



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*'A High Quality Education in a Caring Environment'*

## INTRODUCTION

At Moyle Primary School and Nursery Unit we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We are of the opinion that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment.

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## VALUES

1. Rules to keep us safe
2. Rules to keep us friends
3. Rules to help us learn

These values underpin all our school policies.

# CONTEXT

**This policy is informed and guided by current legislation and DE Guidance listed below:**

Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978 The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 Article 3 – see DE 1998/25

WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF PUPILS EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2003

THE EDUCATION (2006 ORDER) (COMMENCEMENT NO.2) ORDER (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2007

The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

## **DE Guidance:**

Pastoral Care in Schools: PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR DE, 2001

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools DE 2017 – to be read in conjunction with the following:

*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's (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017*

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019

## **International Context**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In accordance, this policy will place a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents. The Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit will record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

# ETHOS & PRINCIPLES

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We believe that the safety of our school community is paramount.

## **WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF PUPILS EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2003 states**

“Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care, child protection, pupil behaviour, health and well-being, safety and security.”

Accordingly, we are committed to a **preventative, responsive** and **restorative** anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.

“The Department is committed to encouraging all schools to find meaningful ways of giving their pupils a voice and of listening and responding to the views of young people”

**‘Every School a Good School’ The Governors’ Role: A Guide for Governors, DE, 2017.**

Hence we value the views and contributions of our pupils, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account. We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

## Consultation & Participation

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In compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 the Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit maximizes pupil, parent/carer and staff participation and engagement in the development of the Anti-Bullying Policy through focus groups, questionnaires, school council and representative members of staff involved in writing anti-bullying policy. All allegations of bullying behaviour will be responded to and the parents of the child and the child displaying bullying behaviour will be informed. Parent/carers and the children involved will all be made aware of the restorative support and interventions to be used in the reduction or elimination of bullying behaviour.

# What is Bullying?

**The Addressing bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 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.**

In accordance with the above legal definition; bullying is a behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

We recognise there are instances of one-off incidents that the Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit will consider as bullying.

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.

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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 other behaviours may be considered bullying behaviour.

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.

In determining 'harm' we define:

- Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.
- Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

# Signs of Bullying

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There are several signs which may indicate bullying. However, the following is not an exhaustive list of such signs and behaviours.

***Teachers and parents should realise that whilst these behaviours may be symptomatic of bullying, they may also be signs of other problems.***

## ***In School –***

- Increased or erratic absence from school
- Sudden deterioration in school performance including forgetfulness, distractibility, sudden loss of possessions, workbooks destroyed or defaced, spoilt packed lunches
- Reluctance to walk home at the same time as other pupils or to use the same route as others
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. nail biting, non-specific pains, headaches, stomach aches
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour e.g. temper flare up, abusive language or impulsive hitting out
- Asking to sit elsewhere in class – avoiding contact with certain other pupils
- Trying to avoid going out to play at break and lunch times and, if persuaded to, remaining close to an adult supervisor
- Unexplained bruising, cuts, etc
- Isolation and the desire to stay with adults
- Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her

## ***At Home –***

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school
  - Pattern of illness
  - Visible signs of distress
  - Bed wetting
  - Sleep walking
  - Continual need (increased requests) for extra money
  - Repeated loss of personal possessions
  - Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her
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# Preventive Measures

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We believe that the implementation of preventive measures is vital in our anti-bullying work within the Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit.

We will take the following steps:

- \* 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
- \* Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU.
- \* 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.
- \* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- \* Development of peer-led systems of School Council & School Ambassadors to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- \* Development of effective strategies for playground management; zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources, play bus stops and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils.
- \* Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- \* Provision of the extra- and co-curricular activities Homework Club, Friendship Group, Explorers Club, Allsorts, Breakfast Club, Hockey, Football, Art Club, Computer Club, Board Games Club aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks.
- \* 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.

The school recognises that mobile phones can be used when school is over to let parents know when a child needs to be picked up etc. We at Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones to school but will accept in unavoidable circumstances they are needed,

**PROVIDED:-**

**(a) it is understood that the school will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage**

**(b) it is left in the school office or with the class teacher during the school day**

Incidents of Electronic Bullying that happen outside of the school day are the responsibility of parents and guardians. At Moyle Primary School we encourage parents to adhere to the various social media guidelines regarding appropriate age use. Therefore, there are many online services that our school children should not be using. As a school we will only become involved in situations which impact on pupils in school and will liaise with parents and guardians accordingly.

The new legislation also gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. Schools should consider how to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This may include:

- \* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/PD/LLW, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- \* Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- \* Engagement 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.
- \* Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- \* Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy).



# Responsibility

Everyone in Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities.

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.
- \* report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.
- \* 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
- \* resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

We hope to react to incidents of bullying in ways which are supportive of all children, both the child who is experiencing bullying behaviours and the child displaying bullying type behaviour.

The Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit recognises that the speed of response is important and, wherever possible, incidents will be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation and time may be required to reach a resolution.

# Reporting a Bullying Concern

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Concerns can be raised with any staff member. The culture of Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit is on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils should be encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

Pupils reporting a concern:

- Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff
- By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team: Mrs Mann (Vice Principal), Mrs Ford-Hutchinson, Mrs Simpson or Mrs Wilkin.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Senior Leadership Team to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.
- Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

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 anyone.

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.

# Responding to a Bullying Concern

Staff are expected to respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner, with an expectation of change being achieved through implementing the procedures set out in the Positive Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policies.

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

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS)
- 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
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions (CPOMS)
- Review outcome of interventions
- Select and implement further intentions as necessary

If on the basis of the information gathered the criteria for bullying has not been met, the socially unacceptable behaviours will be dealt with under the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and addressed as appropriate, through the SEN Code of Practice & details recorded in SIMMS Behaviour Management Module.

“As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with accepted school policy (consequences) and procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try and change their unacceptable behaviour”

## **Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour, DE 2001.**

Therefore, within the school community we advocate a **restorative approach** to responding to bullying behaviour.

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. The Code of Practice is used to develop Action Plans for **BOTH** children experiencing bullying behaviours and pupil/s displaying bullying behaviours. Support details are recorded on the Bullying Concern Assessment Form.

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

## Responsibility of All Staff

Moyle Primary School expects all staff to listen to pupil's concerns and treat any bullying disclosures seriously and for teaching staff to record the concern via CPOMS and pass on concerns to the appropriate member of the pastoral team.

# Recording

In accordance with Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, The Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit will maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

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.

Records will be kept on CPOMS. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

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.

## **Professional Development of Staff**

The Moyle Primary School & Nursery Unit are committed to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions. We ensure that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching. CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

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## Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Pastoral Team, meet twice a month and review any pastoral concerns including accusations of bullying. The team will ensure that any children at risk are well supported and that interventions will be put in place if patterns and concerns are noted.

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

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before April 2024.

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## 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  
E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy  
Mobile Phone Policy  
Educational Visits  
Staff Code of Conduct

Policy Ratified by Board of Governors in April 22

Review due on or before April 2024.

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