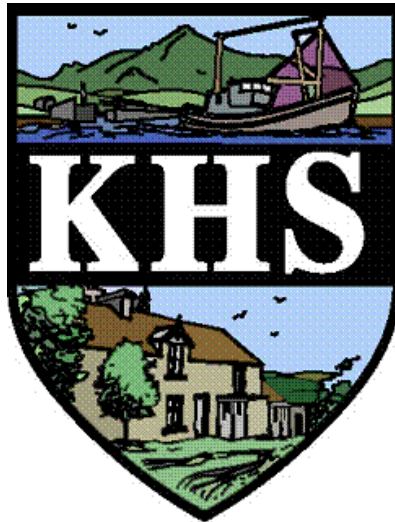


KILKEEL HIGH SCHOOL



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

September 2020

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed following consultation with a range of stakeholders. Its overall purpose is to promote an anti-bullying culture in Kilkeel High School and to help staff provide support to pupils who have experienced bullying behaviour and pupils who display bullying behaviours.

Pastoral Care in Schools; Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001) Paragraph 125 states the following:

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

RATIONALE

Kilkeel High School believes that its students and staffs have the right to learn and work in a secure and caring environment without the fear of being bullied. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. Bullying is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. Kilkeel High School is completely opposed to all forms of bullying behaviour.

At Kilkeel High School we believe that all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment.

MISSION STATEMENT

Kilkeel High School’s mission statement is as follows:

“Offering high quality education within a caring community whose values are based on Christian principles”

In keeping with our mission statement we will endeavour to work toward an anti-bullying culture within our school, where pupils are confident in expressing their views, knowing that they will be listened to, respected and acted upon. To this end we will:

- Ensure that school is an orderly and disciplined community in which consideration for others, courtesy and good manners are encouraged and a positive attitude towards discipline, conduct and authority are sustained.
- Provide a supportive learning environment which cultivates self-esteem and enables students of all abilities to develop confidence, act with initiative and adopt positive attitudes towards themselves and others.
- Develop effective two-way channels of communication and an active partnership between home, school and community.

CONTEXT

This policy has been developed within the following contexts and frameworks:

The Legislative Context:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Education and Libraries order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)

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

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The Human Rights Act 1998

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

The Policy and Guidance Context:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards 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)

ETHOS

- We are committed to a society where young people can live free and safe from bullying.
- We believe every young person should be celebrated in their diversity.
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
- We value the views and contributions of young people. We will actively seek these views and will respect and take them into account.
- We understand that everyone within the school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides a legal 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.

Therefore, bullying is a behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

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

- a. Verbal or written acts e.g. saying mean and hurtful things to, or about others, making fun of others, calling another pupil mean and hurtful names, telling lies or spreading false rumours about others, trying to make others dislike another pupil/s
- b. Physical acts e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, taking/stealing money or possessions, causing damage to possessions.
- c. Omission (exclusion) e.g. leaving someone out, refusing to include someone in group work
- d. Electronic acts e.g. 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

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

While bullying is usually a repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying. When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, staff 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 the wider school community
- Previous relationships between those involved
- Any previous incidents involving those individuals

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Intention to harm may be determined by the continuation of identified bullying behaviour after the school has implemented interventions to respond to the situation, resolve the concern and restore the relationships. In determining intent to cause harm, staff will use their discretion in assessing a pupil's capacity to understand the impact of their behaviours e.g. due to development age, disability or delay.

In defining '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.

There may be several motivations behind bullying, including, but not limited to:

Age	Appearance
Breakdown in peer relationships	Community background
Political affiliation	Race
Gender identity	Disability/SEN
Sexual Orientation	Ability
Pregnancy	Looked After Child Status
Marital Status	Young Carer Status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that 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 refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child e.g. a child displaying bullying behaviours or a child experiencing bullying behaviours.

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY WILL BE APPLIED

1. On the school premises during the school day. This includes the main school building, the mobiles and all outside areas of the school grounds.
2. While travelling to and from school during the school term. While pupils are travelling to and from school they must follow the school's code of conduct and incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same way as if they occurred on school grounds.
3. While the pupil is in lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school e.g. school trips and external events.
4. Education provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided away from the school premises e.g. another school in the Area Learning Community, a Further Education College, EOTAS centres.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The school aims to provide a safe and caring community, through an ethos which promotes consideration for others, courtesy and good manners. All students benefit from a comprehensive and accessible support structure through a dedicated team including Form Tutors, Year Heads, Senior Teachers, Vice-Principals and the Principal. A school counsellor is also available.

Under the legislation, the focus of anti-bullying should be on prevention. Kilkeel High School has an ongoing range of preventative measures including:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in our Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum and class based activities
- Addressing issues such as various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen through Personal Development classes
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive Shared Education projects and classes, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity
- Actively promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing
- Engagement with key national and regional campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day, Kindness Week
- Development of peer-led systems e.g. The Diana Award's Anti-bullying Ambassadors, Sixth Form Buddy System
- Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying
- Support of external agencies e.g. PSNI
- In-service training for staff
- Provision and promotion of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks

There are a number of preventative measures in place to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school:

- 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 while travelling to and from school.
- Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of peers during the journey to and from school e.g. peer monitoring systems on buses, anti-bullying email address to report concerns.
- Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. Translink, EA Transport) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of concerns.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (e.g. local shops and service providers), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home.

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. Kilkeel High School actively works to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and supports students to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way, including:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through Personal Development classes, including 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 (e.g. C2K, PSNI, Public Health Agency) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Use of Securix (online monitoring of pupils' Computer usage within the school network)
- Development and implementation of e-safety policies e.g. Acceptable Use, Bring Your Own Device

RESPONSIBILITY

Everyone has a responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

Everyone in the school community (including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school) is 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, 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 is being 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 recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Pupils can raise a concern about a potential bullying situation with any member of staff that they trust, including teaching and non-teaching staff. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Verbally – talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff
- By sending an email to a member of staff
- By sending an email to the dedicated anti-bullying email address:
5210016AntiBullying@c2kni.net
- By posting a comment in the letter box at the General Office

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Pupils must not see this as 'telling' but rather as 'getting help'. As such, pupils should be encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents/carers have a responsibility to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. They should also encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

To report a concern, a parent/carer should:

- Report all bullying concerns to the Form Teacher, in the first instance.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to a Year Head/Senior Teacher (KS3 – Mr Pobloth, KS4 – Mr Kincaid).
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has not been taken, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Vice-Principal/c Pastoral Care (Mrs C McAtee).
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has not been taken, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal (Mr V Coert).

Where a parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately dealt with, Kilkeel High School's complaints procedure should be followed. The Complaints Policy is available from the school, by making contact with the General Office.

While the majority of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, Kilkeel High School is open to receiving such reports from anyone who has a concern.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must be noted that 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

The focus of any intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. In responding to bullying concerns, staff must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

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

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS/BMM)

- 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 not listed in the NIABF's Effective Responses Resource
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- Review outcome of interventions
- Select and implement further interventions, as necessary

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 concerned. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

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

RECORDING

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- How the bullying behaviour was displayed
- The motivation for the behaviour
- How each incident was addressed by the school
- The outcome of the interventions employed

Records will be kept in the antibullying file in the Vice-Principal's office.

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

Kilkeel High School is committed to providing appropriate and adequate training for staff including:

- A commitment to ensuring staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of our ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
- Noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
- Ensuring that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
- Keeping and regularly updating CPD records

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF POLICY

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 its effectiveness, 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

The Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before 30 September 2023.

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
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- E-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Retention and Disposal of Records Policy