ideas or concerns, and council members are anti bullying buddies.
- A wide range of rewards to promote positive behaviour is firmly established within our school e.g. pupil of the week/month and positive behaviour on the playground award.
- Cyber Bullying awareness workshops and Safer Internet events.
- Securus software monitoring online behaviour.
- School Assemblies – addressing bullying / providing anti-bullying strategies.
- Promotion of playground friends/ buddy bus stop area.
- Awareness raising e.g. P.1 parent induction, school policies, newsletters, Ballykeel Bulletin, website. Posters in school advertising promoting positive behaviour and dissuading children from bullying. The School Council child friendly ‘Be a buddy not a bully’ shortened policy is displayed in corridors and classrooms.

Links with Other Policies

Ballykeel Primary School’s Anti Bullying policy is set in the context of our Pastoral Care programme and reflects our mission statement. It links with other policies such as; Safeguarding & Child Protection, Pastoral Care, Attendance, P.D.M.U. Special Educational Needs, Health & Safety, ICT (in particular online Safety), RSE and Positive Behaviour. It also reflects NI Anti Bullying guidance and the Addressing Bullying in Schools (Northern Ireland) Act 2016. This policy is evaluated, reviewed and updated annually taking into account the voice of pupils, parents, staff and governors through a range of consultations.

Useful websites & telephone numbers

Department of Education	www.deni.gov.uk
Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum	www.niabf.org.uk www.thinkuknow.org
Childline NI	0800 1111
NSPCC (Fullstop) campaign	0808 800 500

Appendix 1

Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers

Bullying is an issue throughout the community. To prevent bullying we must help our young children to build the skills to manage the situation.

Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others.

It can be **physical** (like hitting, pinching, pushing or taking things), **verbal** (like teasing, name calling, insulting or threatening) or **emotional / social** (like leaving individuals out, ignoring, stopping others befriending etc) or **cyber-bullying** (through text, e-mail and/or social networking sites including game sites with this facility). Although in the vast majority of cases bullying can be seen as repeated behaviour over a period of time, a one off incident may be deemed as bullying if viewed as serious or significant.

Below are some suggestions on how to help you and your child be able to recognise and know how to deal with 'bullying' situations:

- Ask what they think bullying is.
- Explain the different behaviours a child presenting with bullying behaviour can use.
- Talk about how children presenting with bullying behaviours affect others, and how important it is to care for other peoples' feelings.
- Look out for any signs your own child is being bullied (not wanting to go to school, or mix with others)
- Talk about ways to show confidence, (through body language, like standing tall, shoulders back, and head up) and that confident people are less likely to be bullied.
- Go through the following strategy, in case they are bullied or see other people being bullied:
 - Take a deep breath, stand up tall, look strong and confident.
 - Tell the child presenting with the bullying behaviour to stop at once.
 - Shout 'NO' and get away to a safe place.
 - Go to an adult they can trust (teacher, supervisor, parent).
 - Tell the adult the truth about what has happened.
 - Making sure your child is not bullying others is just as important.



The definition of a bully is someone who hurts someone else again and again, or something more serious that happens once in one of the ways below:

Cyber-bullying – through texting, social media, e mails and gaming

Physical – hurting someone through kicking, hitting, punching etc or damaging something that belongs to them

Verbal – saying mean, hurtful things to put someone down and hurt their feelings or embarrass them

Emotional – making someone feel uncomfortable, sad or unwanted by saying things about them or leaving them out.

BALLYKEEL P.S. DOES NOT TOLERATE ANY KIND OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR.

WE SAY NO TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR.

Do not keep it to yourself – You can talk to:

- Your family
- Your close friend
- Mrs Sheeran
- Your teacher or classroom assistant
- Mrs Thompson in P6 or P2 or Mrs Esler or Mrs Cumberland
- Mrs Young

In Ballykeel P.S. members of the School Council are anti-bullying buddies. These children are there to help others on the playground if they are needed.



Remember in Ballykeel P.S. we always try to be a buddy.

BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form

Incident Date:

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments

PART 1

ASSESSMENT OF CONCERN	Date:	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	
<p>Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:</p> <p><i>“bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">(a) <i>any verbal, written or electronic communication</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">(b) <i>any other act, or</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">(c) <i>any combination of those,</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>			
	Name(s)	Gender M / F	DOB/Year Group
Person(s) reporting concern			
Check records for previously recorded incidents			

BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff). Include dates of event(s), the type of information gathered and where the information is stored (i.e. on paper or in SIMS).

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met:
The school will treat any incident which meets these criteria as bullying behaviours.

Is the behaviour intentional?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour repeated?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	YES / NO
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	YES / NO

One-off Incident

When determining whether a one-off incident may be classified as bullying, the school shall take into consideration the following criteria and use the information gathered to inform and guide the decision making process:

Criteria:	Information gathered:
severity and significance of the incident	
evidence of pre-meditation	
Significant level of physical/emotional impact on individual/s	
Significant level of impact on wider school community	
Status/nature of previous relationships between those involved	
Records exist of previous incidents involving the individuals	

BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form

<p>YES the above criteria have been met and bullying behaviour has occurred.</p>	<p>NO the above criterial have not been met and bullying behaviour has not occurred.</p>
<p>The criteria having been met, proceed to complete Part 2 of this Bullying Concern Assessment Form</p>	<p>The criteria having not been met, proceed to record the details in the Behaviour Incident section of this Behaviour Management Module. Refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy of your school, continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate.</p>
<p>Agreed by:</p>	
<p>Status:</p>	
<p>On:</p>	

PART 2

2.1 Who was targeted by this behaviour?

Select one or more of the following:

- Individual to individual 1:1
- Individual to group
- Group to individual
- Group to group

2.2 In what way did the bullying behaviour present?

Select one or more of the following:

- Physical (includes for example, jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking)
- Any other physical contact (which may include use of weapons)
- Verbal (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)
- Indirect (includes omission, isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)
- Electronic (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)
- Written
- Other Acts - Please specify:

2.3 Motivation (underlying themes): this is not a definitive list

Select one or more of the following:

- Age
- Appearance
- Cultural
- Religion
- Political Affiliation
- Community background
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)
- Looked After Status (LAC)
- Peer Relationship Breakdown
- Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)
- Ability
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Not known
- Other – Please specify:

**BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form**

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent / carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carer:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 3B

**BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form**

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent / carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carer:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 4

**BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bullying Concern Assessment Form**

**REVIEW OF BULLYING
CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO
DATE**

Date of Review Meeting:

Part 4A Following the Review Meeting, to what extent have the success criteria been met?

- 1 – Fully
- 2 – Partially
- 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give details:

Part 4B If the success criteria have not been met, continue to:

- Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level
- Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention
- Follow Anti-bullying policy
- Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on
- Follow Safeguarding Policy
- Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- Engage with Board of Governors

Agreed by:

School	Signed: Date:
Parent	Signed: Date:
Pupil	Signed: Date: