New-Bridge Integrated College

Draft Anti-Bullying Policy

(new Anti-Bullying Legislation)

Framework

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

At New-Bridge Integrated College 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. The role of this policy is to ensure that all have an understanding of the need to have a school environment which allow all to reach their fullest potential, without having their progress prevented or disrupted. Its function is to ensure that the positive well-being of all is promoted.

It will be the responsibility of the school through the Board of Governors to ensure that all pupils have a fair and equable educational experiences that are not affected by the bullying activities of others. It is also the purpose of the policy to highlight ways in which the school seeks to build the capacity of each pupil to be informed of preventative measures which they can deploy to help deal with bullying situations. These include a range of school based activities which provide key strategies and approaches that can be used in school and outside of school which allow pupils to deal with the issue of bullying in an appropriate manner.

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:
'Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils' (A.17)

The school supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which 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)

Section 2 – Context

Our purpose is to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all our pupils in New-Bridge Integrated College; an environment which is conducive to effective learning and teaching, free from intimidation and the threat of psychological and physical abuse. The school's anti-bullying policy is an integral part of our
- Pastoral Care Policy,
- Safeguarding Procedures and
- Positive Behaviour Policy.

The Policy is also informed and guided by current legislation,

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 & 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)
* 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)

Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

New-Bridge Integrated is an integrated all-ability school. We are committed to ensuring that all our pupils are provided with the opportunity to achieve to their full educational potential in a challenging and stimulating environment in which they all feel cherished and valued.

Our vision is to;
* To enable our pupils to grow mature in their own beliefs, culture and tradition
* To promote peace and reconciliation by actively seeking knowledge and understanding of other beliefs, cultures and traditions.
* To develop in our pupils, the self-esteem and self-discipline necessary for responsible citizenship in a pluralistic society
* To provide a challenging and stimulating environment in which the academic, sporting and personal success of pupils is promoted and celebrated
* To cherish, nurture and respect each other regardless of race, gender or other differences
* To encourage individual spiritual development and to work and pray for peace in our lives
* To promote the involvement of all members of the College community, whether governors, parents, pupils or staff in the development of the College
* To foster a caring and responsible attitude to the College and the local environment
* To create effective links between the College and the wider community
* We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
* We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying.
* We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole 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.

Section 4 – Consultation and Participation
In compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, the school has consulted a range of stakeholders:

Pupils:
- Consultative workshops with Pupil Council
- Consultative workshops with our group of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Class-based activities
- Whole school online googledocs questionnaires distributed to all pupils

Parents:
- online googledocs questionnaires distributed to all parents
- Information events with parents/carers – parent/teacher meetings
- Consultative workshops with parents (Friends of New-Bridge)

Staff
- Staff survey for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- Engagement activity for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- Representative members of staff involved in writing anti-bullying policy (Pastoral Leaders; Year Co-ordinators; Anti-Bullying Ambassador Co-ordinator; Designated Child Protection Officer; SLT)

Section 5 – What is Bullying?

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of "bullying":

1. A 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.
   B For the purposes of subsection A, "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.

Our Policy shows that whilst bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there may be 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, New-Bridge 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 our Positive Behaviour Policy.

The following unacceptable 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

Other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

There can be various motivations behind bullying, which include those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

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

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure 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 will refer to the child as describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

➢ A child displaying bullying behaviours
➢ A child experiencing bullying behaviour

We encourage all members of our 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.

Section 6 – Preventative Measurers

The following measures are taken by New-Bridge Integrated College to prevent bullying behaviour, as defined in the section above. The school's measures aim to promote and strengthen an anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community. The focus for all anti-bullying work is one of prevention.

New-Bridge Integrated College sets out a number of key actions and practices adopted within the school, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment.

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the **Positive Behaviour Policy,** through Assemblies, Yearbook, Induction Programme, Restorative conversations, meetings and parent information evenings
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying such as Citizenship; Employability; Careers Education; Personal Development; English and RE; positive behaviour and inclusion
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through the school's Personal Development Programme themes identify some of the PD themes/topics (eg. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.) through Induction Programmes, Yearbook, Integrated Education Month, Peace Assembly NIABF - Anti-Bullying week
- Structured Intervention sessions for students displaying and experiencing bullying behaviours are used as both preventative and proactive learning experiences for the students involved.
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
- Through the preventative curriculum which actively promotes positive emotional health and wellbeing (eg. mindfulness training, coping strategies, mental health awareness, resilience training – focus on I can, I am, I have and Gimme 5, Integration unit, PD Topics, Induction Process, Growth Mindset, PIPS Support, PCSP workshops on E safety, drugs and alcohol, healthy relationships. Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities Assemblies – whole school focus, Personal Development activities,
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, NIABF Anti-Bullying Week, National Kindness Day, World Mental Health Day all contribute towards the whole school focus on compassion and kindness. . T-H-I-N-K is used to reflect upon the power of our language and the power of our words.
- MYCOURSE is used for meaningful form class and year group work on developing the theme of Kindness.

- Development of peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school – Pupil Council and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Year 8 mentors and sixth form prefects / SLC., Buddy Up Programme.
- Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, social interaction groups, welcoming committee, sixth form mentors, buddy system and provision of a variety of play option to meet the needs of all pupils. Staff on duties, defined toilet blocks, lunch time activities.
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (eg. break time, lunch) Learning Support game club, lunchtime activities
- Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games.

New-Bridge Integrated College put in place **Preventative measures** to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school.

- ✳ Development of a culture where pupils take pride in being a pupil of New-Bridge Integrated College 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, delivered through form tutor time, assemblies and" The New-Bridge Way" - 3Rs – Respect, Responsible and Ready
- ✳ Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. **Sixth Form Bus Prefects** are allocated to each bus and are trained in intervention work.
- ✳ Regular engagement with transport providers (eg. Translink, EA Transport, etc.) 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 through staff on bus duty, staff on reception duty in morning time.

New-Bridge Integrated College employs strategies to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and provide guidance and support for 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 Personal Development programme (LLW Programme) - ICT programme - including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- ✳ Awareness raising of 'Acceptable Use of ICT' Policy
- ✳ Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- ✳ Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies 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 E-safety policies in related areas Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy; C2k Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Bring Your Own Device Policy etc

Section 7 – Responsibility

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of New-Bridge Integrated College 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

Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

New-Bridge Integrated College encourage pupils and parents to speak to staff if they have a concern about a potential bullying situation. The school has identified Child Protection Officers which form the Safeguarding team but all staff can be approached to discuss a potential bullying incident. ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Our message to pupils focuses on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils are encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

Pupils can report bullying concerns in a number of ways:
- ➢ Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- ➢ By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. in a homework diary)
- ➢ By sending an email to a member of staff
- ➢ By posting a comment in a 'worry box/concern box?
- ➢ By speaking to a member of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador team

➤ By contacting a member of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador team via Facebook?

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

New-Bridge Integrated College encourages parents and carers to 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'.

The process of parents/carers reporting bullying concerns is as follows:
* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Year Co-ordinator. (The principal is keep fully informed of all bullying concerns at the earliest point of contact)
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has had the desired impact to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Head of School (Head of Junior or Head of Senior school)
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Schools, to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Vice Principal, Care and Welfare.
* Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This usually involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors in line with our Schools Complaints Procedure (available on our college website)

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with our Anti-Bullying 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.

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how New-Bridge Integrated College 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

Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved.

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. New-Bridge Integrated has well established restorative practices which are used as a response to bullying behaviour.

Restorative questions in year book:
- ✓ What has happened?
- ✓ What do you think about what happened and how do you feel about it?
- ✓ Who do you think has been affected and how?
- ✓ What do you think needs to happen to put things right?
- ✓ What do you think needs to happen in the future to make sure the situation does not occur again?

Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour, however in line with Anti-bullying Legislation, the focus is on intervention and support for pupils displaying bullying behaviour as well as pupils who experience bullying behaviour.
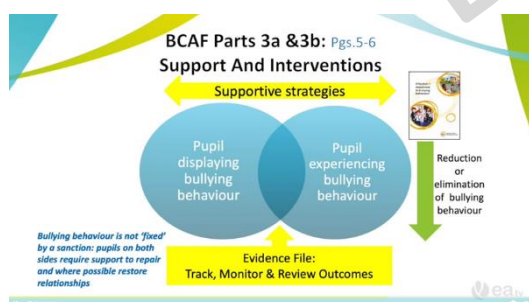
Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 10 – Recording

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns electronically using **BCAF Documentation** (Bullying Concern Assessment Form) which will include:
- ✳ 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.

Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

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.

Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

New-Bridge Integrated College recognises the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff; these include:
 * stating a commitment to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD 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

Section 12 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:
 * maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board, under Safeguarding report where 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 the [June 2023].

Section 12 – 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 & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
 * Mobile Phone Policy
 * Educational Visits
 * Staff Code of Conduct