



Anti-Bullying Policy

2022-2026



CONTENTS

School Mission Statement.....	2
Anti-Bullying Statement.....	2
Context.....	2
The Legislative Context:.....	2
The Policy and Guidance Context:.....	2
The International Context:.....	2
Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.....	3
.....	3
Defining Bullying.....	3
Methods of Bullying.....	3
Consultation and Participation.....	5
NIABF Definition of Bullying.....	6
<i>Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others.</i>	6
Under what circumstances should the Anti-Bullying Policy be applied?.....	6
Prevention of Cyber-Bullying.....	7
Features of Bullying Behaviour (What Is Bullying?).....	8
Definition of bullying (child friendly).....	8
Definition of Cyber bullying.....	9
Definition of Cyber bullying (child friendly).....	9
Anti-Bullying Policy and Aims.....	9
Preventative Steps.....	9
Code of Conduct.....	10
Responsibilities of the School.....	11
Responsibilities of Pupils.....	11
Responsibilities of Parents.....	11
Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Alleged Bullying Behaviour.....	11



School Mission Statement

We are committed to providing high quality learning in a safe, caring and happy environment based upon respect for all. In partnership with parents and the community we aim to provide positive and stimulating experiences, which enable children to be lifelong learners in a changing world.

Anti-Bullying Statement

In Harmony Hill Primary School, staff and pupils alike aim to maintain a safe, secure and happy environment, where everyone can achieve their full potential. We aim to prevent bullying in any form through an approach committed to building positive relationships and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

Context

The Legislative Context:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978

The Policy and Guidance Context:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (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)



Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

Definition of “bullying”

1.—(1) In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- (b) any other act, or
- (c) any combination of those,

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.

Defining Bullying

Methods of Bullying

1.— (1) *In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—*

(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,

These methods can be described as, *but are not limited to*, saying, writing or using online contact and platforms to:

- say mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
- make fun of others
- call another pupil mean and hurtful names
- tell lies or spread false rumours about others
- try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
- extort from, blackmail or exploit another.

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 online platforms.

(b) any other act, or

Other methods of bullying behaviour commonly include physical bullying and can be described as, but are not limited to:

- hitting
- kicking
- pushing
- shoving around
- material harm (such as taking/stealing money or possessions)



- other direct/indirect acts, such as aggressive non-verbal communication.

c) any combination of those

The Act acknowledges that various methods of bullying behaviour can occur separately or together.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.

The Act specifies that methods of bullying behaviour include omission. This includes where a pupil is intentionally left out (e.g. ‘they stopped him playing with them’) and where there is a wilful failure to include a pupil (e.g. ‘they purposefully did not ask her to join the game’). Other examples include a pupil being excluded or left out of:

- a group of friends
- activities
- games
- group work in class

Exclusionary bullying behaviours are as serious as other verbal or physical acts.

Bullying behaviours are not limited to repetition

While repetition is internationally recognised as an important element in establishing bullying behaviour, The Act does not require repetition for behaviours to be defined as bullying.

As a school, Harmony Hill Primary School has the discretion to include ‘one-off’ acts as bullying behaviour.

This policy does NOT specify incidents that will be considered bullying; rather, the following criteria will be used by school staff to assess whether incidents will be addressed through the Anti-Bullying Policy or Positive Behaviour Policy.

The criteria may include, but not limited to:

- The severity and significance of the incident
- Is there evidence of pre-meditation?
- What is the impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)?
- What is the impact of the incidents on wider school community?
- Are there previous relationships between those involved?
- Are there any previous incidents involving the individuals?

Intention to Cause Harm

With the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils



The Act requires schools to determine the intention of the pupil allegedly demonstrating bullying behaviours to cause harm. This could include, for example, *intention to harm being determined by the continuation of identified bullying behaviour after the school has implemented interventions to respond to the situation, resolve the concern and restore the relationships.*

Whether a one-off incident should be treated as bullying is a decision for the school alone.

In determining intent to cause harm, the school will use discretion in assessing an individual pupil's capacity to understand the impact of their behaviours, e.g. due to development age, disability or delay.

Emotional or psychological 'harm' is determined as *intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.*

Physical 'harm' is determined as *intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.*

The list of bullying behaviours is non-exhaustive.

Consultation and Participation

This policy has been developed in consultation with the school community in the following ways:

Pupils

- Consultative workshops with pupils and outside agencies, as part of the preventative curriculum i.e. Youth for Justice, Made for More, Action Mental Health, play-based learning, ongoing assemblies.
- Class-based PDMU activities and Anti-Bullying focused lessons.
- Safeguarding and Well-being Assembly, at least annually
- Creation of a reference group of pupils e.g. School Council/House Captains.
- Wellbeing Questionnaire taken by all pupils.

