



Lislagan Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy





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At Lislagan Primary School we believe that all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We advocate that all children have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment where feelings of positivity and self-worth can be nurtured and used to understand the complexities of bullying behaviour. We promote a culture of inclusiveness and actively encourage all pupils and staff to respect the individualities of our community.

Context

This policy is informed and guided by current legislation and DE guidance: -

The Legislative Context:

- ❖ The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- ❖ The Education & Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)
- ❖ The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012
- ❖ The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- ❖ The Human Rights Act 1998
- ❖ The Health & 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 Board 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 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 (e.g. school trip)
 - When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the ALC)
- ❖ 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 of 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 (A19)
 - Be protected from discrimination (A2)
 - Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and have their opinions take seriously (A.12)
 - Education (A.28)

Ethos & Principles

In Lislagan Primary School 'emotional intelligence' underpins all aspects of learning and the children are encouraged from the onset to discuss issues and recognise feelings in order to understand and manoeuvre the dynamics of social interactions both in school and in the wider community. We encourage children to 'speak out' and express their thoughts, feelings, fears, passions and agitations. We believe that through embracing, mentoring and living this ethos we are providing the children with the necessary competences to develop a positive mind-set. We foster the theory that positive thoughts and a positive mind-set will lead to positive actions and positive actions lead to a better world.

In Lislagan Primary School:

- ❖ We are committed to establishing a society where children and adults can live free and be kept safe from bullying
- ❖ We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child is safe and feels safe from bullying
- ❖ We believe that every child should be celebrated for their individuality and diversity
- ❖ We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school community
- ❖ We cherish the views and contributions of our children and show respect for their opinions and take on-board their input
- ❖ We believe in a collegiate approach to bullying and understand the role the school has to play in taking a stand against bullying
- ❖ We are committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Consultation and Precipitation

- ❖ NSPCC workshops with pupils
- ❖ Class based activities through PDMU
- ❖ Whole school questionnaires distributed to all pupils
- ❖ Lislagan School Council

Consultation with parents/carers will take place, for example

- ❖ Paper questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers
- ❖ Draft proposals placed on Ed Tap for feedback and comments

Staff

- ❖ Engagement activities for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- ❖ Staff Meetings

What is Bullying?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 states the legal definition of bullying as follows:

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.***

Bullying is 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.

Although Bullying has long been associated with repeated behaviour, there may be instances of one-off incidents that Lislagan Primary School may consider as bullying. When assessing a one-off incident, in regards to making a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, we shall consider the following criteria:

- ❖ severity and significance of the incident
- ❖ evidence of pre-meditation
- ❖ impact of the incident on the individual/s (physical/emotional well-being)
- ❖ impact of the incident on the wider school community
- ❖ previous relationships between those involved
- ❖ any previous incidents involving the individuals
- ❖ previous incidents involving parental disputes

Incidents that are not deemed bullying behaviour will be addressed through the Positive Behaviour Policy!

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviours:

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 spreading falsehoods about others
- ❖ encouraging other pupils to dislike another pupil/s
- ❖ dominating others with aggressive language

Physical acts

- ❖ hitting
- ❖ kicking
- ❖ pushing
- ❖ shoving
- ❖ material harm, such as taking/hiding/stealing money or possessions
- ❖ causing damage to possessions

Omission

- ❖ 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 (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone else

As a Board of Governors, principal and staff we would like to stipulate that the list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Understanding

We believe that understanding how and why a bullying incident occurs through the use of aggressive behaviour is key in knowing how to identify and handle the

situation. There are various reasons why bullying behaviour is motivated and perpetuated. These include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Lack of attention from home
- ❖ Lack of understanding of the conventions of socialisation
- ❖ Fulfil a need for feeling important/valued
- ❖ Recipient of bullying
- ❖ Age
- ❖ Appearance
- ❖ Relationships with peers
- ❖ Community background
- ❖ Political affiliation
- ❖ Gender identity
- ❖ Sexual orientation
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Ability
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Looked After Child status
- ❖ Young Carer status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that as a school community we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, we will abstain from referring to a child as a 'bully', and refrain from using the word 'a victim'. Instead we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child through the following statements:

- ❖ A child displaying bullying behaviours
- ❖ A child experiencing bullying behaviours

Definition

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.***

Preventative Measures

As a school community we are acutely aware that it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that we focus on preventative strategies and programmes to ensure that our children are not only safe from bullying behaviours but they have a clear understanding of our anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider community. In line with current legalisation, the following actions will be used to ensure this ethos is embedded within the mind-set of all stakeholders.

- ❖ Raise awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- ❖ Promotion of anti-bullying messages within the physical environment
- ❖ Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum with the inclusion of age appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, emotional intelligence, positive behaviour and inclusion
- ❖ Addressing issues such as the different forms of bullying, including the why and how it can happen through our PDMU programme
- ❖ Participating in Anti-Bullying Week
- ❖ Engaging in Safer Internet Day
- ❖ School Council to support and deliver key anti-bullying messages within the school
- ❖ Effective playground strategies to incorporate zoning of areas, buddy bench and a variety of play options to meet the needs of all children
- ❖ Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying
- ❖ Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured time (break and lunch)
- ❖ Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks.

Although all pupils are transported to school by their parents and ushered into school through our Meet and Greet System, we are aware that the children need to be ready for the transition to secondary level education. We aim to develop this through our ongoing:

- ❖ Development of a culture where our children take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community.

This will include regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations when using transport for trips

- ❖ Children will be expected to enter and leave the school grounds with respect and courtesy for others. Staff will be on duty to assist during hand over times
- ❖ Children will be expected to behave during school visits to the local swimming pool, football tournaments, educational visits and measures will be in place for children to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable of their peers.

The legislation also gives Lislagan Primary School the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during the term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. At Lislagan we intend to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support our children to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful manner through the following: -

- ❖ Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/ICT, including an understanding of how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use
- ❖ Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities
- ❖ Engagement with statutory and voluntary agencies i.e., C2k, PSNI, PHA, CPSS etc., to support the promotion of key messages
- ❖ Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages
- ❖ Using the environment to promote key messages throughout the year
- ❖ Development and implementation of policies supporting pastoral care and safeguarding
- ❖ Being aware of the speed of changes associated with developing technology and implementing speedy, effective updates when necessary.

Responsibility

The Board of Governors, Principal and all staff of Lislagan Primary School believe that all stakeholders have the responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all. Everyone including pupils, parents/carers and staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

As outlined in our Vision and Mission Statement we advocate working together to empower and encourage our children to be confident, creative, passionate,

tolerant, resilient individuals equipped to succeed in today's diverse society. We strive to instil these qualities through our Mission Statement of making 'learning a life-long habit'. Taking responsibility for our actions is embedded in the core of empowerment for learning and therefore all stakeholders have the responsibility to work together to: -

- ❖ Foster positive self-esteem
- ❖ Behave towards others in a mutually respectful manner
- ❖ Model high standards of personal 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 reoccurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

Reporting a Bullying Concern

Transparency and trust are the fundamental elements necessary for reporting a bullying concern. Reporting individuals must have the **confidence & security** that being open and honest is treated with respect and sensitivity. The reporting individual does not necessarily have to be the person who is experiencing the bullying behaviour but can be **ANY** concerned individual.

Pupil Reporting a Concern

Although, the Child Protection notice board does highlight the DT & DDT as key individuals in Safe Guarding, in Lislagan Primary School the language of **'trusted adult'** is introduced from Day 1 and refers to any adult who wears the Lislagan Lanyard. We acknowledge the importance of relationships and are united in recognising that children need to talk with whom they feel most comfortable and safe whether this is the Principal, Teacher, Classroom Assistant, Dinner Supervisor or Caretaker. ***Relationships before Rank is the norm.*** Staff are given training in all elements of safe-guarding and understand the message of children **'getting help'** rather than **'telling tales'**. All adults regard trust as a privilege and strive to earn the respect of the children.

Children may wish to raise concerns through the following:

- ❖ Verbal communication - talking with a member of staff
- ❖ Written communication – (homework diary entry, post-it note in book, letter, drawing etc.)
- ❖ Through an email to a c2k staff account
- ❖ Peg in the Bucket or Worry Box

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

It is the responsibilities of parents/carers to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/Carers are advised of the need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and it is their duty to dissuade retaliation, whether verbal or physical.

Parents/Carers may wish to raise concerns through the following: -

- ❖ Bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- ❖ Where the parent/carer is dissatisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal
- ❖ Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

Parents are furnished with a complaints procedure policy when child enters schools. They can however request a duplicate if it is lost or mislaid.

Although the school recognises that the majority of reports of bullying behaviour will be made through internal sources we are open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parent/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and feedback will be made to the person who has made the report. We must however state that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil will be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carer.

Responding to a Bullying Concern

In Lislagan we will respond to any bullying concerns identified using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour Resource through:

- ❖ Clarifying facts and perceptions
- ❖ Checking records
- ❖ Assessing the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
- ❖ Identifying any these or motivating factors
- ❖ Identifying the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- ❖ Identifying the intervention level
- ❖ Selecting and implementing 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 the effectiveness of interventions
- ❖ Review the outcome of interventions
- ❖ Select and implement further intentions as necessary

Lislagan Primary School advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour and will model the interventions outlined in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the well-being of those involved. (Appendix 2)

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

Recording

As set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI)2016, Lislagan 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

*Until SIMS training for staff has been updated and the staff are confident with the use of SIMS Behaviour Management Module for record keeping, paper copies will be used. These copies will be stored and kept in a locked filing cabinet within the School Strong Room.

When electronic record keeping is established these records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in our school. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All paper records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the Retention and Disposal of Documents. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of the anti-bullying policy and practice within our school.

Professional Development of Staff

As a school we recognise the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Therefore, in line with our 'life-longing learning' beliefs we will:

- ❖ Ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provision
- ❖ Ensuring that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff –teaching and non-teaching
- ❖ Records of training will be kept and updated regularly
- ❖ Noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedure

Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal will monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy. To monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy appropriately, the Board of Governors will:

- ❖ 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 preventative measure in place for the prevention of bullying behaviour
- ❖ Assess the effectiveness of the strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour
- ❖ Ensure that the anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed on a four-year cycle or sooner if directed by the Department of Education in light of new guidance.

This Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed as required, and in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before June 2015.

Links to Other Policies

In development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, The Board of Governors has been conscious of the inextricable links to following policies:

- ❖ Positive Behaviour Policy
- ❖ Pastoral Care Policy
- ❖ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ❖ Special Education Needs Policy
- ❖ Relationships and Sexuality Education
- ❖ E-Safety and Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- ❖ Mobile Phone Policy
- ❖ Staff Code of conduct