

West Winds Primary School & Nursery Unit

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| Anti- Bullying Policy | | | | |
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| *Authorised by* | Name  Board of Governors | | | Month/ Year  October 2021 |
| *Scheduled Review*  *(Circle relevant Review cycle)* | Review Frequency (years) | | | Due Date  September 2024 |
| Annual | 2 | 3 |

1. Introduction/ Rationale

At West Winds Primary School and Nursery Unit, 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.

This policy has been revised in line with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Schools in Northern Ireland will be legally required to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying behaviour from 1 September 2021. They will also have to keep records of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour, the method involved and how the incident was dealt with.

1. The Policy Context
   1. Legislative context

* [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/25/contents)
* [The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2003/424/contents/made) (A17-19)
* [The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/annex-a-school-development-plans-regulations-2010.pdf)
* [The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)
* [The Human Rights Act 1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents)
* [The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1039)

The **key points** to note are:

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 (eg. school trip)
  + When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (eg. 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)
  1. The policy and guidance context
  + The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
  + [Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf)
  + [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-in-Schools-A-Guide-for-Schools.pdf)
    - [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland)
    - [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)](https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/)
  1. International context
* [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.109765637.1827233515.1552648186-274690600.1552648186) (UNCRC)

The **key points** to note are:

* The United Nations Convention on 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. (A.19)
  + Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)
  + Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)
  + Education. (A.28)

1. Ethos and Principles

West Winds Primary School is opposed to bullying in all forms. We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the school. 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.

It is our aim:

* To provide a safe and secure environment in which pupils are free from intimidation and fear.
* To take steps to support a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
* To take seriously and thoroughly investigate any reported incidents.
* To act appropriately and proportionately taking all factors into consideration.
* To work in partnership with parents to promote a common value of mutual respect within the school community

1. Consultation and Participation

This policy has been developed in consultation with registered pupils and their parents/carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Consultation took place with pupils. This involved:

* *Class based activities (including annual NIABF Anti-Bullying Week Activities*
* *Whole school questionnaires*

Consultation took place with parents/carers using questionnaires which were distributed online.

Consultation with all members of the school community took place. This involved:

* *Questionnaire for staff and Governors*
* *Training for all staff and Governors*

The results were analysed and feedback provided to all participants. The results will be used to address concerns and inform and guide amendments to the school’s policy and procedures.

1. What is Bullying?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which must be used.

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:

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.

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 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 which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

There may be various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. 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 / SEN
* 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 discussion 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 discussion 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.

1. Preventative Measures

In line with the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work will be on prevention. The school will, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment:

* Raise awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
* Promote anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
* Address issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding), RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education)
* Actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing through the preventative curriculum (e.g. mindfulness training)
* Engage the School Counselling Service (Imagine If)
* Participate in pastoral programmes including Incredible Years, XXXX, Roots of Empathy
* Participate in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
* Engage in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day etc
* Develop peer-led systems (e.g. School Council, school prefects, buddy system) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
* Provide mediation by adults – members of staff can assist pupils to set boundaries for behaviour and positive relationships
* Develop effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches)
* Hold focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
* Develop effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch)
* Provide and promote extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. (e.g, sporting activities, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.)
* Involve external agencies eg NIABF

Bullying behaviour can take place both inside and outside of school. Bullying which occurs outside of school hours or off the school premises can impact on the school day and have implications for the parties involved when they are in school. Examples of bullying outside school may include incidents of cyberbullying, verbal or physical incidents that occur on the way to and from school, arguments between peers outside of school that can lead to bullying behaviour. There may also be additional problems in families and the wider community that have an impact on bullying behaviour in school, such as a climate of harassment, family feuding, domestic violence and other related behaviours.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, requires the Board of Governors of a grant aided school to determine the measures to be taken by the school with a view to preventing bullying involving a registered pupil at the school while travelling to or from the school during the school term.

The school will also put measures in place to prevent bullying behaviour **on the way to and from school**. While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, the school will further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

* 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.
* Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school.
* Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. EA Transport SEN pupils) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
* Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff duty at school doors, where appropriate)

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. West Winds Primary School and Nursery Unit will 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 will 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, 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 (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, etc.)

The Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. As such, it is essential that these policies align and provide a consistent message. For example, the measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, will also be included in the school’s e-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Given the nature of technology, as constantly changing and developing, the school will monitor the policy and message and make changes when necessary.

1. Responsibilities

The Anti-Bullying Policy should make clear that everyone 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, 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

**teaching staff**

Teaching staff members will:

* Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
* Discuss bullying with their classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes and the importance of telling the teacher about bullying when it happens.
* Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
* Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
* Record incidents of bullying as required and alert the Pastoral Care Coordinator.
* Report alleged/suspected cases of bullying to the Pastoral Team.
* 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.
* Attend in-service training on bullying and related issues.
* Be familiar with the school anti-bullying policy and be aware of current educational research and initiatives related to these issues.
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**non-teaching staff**

Non-teaching members of staff will:

* Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
* Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
* Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
* Report all incidents to the class teacher or a member of the pastoral team if class teacher is not available
* Attend school based training as required
* Follow school procedures in relation to witnessing an incident, dealing with a disclosure from a child and dealing with parents who may approach them about bullying
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**pastoral care coordinator**

The Pastoral Care Coordinator will:

* Attend all relevant courses and disseminate to colleagues
* Ensure all staff have adequate training in anti-bullying procedures
* Ensure that all policies and procedures are implemented and reviewed as appropriate
* Foster effective communication between school and home
* Raise awareness of bullying and the role parents can play in its prevention
* Deal with issues fairly in accordance with legislation and DENI/EA guidelines
* Consult with external agencies (where appropriate), including Educational Welfare, Social Services and PSNI
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**senior leadership team**

The Senior Leadership Team will:

* Be familiar with school policies and procedures
* Support the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the Principal and Governors in the implementation and review of policies and procedures
* Support staff and parents in the implementation of the policy and procedures
* Deal with issues fairly in accordance with legislation and DENI/EA guidelines
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**principal**

The Principal will:

* Facilitate staff briefingsand in-service training
* Highlight bullying as a relevant and regular item on the agenda for staff briefings and training sessions
* Ensure that the policy is a living document which is communicated to the school community
* Facilitate regular monitoring and review of anti-bullying procedures
* Foster effective communication between school and home
* Make available to parents the school’s policy statement on Anti-Bullying
* Deal with issues fairly in accordance with legislation and DENI/EA guidelines
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**board of governors**

In addition to the legal requirements and responsibilities for Boards of Governors as specified in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, the Board of Governors will:

* Support staff and parents/carers in the implementation of the policy and procedures
* Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality

**parents**

Parents should:

* Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
* Report any concerns to the school.
* Advise their children to report any bullying to a member of staff
* Explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
* Inform their children not to retaliate to any form of bullying in accordance with the school’s behaviour policy.
* Work in partnership with the school and respect the sanctions imposed (in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy) to promote positive resolutions.
* Understand that isolated incidents may not always constitute bullying
* Actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school community.
* Give their child lots of praise and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others.

**pupils**

Pupils should:

* Act in a respectful and supportive manner to fellow pupils.
* Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying
* Understand that isolated incidents may not always constitute bullying
* Refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying
* Intervene to protect a 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.

1. Reporting a bullying concern

**pupils reporting a bullying concern**

In West Winds Primary School and Nursery Unit pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff by one of the following methods:

* Verbally- talking to a member of staff.
* By writing a note to a member of staff
* By sending a message to a member of staff on Seesaw.
* By posting a comment in a ‘worry box’

**ANY PUPIL** can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. The message shared with the pupils will focus 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.

**parent/carers reporting a bullying concern**

Parents and carers must raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers are reminded to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to ‘hit back’.

When an incident occurs it will be fully investigated to ascertain the truth. Parents will be updated throughout and informed of the outcome of the investigation.

* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher; the class teacher will alert the Pastoral Care Coordinator, Miss Carson.
* 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 Principal.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school’s complaints procedure should be followed. This involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

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

Please note: no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can or will be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and parents/carers, the school is open to receiving reports from anyone.

1. Responding to a bullying concern

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
* 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 Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
* Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
* Review outcome of interventions
* Select and implement further intentions as necessary

NIABF advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour. Interventions suggested in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. West Winds Primary School will adopt this approach as best practice.

However, at times, it may be more appropriate to employ a more consequential approach, including consequences and sanctions. This is outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

In summary, 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.

1. 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 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.

A digital, online record will be kept relating to incidents of bullying behaviour. This will comprise of a record of concerns, followed by information outlining the steps taken by school and the resulting outcomes. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access. West Winds Primary will design appropriate records for this and will review the functionality of the records to ensure they are fit for purpose.

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.

1. Professional Development of Staff

West Winds Primary School recognises the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff.

This includes:

* A commitment to ensure that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school’s 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
* stating that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

1. Monitoring and Review

**It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.**

To accomplish this, 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 June 2024.

It should be noted that the policy will be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review, or when directed 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
* Pastoral Care Policy
* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Special Educational Needs Policy
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Relationships and Sexuality Education
* E-Safety Policy
* Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
* Mobile Phone Policy
* Educational Visits Policy