As part of our pupil consultation, we conducted an extensive wellbeing survey with P2 to P7 pupils, post-pandemic, in term one of 2021/22.

Analysis of responses revealed that instances of pupils experiencing bullying behaviour in our school are negligible, but where they do occur, we have robust systems in place to address them proactively.

In relation to pupils responding as to whether they had experienced bullying behaviours through relationships with other pupils, the following results were obtained:

The overwhelming majority of pupils surveyed responded that they were never teased or physically bullied by their peers in school, nor did they feel 'left out' of play



or picked on for being 'different' in any way. Likewise, the vast majority of pupils responded that they felt safe at school, enjoyed being in school and had a strong sense of belonging in Harmony Hill.

We aim to continue with our commitment to address potential negative behaviours and feelings/perceptions through our extensive programme of preventative curriculum activities.

Parents/Carers

Parents were offered the chance to take part in reviewing the draft policy and a group of parents did this. We acknowledge their contributions which have helped to shape this policy.

School Staff

- Pastoral Leadership Team and Board of Governors involved in regular and sustained reviewing of DE guidance, writing and ratifying anti-bullying policy.
- Presentation on legislation and implications for staff on Baker Day.
- Teaching, nonteaching, supervisory and ancillary staff attendance at Safeguarding Assembly.

NIABF Definition of Bullying

Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms or adversely affects the rights and needs of another or others.

Under what circumstances should the Anti-Bullying Policy be applied?

- (b) determine the measures to be taken at the school (whether by the Board of Governors, the staff of the school or other persons) with a view to preventing bullying involving a registered pupil at the school—
- (i) on the premises of the school during the school day;
 - (ii) while travelling to or from the school during the school term;
 - (iii) while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school; or

- (iv) while the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school;



(i) on the premises of the school during the school day;

Within the school grounds during normal school hours.

(ii) while travelling to or from the school during the school term;

(iii) while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school e.g.

- school trips
- sporting fixtures
- external events

(iv) Education provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided away from the school premises e.g.

- Another school in the Area Learning Community
- Alternative Educational Providers/Education Other than at School centres
- Home (Exceptional Teaching Arrangements)

Prevention of Cyber-Bullying

(2) The Board of Governors of a grant-aided school may, to such extent as it thinks reasonable, consider measures to be taken at the school (whether by the Board of Governors, the staff of the school or other persons) with a view to preventing bullying involving a registered pupil at the school which—

- (a) involves the use of electronic communication;
- (b) takes place in circumstances other than those listed in subsection (1)(b);
and
- (c) is likely to have a detrimental effect on that pupil's education at the school.

The Act gives schools the explicit power to take action to prevent cyber bullying which is taking place outside school, but which is likely to have an impact on the pupil's education in school.

This policy will address any incidents of online bullying which take place;

- in school during the school day,
- while travelling to or from school during the school term,
- while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school,
- or while in education provision on behalf of the school away from the school premises.



Features of Bullying Behaviour (What Is Bullying?)

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

- It is repetitive and persistent.
- It is intentionally harmful.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- It causes distress.

Definition of bullying (child friendly)

- Bullying is a person, or people, doing nasty or unkind things to you, more than once.
- Bullying is done on purpose, more than once.



Definition of Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is the act of using the internet, mobile phones, online gaming or other technology to send text or post images intended to hurt or embarrass another person or persons.

Definition of Cyber bullying (child friendly)

Cyber bullying is any form of bullying that takes place online or through your mobile phone.

Anti-Bullying Policy and Aims

1. This Anti Bullying Policy reflects the school's aims with a view to maintaining a safe, secure and happy environment for all children and staff.
2. To prevent bullying, in any form, and to have a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
3. To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of this policy and that reported incidents of bullying behaviour will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
4. To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities.
5. To ensure that the strategies we use to prevent or deal with bullying behaviour are supportive to both the child who is being bullied and the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.

Preventative Steps

As we aim to create a caring and positive environment fostering respect for all, we will make every effort to reduce and prevent any bullying behaviour. The following procedures are in place:

- Named persons have been designated to co-ordinate and monitor both our Anti Bullying Policy and incidents, or alleged incidents, of bullying. They will also be responsible for periodically reviewing procedures and reporting to appropriate bodies.
- Named persons: Mrs Hilary Johnston (Principal/Deputy Designated Teacher), Mr Conor Hyndman (Designated Teacher), Mr John Anderson (Vice Principal/Digital Safeguarding), Mrs Caroline Matchett (Digital Safeguarding), Mrs Debbie Seymour (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Nursery).
- The Designated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding is Mrs Mary Potter. She visits the school on a termly basis to review all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying. This Governor is also consulted periodically should any more serious incidents occur.
- A Positive Behaviour Policy, outlining the ethos of the School and the Code of Behaviour expected within the school community is in place.
- Agreed procedures for responding to and recording incidents of bullying have been established. These procedures include informing parents at appropriate stages.
- A commitment has been made to periodically communicate this policy to all members of the school community.
- The responsibilities of pupils, staff and parents have been clearly outlined.



