

Richmond Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised Spring Term 2018

Richmond Primary School

Anti-bullying policy

1. School Mission Statement

Richmond Primary School will provide a friendly, family orientated, caring, happy and secure environment where children, staff and parents work actively in partnership.

High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal academic and social goals.

The safety, welfare and personal development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. We believe in the dignity and worth of each individual and in the development of the whole person.

All members of staff share these values and work to ensure a pupil-centred approach in which caring is a shared responsibility of all staff.

These values underpin and shape all our school policies.

2. Aims and objectives of our anti-bullying policy

We believe that everyone in Richmond Primary School – pupils and staff (teaching and non-teaching), has the right to work, learn and teach in a supportive, caring and safe environment which is free from intimidation and fear.

Accordingly, we will work to create an environment within which positive relationships will be fostered and violent behaviour of any sort will be unacceptable.

We believe that every member of the school community has the right to:

- feel safe and secure
- be treated with respect and courtesy
- have equal opportunities, regardless of sex, race, religion or ability
- be able to learn
- be valued as a member of the school community.
- be listened to and supported

Within such an environment, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated as it is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by.

Should bullying occur, the needs of the child who has been bullied will be paramount, and the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the situation is resolved.

The school will seek to involve and inform parents and pupils of its anti-bullying policy and procedures.

Teachers will undertake training and receive support from the relevant agencies.

3. Links with other school policies

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care Policy.

It links with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies.

It links with the Positive Behaviour Policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the rewards and sanctions which will be used as part of the disciplinary process.

It also links with our Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

4. Definition of bullying behaviour

The Department of Education defines bullying in its document – ‘Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection’ as, “deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself”.

NIABF defines bullying as the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

In child's language - bullying is when a child or group of children keep picking on someone repeatedly because he/she/they think they're cooler, smarter, stronger or better than them.

Bullying is a form of aggressive, hurtful behaviour which is persistent and unprovoked. It involves an abuse of power. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal and emotional. Examples of bullying behaviour include:

***Physical:** kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping*

***Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours*

***Emotional:** excluding from play, threatening, pulling faces*

***E-bullying:** through text messages and use of internet*

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. Bullying behaviour usually has the following four features.

1. It is repetitive and persistent – though sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
2. It is intentionally harmful – though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are responsible.
3. It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
4. It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

It is important that everyone - pupils, parents/carers, governors and staff in Richmond Primary School:

- Recognise the importance of distinguishing between those behaviours which while undesirable and unacceptable do not constitute bullying from those which are undesirable and unacceptable and do constitute bullying because they are proven to be deliberate, hurtful, targeted and repeated over a period of time
- are sensitive to different perspectives
- understand bullying can take many forms from teasing and spreading rumours, to causing physical harm. It includes name calling and verbal abuse (face to face, in writing, by phone, on-line, by text message or making comments on social networking sites), mocking or taunting, hitting, writing or drawing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups, and threatening others including demanding money.

5. Preventive strategies

We believe that the implementation of preventive measures will help to reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour.

We will take the following steps:

Ethos and pastoral care:

We will seek to be a "listening school", in which pupils are encouraged to share and express their feelings, fears and concerns.

We will promote and reward positive behaviour i.e. house points, Kindness Award, certificates, Pupil of the Month shields etc.

Curriculum:

Through Circle Time and PDMU we will provide a cross-curricular safety teaching programme. This programme will help children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness, friendship seeking and communication skills. We avail of the services of the PSNI School

Liaison Officer, Anti-Bullying week and Pupil Personal Development Service. We provide opportunities for developing positive peer relationships.

Supervision:

We will promote positive play experiences and will train teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors in strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying. A buddy system operates in the early weeks of school for Primary 1 and other new pupils.

Partnerships:

We will encourage close co-operation between school and home in the knowledge that the problem of bullying can only be prevented with "everyone on board". The school will foster a close working relationship with outside agencies whose interventions can make a meaningful contribution to challenging bullying behaviour:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Behaviour Support Team
- PSNI
- Social Workers
- Educational Welfare Service

Parents will be informed of any bullying regarding their child. The school will take reasonable steps to prevent bullying occurring. Any bullying incident that is found to have taken place will be dealt with in line with the school's policy.

6. Agreed code of conduct for the school community

Pupils:

- Pupils have an entitlement to be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.
- Pupils have a responsibility to treat all other pupils, teachers and other staff with respect. They have a responsibility to refrain from engaging in bullying behaviour and to report it if they are aware of it occurring.
- Pupils must be careful to whom they give their mobile Number and email address. If they receive an offensive or bullying message they should keep a record of time and date sent and report it.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- report concerns of bullying to staff at once or as soon as is practical. This will help staff to investigate concerns quickly and without information potentially being distorted.

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of persons displaying bullying behaviour 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.

Parents:

Parents have an entitlement to expect that their child will be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs.

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child co-operates with teachers, other staff and other pupils. They have a responsibility to inform the school of any incidents of bullying which they are aware of.

The Responsibilities of Parents

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

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- advising their children to report any bullying to the Principal or class teacher or any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. Parents should also explain to their children the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- checking the facts – before determining whether bullying has occurred i.e. the behaviour was deliberate, hurtful, targeted and repeated over a period of time.
- 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 bullies themselves.

Teachers and other staff:

Teachers and other adults in the school community have an entitlement to work in an environment which is characterised by respect and caring for all.

Teachers and other adults in the school community have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of such an environment and to work for the wellbeing of all pupils.

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will;

- be consistent in approach when dealing with bullying concerns / behaviour;
- foster in our pupil's self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
- discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the person displaying 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;
- encourage pupils to come forward with information about possible incidents of bullying and to ensure that pupils are able to discuss issues of bullying;
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively;
- check all facts before determining whether or not bullying has taken place;
- report suspected cases of bullying to Mrs Robinson (Principal), Miss Marshall (Designated Teacher) or Miss Lucas (Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection);
- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;

- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures. (Dept. Educ. Guidelines – Pastoral Care in school; Promoting Positive Behaviour);
- make use of the curriculum to address issues of bullying and how pupils can deal with it (Circle Time and the learning area of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding are particularly relevant in addressing the needs of the children)
 - make use of inter-board Anti-Bullying Week materials (NIABF).

Everyone should:

Work together to combat bullying and aim to eradicate it altogether.

Be calm

Be positive

Be assertive

Be confident

Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying

Assess the situation and its severity level

7. Procedures for dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, including contact with parents and external agencies

Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned. All reports of bullying will be taken seriously.

The following steps will be followed.

Reporting of an incident

When a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the following people:

The teacher of any child involved

The Principal

The designated teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Investigation of an alleged bullying incident

This will normally be carried out by the designated teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection and /or the Principal, in co-operation with any class teachers concerned.

Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's Bullying Concern Assessment Form. Only facts will be gathered and recorded. Then the designated teacher will check that the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in the current policy and also check if there are records for previous incidents.

On the basis of the initial assessment the teacher will:

- choose an appropriate intervention level. The intervention level will be determined by the nature, the frequency and the duration of the bullying behaviour and the perceptions of the child being bullied.
- the school will try to ensure effective communication amongst all parties
- consider need for parental involvement, SENCO, Risk Assessment, External Agency involvement

Agreeing a plan for resolution

By working with the pupils concerned, the designated teacher will devise a plan for resolution of the conflict. This plan, depending on level of intervention, will include targets for acceptable behaviour and will set out support measures which will be provided for the pupils concerned.

Any disciplinary action required will use the system of sanctions which is set out in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. Examples of sanctions which could be used would range from immediate verbal checking of misbehaviour, loss of freedom e.g. break-time or lunch-time (subject to child getting sufficient time for eating his/her meal and for toileting), being referred to the principal, a behaviour report and temporary removal of a pupil from his/her peers into another class, suspension for a specific time or expulsion through the EA agreed procedures.

Reviewing the situation

The situation will be monitored and formally reviewed within one month of the initial report. This will be done by the designated teacher, in co-operation with the other teachers, pupils and parents concerned.

Involvement of other agencies in provision of support

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including the Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, the Educational Psychology Service, the EA's Pupil Personal Development Service and NSPCC. In most instances, the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources. However, if it becomes clear at step 3 or 4 that outside help is needed, the school will not hesitate to avail of it.

Professional Development

Staff avails of relevant training / courses when offered.

8. Monitoring and review of the anti-bullying policy

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection. This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed every two years by the staff and the Board of Governors. Feedback will be provided to the Board of Governors regarding changes in procedures, sanctions, supervision levels etc. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Governors, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils in line with Department of Education recommendations (Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour 2001). This policy will be reviewed in Spring Term 2020.

Links to other School Policies

The school's anti-bullying policy is one of a number of initiatives undertaken by Richmond Primary to ensure that each pupil is secure and happy at school and able to function at their optimum level, both physically and academically. The Anti-Bullying Policy has close links with other school policies which include:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable use of Internet Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Attendance Policy

9. Communication

Communication to Parents

Parents of all P1 children will be issued annually with a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Communication to permanent teaching staff / non-teaching staff

A copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy will be issued to all permanent teaching staff and permanent non-teaching staff.

Communication to temporary teaching staff / non-teaching staff

The Principal will be responsible for briefing temporary teaching staff and temporary non-teaching staff on contents and school procedures of Anti-Bullying Policy.

10. Consultation

This policy was produce after consultation with Board of Governors, Staff, Parents and Pupils.

Chair of Governors:

Principal

Date:

Richmond Primary School



Anti-Bullying Charter

Bullying of any sort is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated in Richmond Primary School. The following steps are undertaken to ensure that bullying should rarely happen and is stopped immediately:

Recognition: Bullying is, *“deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself”*. (Pastoral Care in School: Child Protection (DENI) – Circular 1999/10)

Caring Atmosphere: Children are reminded regularly of the importance of working together in harmony and all reports of bullying are taken seriously. Bullies are made aware of the total unacceptability of their actions.

Positive Anti-Bullying Procedures: Every opportunity is used to reinforce the anti-social nature of bullying and the consequences in terms of suffering.

The atmosphere in the school is such that bullying is seen as unacceptable and all incidents of it are dealt with promptly.

Supervisors and teachers look out for children not playing with others and identify the reasons.

Assemblies are used to reinforce the importance of looking after younger children and of reporting any incidents of bullying promptly.

A list of instructions is displayed in prominent locations in the school corridors informing children what to do and who to speak to, if they are unhappy in school.

We are continually working with staff, pupils and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Our school community:

discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis. Good practice suggests the policy should be reviewed on average every two years and approved by the **Board of Governors**;

supports **staff** to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately;

ensures that **pupils** are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, that pupils feel safe to learn and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy;

reports back quickly to parents / guardians regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents / carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

seeks to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilises the support of the **Education Authority and other relevant organisations** when appropriate.

Anti-Bullying: A charter for Action

Chair of Governors:

Principal

Date:

Signs of Bullying Behaviour

The signs below may indicate that a child is being bullied at school. It is important to look for changes in behaviour patterns rather than jump to conclusions.

Behavioural

- Unwilling to come to school;
- Frightened of walking to or from school/changes routes
- Comes to school late
- Avoids friends and others
- Performs poorly in class
- Poor concentration
- Misplaces books or equipment
- Continually loses money
- Refuses to tell anyone what is wrong
- Becomes emotionally volatile

Physical

- Has mystery illness
- Frequently feels sick in class
- Has possessions which go missing
- Has damaged clothes or belongings
- Socially isolated
- Has physical injuries which they are reluctant to explain

Emotional

- Becomes withdrawn
- Becomes startled easily
- Irritable and aggressive
- Loses confidence
- Bursts into tears in class
- Becomes depressed
- Has low self-esteem