

# Bullying Prevention Policy



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

We believe that all pupils should be educated in an atmosphere in which they feel valued, secure and supported by each member of the school community. A central aim of the policy is to establish an ethos based on mutual respect, consideration and positive relationships, where the needs of each individual are recognised and where all members are treated fairly and as individuals, irrespective of socio-economic background, race, religious beliefs, age or disability.

At Crawfordsburn Primary School we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. Everyone in the school community is valued and is entitled to have their rights protected. They have the right to learn and work in a secure and caring environment and consequently each individual has the responsibility to contribute to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

### **Legislation**

This policy has been developed consistent with the related legislation. The specific articles of the Legislation and policy/guidance framework applicable include the following:

#### **The Legislative Context:**

- 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
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

#### **The Policy and Guidance Context**

- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 statutory Guidance for schools and Boards of Governors 2019.
- 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. Oh Health, Social Services and public Safety 2016.
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017

#### **The International Context**

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

## **Duties placed on Boards of Governors**

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 outlines the following:

- Duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- Duty to keep a record of incidents of all of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil at the school.

Welfare and protection of pupils' education and libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003-DE Circular number 2003/13-which amends Article 3 of 1998 N.I Order as follows

Article 17 Duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils outlines the following:

The Board of Governors is required to:

- 'safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school' (Article 17:2)
- Consult with registered pupils on the general principles which will be reflected in the school's discipline policy (Article 19: 13 & 14)

## **Duties placed on the Principal/ the School**

Article 17 Duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils outlines the following:

The Principal:

- when deciding on measure which will be used to encourage good behaviour in the school must specifically include measures to prevent bullying among pupils (Article 19:14)
- before deciding on measures to encourage good behaviour must consult with pupils registered at the school and their parents' (Article 19:14)

The School:

Schools must record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.

- In school, during the school day
- While travelling to and from school
- When under control of school staff, but away from school (eg. school trip)
- When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere

**The policy be updated at least every four years.**

Implications arising: The Principal and Board of Governors 'will need to be satisfied that their current discipline policy deals with the PREVENTION of BULLYING among pupils in a sufficiently clear and robust way to satisfy the new legal requirement' (Article 19:15)

## **Ethos and Principles**

Crawfordsburn Primary School aspires to create an ethos and environment wherein all members of the community feel cared for, are able to express themselves creatively and can develop their confidence. A robust anti-bullying policy is central to this ethos.

## **The Consultation and Participation Process**

This Policy has been developed in consultation with registered pupils, their parents/carers, all staff and is in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016. The consultation process with pupils included:

- Consultation with the student council;
- Class based activities (in personal development/citizenship lessons) to discuss and understand the definition of bullying;
- School assemblies to reiterate the school's understood definition of bullying and the consequences of engaging in this style of negative behaviour.

The consultation with parents included:

- Consultation period for feedback from wider parent body via parental newsletter.

The consultation with all staff included:

- Detailed discussion at Safeguarding Team and SLT meetings;
- Consultation period re Policy for feedback from staff.

We at Crawfordsburn Primary School support and work to create an ethos of participation. Pupils will be involved in the creation and maintenance of the School's anti-bullying culture through active participation in the following areas:

- The annual NIABF Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Ongoing engagement with and support from our community PSNI officers.
- Continued use of pupil surveys/questionnaires distributed to pupils, parents and whole school staff.
- Taught pastoral programmes such as Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and engagement with the REACH Youth Service.
- Home/ School Liaison.
- Obtaining the views of Student Council on an ongoing basis
- On-going Professional Development and support for staff
- Monitoring effectiveness of our preventative policy at staff, SLT and governor level.
- Formal review/update of policy every 4 years or as required, formally adopted by Board of Governors, signed and dated.

## **Guiding Principles**

In order to promote and sustain good behaviour in Schools: DE Circular 1998/25 – Article 3 requires the Board of Governors and Principal work to:

- 'ensure that policies and procedures designed to promote good behaviour and discipline are pursued at school'.

In accordance with the Welfare and Protection of Pupils education and libraries (Northern Ireland) order 2003: DE Circular Number 2003/13- Article 17:2 The Board of Governors will:

- 'Safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school' (Article 17:2)

## **What is Bullying?**

The legal definition of bullying as laid out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 is:

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 a 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 Behaviour Defined**

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.

While bullying is usually 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, 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.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered as 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;
  - trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s.

- Physical acts:
  - Jabbing;
  - Spitting
  - Hitting;
  - Kicking;
  - Pushing;
  - Shoving;
  - Material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions.
  
- Indirect: Omission (Exclusion):
  - Leaving someone out of a game;
  - Refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others,
  - Repeatedly refusing to include a pupil in group work, despite teacher intervention.
  
- 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.

The use of electronic communication as a method of bullying behaviour is most commonly identified as cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by an individual or group against a target using, for example, electronic forms of contact and social media platforms.

The Act acknowledges that various methods of bullying behaviour can occur separately or together. It is important to note that the above lists are not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Although children experiencing bullying behaviours often remain silent, changes of mood and behaviour can be indicative of their suffering. Those experiencing bullying behaviours can feel helpless and overwhelmed by the power that the person displaying bullying behaviours exercises. This leads to insecurity, increased fear, loss of confidence and consequent lowering of self-esteem. Thus, the child experiencing bullying behaviours becomes more vulnerable. Vigilance with regards to any behavioural change is important as early intervention is crucial.