- Every effort has been taken to ensure that the school environments, procedures and practices are designed to reduce the risk of bullying behaviour occurring.
- All staff will receive periodic training to ensure they feel confident in delivering this Policy.
- As Harmony Hill Primary School is committed to building positive relationships, it will be supportive to both the child who is being bullied and the child who is displaying bullying behaviour. Every effort will be made to ensure that amends are made and appropriate lessons are learned in a restorative approach.
- The Preventative Curriculum, which includes events such as Anti-Bullying Week and Online Safety Week, as well as PDMU lessons and other programmes, has been introduced to all classes with a view to enhancing communication and positive interpersonal skills.
- Anti-Bullying Weeks and discussion within PDMU gives pupils an opportunity to be involved in discussions on how they can best help to prevent bullying, and to tackle it effectively where it arises.
- Clear sanctions have been outlined within our Positive Behaviour Policy. These sanctions will be applied fairly in order to maintain a high standard of behaviour.
- At all times, we shall endeavour to build an individual's self-esteem. This aim will still apply when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour as we promote resolution of difficulties and responsible, positive behaviour.
- School counselling service will operate through appropriate staff, or external support, if and when required and as funding permits.
- Provision of Home-School liaison will be facilitated carefully, with regular communication between school and parents, always with a strong commitment to resolution.

Code of Conduct

Harmony Hill Primary School has a clearly defined code of conduct linked with its Pastoral Care Policy. This code has implications for the entire school community. With respect to bullying behaviour, the following rights and responsibilities should be highlighted:

Responsibilities of the Board of Governors

- It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- To do this, the Board of Governors will:
 - Appoint a designated Governor to maintain an ongoing review of any incidents of bullying and school's appropriate response.
 - maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted, and/or have regular meetings with Designated Governor for Child Protection.
 - Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing, and responding to, bullying behaviour.
 - Identification of trends and patterns to inform further development of policy and practice



Responsibilities of the School

- To take all reports of bullying seriously.
- To provide a safe environment for all.
- To promote an ethos of respect for the individual.
- To encourage pupils to tell.
- To listen to all sides.
- To follow procedures when an incident occurs.
- To promote non-aggressive strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour.

Responsibilities of Pupils

- Pupils should avoid any behaviour which could be considered bullying.
- Pupils should TELL if another child is being bullied.
- Pupils should always tell their parents if something is wrong.
- Pupils should not react aggressively.
- Pupils should act in a respectful and supportive manner to fellow pupils.

Responsibilities of Parents

- To discourage any tendency towards bullying behaviour.
- To suggest to their child non-aggressive strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour and stress that retaliation is not helpful.
- To inform school if they suspect bullying is taking place.
- To endeavour to resolve difficulties occurring outside of school thus preventing them continuing inside school.
- To work in partnership with School and actively support the school's Anti Bullying Policy.

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before the 1st of May 2026.

Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Alleged Bullying Behaviour

The class teacher will complete Initial Report Form. They will then use the indicators on this form to assess whether or not the behaviour is to be considered 'bullying', as defined by the NIABF. If it is defined as bullying, the teacher will:

1. Inform the parents of both the target, and the P.D.B.B. (Pupil Displaying Bullying Behaviour) of the incident and begin the two-week follow up (Follow-Up Action Form)
2. Send a 'BULLYING ALERT' email to all staff.

The teacher will then complete the two-week follow-up action form, noting positive and/or negative incidents each day after consulting with the target of the bullying behaviour. At the end of this two-week intervention, the teacher will inform the parents of both the target and the P.D.B.B. of progress.

If, at this stage, the incident is still unresolved, the teacher will refer the incident directly to the DT/DDT who will decide, with the teacher, which member of staff should action the next step.



At this stage, the incident moves to a further two-week follow-up with the target and the P.D.B.B. ('Further follow-up with target form' and 'Further follow-up with P.D.B.B' form - to be actioned by the person decided.)

If the issue remains unresolved at this stage, it will move to Pastoral and Behavioural Leadership Team for consideration of next steps to be taken.

This Policy is part of Harmony Hill Primary School Pastoral Care Policy and is linked to the Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, and Acceptable Use of the Internet policies. As such, it is fully in accordance with the ethos of the school. A copy is available in the school office if required.

Staff are fully aware of the contents of this Policy and will apply it appropriately, alongside all other policies, both pastoral and curricular. Appropriate record keeping will be held securely.

Policy ratified by Board of Governors May 2022