### **Motivations behind Bullying**

The various motivations behind bullying, including those named in The Addressing Bullying in schools Act (NI) 2016. These include, but are not limited to:

- Age
- Appearance
- Breakdown in peer relationships

- Community background
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy
- Marital status
- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Ability
- Looked After Child status
- Young carer status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For this reason, during the investigation we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'. Instead, we will refer the child's behaviours and the general situation surrounding that child.

Staff investigating incidents will therefore be sensitive with language and will talk of, 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 alleged bullying incidents.

As set out in the DE Guidance, 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**

Preventative measures set in place at Crawfordsburn Primary School aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider community. The focus of all anti-bullying work should be on prevention. Below are some examples of how we promote this ethos:

- Awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy, are raised via class teacher and class charter, PDMU, and whole school assemblies.
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages (where possible) through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion.
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen through PDMU and our Anti-Bullying Week.

- Through the preventative curriculum, actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing.
- Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement in Key national and regional campaigns, e.g. World Mental Health Day.
- Development of peer-led systems (e.g. Student Council, Playground Buddies) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school.
- Focused assemblies (Whole School) to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times.
- Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. E.g. sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways we can further build upon this related specifically on the journey **to and from school**. This includes:

- Development of a culture where CPS 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.
- CPS pupils empowered to support those displaying inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour during the journey to and from school via senior pupil influence.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (e.g. local shops, service providers and residents, etc.), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.

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. CPS will endeavour to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support 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, 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 (e.g. C2k, PSNI, 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 (e.g. Acceptable use Internet Policy, Social Media Policy, Mobile Phone Policy etc.)



## **Responsibility**

Everyone at CPS has responsibility (teaching, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents) for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

All members of 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 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 recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties.

## **Reporting a Bullying Concern**

There are a number of ways in which pupils, parents and anyone else with concerns can make these known to the school.

### A. Pupils Reporting a Concern

At Crawfordsburn Primary School pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff they feel comfortable with if they have any concerns or worries. This will normally be either their class teacher or classroom assistant. Pupils are also encouraged to speak directly to a member of the safeguarding team. This is reinforced regularly in class, during assemblies and on corridor displays.

Pupils can raise concerns (either personal or on behalf of a friend) in a number of different ways. For example, pupils can report bullying concerns by:

- Verbally - talking to a member of staff;
- By writing a note to their class teacher;
- All pupils will be assured that the matter will be dealt with discretely and with emphasis on support.

## B. Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

When a pupil confides in a parent/carer about being subjected to bullying behaviours, it is important that parents /carers encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

Parents can report a concern in the following ways:

- By telephoning reception and leaving a clear message to be passed onto the class teacher, head of Key Stage or Principal.
- By writing a letter to the class teacher, head of Key Stage or Principal
- By sending an email to the class teacher, head of Key Stage or Principal via the account with a clear direction in the subject heading as to who the email has to be forwarded to; [info@crawfordsburnps.bangor.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@crawfordsburnps.bangor.ni.sch.uk)
- To arrange to meet with the class teacher, head of Key Stage or Principal at the member of staff's earliest convenience.

When the relevant class teacher has been contacted and adequate time has been given to allow for investigation, if the parent is not satisfied with the outcome, the following steps can be taken:

- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the parent should report the concern to the Head of Key Stage.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Key Stage to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal by the parent.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This process involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors. While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school must be 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. After the first communication with the School, an update will be provided to the pupil and/or parent within 48 hours. As per school protocol, no information about action taken in relation to another 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 made by Crawfordsburn Primary School Staff will be to respond to the bullying concern and restore the wellbeing of those involved. As such, any strategy for responding to bullying concerns will concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents. It is accepted that the precise action taken will vary from incident to incident and that it is not always easy to find clarity when there are conflicting allegations.

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 class teacher in the first instance will:

1. Clarify facts and perceptions, using pupil witness statements where appropriate;
2. Check records (SIMS);
3. Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour;
4. Identify any themes or motivating factors;
5. Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed;
6. Identify intervention level;
7. Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource;
8. Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions;
9. Review outcome of interventions;
10. Select and implement further intentions as necessary.

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff will implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff will implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour as reflected in the Positive Behaviour Policy of the School. Since there are many different types of behaviour which can be categorised as bullying, each will require an appropriate and individual response. School will follow the Positive Behaviour Policy when deciding on an appropriate sanction, taking the level of severity into consideration.

As per school protocol, information about action taken in relation to a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

## **Recording**

It is a legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

The school uses the SIMS Behaviour Management Module for record keeping and 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.

As per guidance from the Department of Education, records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of staff with a legitimate need to have access. The SLT and Safeguarding team will have overall responsibility for the maintenance of these records.

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 School is committed to providing appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff. This may include:

- stating a commitment to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing EPD/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
- stating that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

## **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 Bullying Prevention Policy. To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Bullying Prevention 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.

The Bullying Prevention Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Governors every four years. However, the policy may be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review. It will also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

### **1. 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
- Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct