**MAGHERA**

**PRIMARY**

**SCHOOL**



**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**MARCH 2022**

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**SCHOOL ETHOS AND MISSION STATEMENT**

At Maghera Primary School, we will inspire each child to acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities which will prepare them for life as independent, self-motivated adults. We endeavour to develop in each a sense of self respect and self worth.

**INTRODUCTION**

At Maghera Primary School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils. We believe all forms of bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying of any kind is unacceptable and that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment. As a school, we are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos and we believe that it is everyone’s role to take a stand against bullying in order to create a safe and welcoming environment for all. We value the views and contributions of children and young people, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account.

**RATIONALE**

This Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the school mission statement with a view to providing a safe and enriched environment where success is celebrated and the pursuit of excellence is emphasised.

At Maghera Primary School we aim to foster values of tolerance and mutual respect through promoting the self-esteem of all members of the school community.

In Maghera Primary School bullying behaviour is contrary to the school ethos.

We recognise that bullying is a concern for us all, including pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/carers and governors.

**AIMS**

The aims of this policy are to:

* provide a legislative framework for school procedures
* enable prevention or reduction of bullying behaviour in any form
* enable a distinction between anti-social behaviour and bullying behaviour
* enable adoption of effective responses to bullying behaviour
* ensure that all pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/carers and governors are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success

**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

**POLICY AND GUIDANCE CONTEXT**

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019) places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.   
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)

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

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 provides a legal definition of bullying.

*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.*

*“act” includes omission.*

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

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)

**PRINCIPLES**

At Maghera Primary School we are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying. We believe bullying is unacceptable and that every child should feel safe and secure. We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity and we value their views and contributions respecting them and taking them into account. We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe environment for all.

**CONSULTATION AND PARTCIPATION**

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

Pupils views and contributions have been taken into account by creating a School Council and through other PDMU class-based activities. The school also engages with parents to seek their views and opinions.

While not required by legislation, it is good practice for schools to consult with all members of the school community when developing or reviewing the policy. Staff views and contributions were also taken into account and other staff members included in writing this anti-bullying policy.

**SCHOOL’S DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is behaviour which is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights of another or others.

Following consideration of what constitutes bullying behaviour and consultation among pupils, staff, parents, carers (LAC) and governors the following definition was agreed:

Unacceptable, unpleasant, hurtful, anti-social behaviour becomes bullying behaviour when there is clear evidence that the following features are present:

1. There is a deliberate desire to hurt.

2. Physical and/or emotional hurt is caused directly or indirectly.

3. There is repeated action against the targeted individual or group.

4. There is an imbalance or misuse of power.

5. An individual or group is targeted because of a perceived difference.

6. The individual or group presenting bullying behaviour experience a sense of satisfaction which meets a personal need.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are some instances of one off incidents that 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.

**UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS**

The school have identified the following types of unacceptable, anti-social behaviours, which when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour once the above features are clearly in evidence:

* **PHYSICAL UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS**

includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching, kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons

* **VERBAL UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS**

includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours

* **INDIRECT UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS**

includes isolation, refusal to work with/play with/help others

* **THEMED UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS**

**HOMOPHOBIC** related to perceived or actual sexual orientation

**SECTARIAN related** to religious belief and/or political opinion

**ETHNIC/RACIST** related to skin colour, culture and religion

**DISABILIST** Anti-social behaviours related to perceived or actual disability

**CYBER through** technology such as mobile phones and internet

**CYBERBULLYING**

Includes sending threatening or abusive text messages, creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos, 'Trolling’ – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games, excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups, setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child, encouraging children to self-harm, voting for or against someone in an abusive poll, creating fake accounts, causing trouble using another child’s name, hijacking another child’s account, sending explicit messages, known as ‘sexting’ and pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations

(Source – NSPCC)

Please note the above lists are not exhaustive.

***In determining ‘harm’, we define:***

* Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting a child’s self-esteem.
* Physical harm as intentionally hurting a child by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts

**MOTIVATIONS BEHIND BULLYING**

At our school, we recognise that there are various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

* Age
* Appearance
* Breakdown in peer relationships/friendships
* Jealousy
* Community background
* Political affiliation
* Gender identity
* Sexual orientation
* Pregnancy
* Marital status
* Race
* Religion
* Disability / SEN
* Ability
* Looked after child status
* Young Carers status

**USE OF LANGUAGE**

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that 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 by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

* A child displaying bullying behaviours
* A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We will encourage all members of staff to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

**OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

**PROMOTING AN ANTI-BULLYING CULTURE**

This section is the key lynchpin of this policy document.

**OUR PRIMARY AIM IS TO ESTABLISH A CULTURE WHICH MINIMISES THE LIKELIHOOD OF BULLYING TAKING PLACE.**

As noted above, the process of establishing this anti-bullying culture will be facilitated through general and consistent attitudes, reactions, support and an overall teaching and learning environment in which pupils feel secure, are free from emotional and physical harm, have their opinions valued and their concerns dealt with sympathetically, efficiently and appropriately.

**THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM**

The culture will also be promoted through a well-planned Personal Development and Mutual Understanding programme (P.D.M.U.) which will consider e.g.:

* Anger management
* Conflict resolution
* Relationships
* Feelings and emotions
* Communication
* Personal Safety
* Emotional health and well-being
* E Safety

Many curricular subject areas can provide opportunities for exploring issues related to bullying e.g. Literacy, Art, Drama, Music, R.E., World Around Us. Drama is used extensively in Key Stage Two to address and discuss bullying behaviours and reaction to bullying.

OTHER STRATEGIES

* Raising awareness and understanding of what behaviour is expected in school through setting of class rules etc.
* Assemblies
* Participation in Anti-Bullying week
* Circle Time
* Participation in peer led systems e.g. School Council to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messages
* Worry Bag, worry monster, post box – various strategies used by each teacher
* Participation in Safer Internet Day
* Shared Education activities which explore diversity and difference
* Emotional health and well-being activities
* Effective playground management – use of specific resources e.g. Buddy Bench
* Regular reminders in Assembly of behaviour expectation
* Engagement with relevant agencies e.g. C2K, P.S.N.I., Safer Schools etc.
* Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships
* Appropriate signage and posters around school
* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through P.D.M.U., including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use
* Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas, e.g. E Safety, Mobile Phone etc.

**TRAVELLING TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

We aim to develop a culture where children take pride in their school and are proud of their school family. To this end, we encourage our children to be ambassadors for our school and show exemplary behaviour when outside school, for example, when in local shops, cafes etc.

It is important to remember that this 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.

**ROLE OF STAFF IN PROMOTING THIS CULTURE**

All staff, teaching and non-teaching must avoid:

• Using sarcasm or other insulting or demeaning form of language

• Making negative comments about a child’s appearance or background

• Humiliating a pupil who is academically weak or outstanding or vulnerable in anyway

• Using any gesture or expression of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any form of degrading physical contact

**RESPONSIBILTY**

Everyone within our school community, including children, 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 behaviour
* Be alert to signs of distress or indications of bullying behaviour
* Inform the school of any concerns
* Refrain from becoming involved in any bullying behaviour
* 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 behaviours 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**

**PUPILS REPORTING A CONCERN**

Any child can report a concern to any member of staff. The children are made aware of this frequently during Assembly and during class. There are also posters around the school indicating who they can speak to if they have a worry or concern. The Designated (Mrs L Brown) and Deputy Designated Teachers (Mrs L Mawhinney) are photographed on these posters. Children are reminded that thy can speak to any trusted adult.

Please note that any child can report a concern, not just the child experiencing the bullying behaviour.

Children are reminded that this is ‘getting help,’ rather than ‘telling on.’

Children can report any concerns verbally or by writing a note to a member of staff and leaving it in the worry bag, post box etc. Each class has its own system.

**PARENT/CARER REPORTING A CONCERN**

1. The bullying concern should be reported to the class teacher.
2. Where the parent/carer is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent a further incident or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal.
3. Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately resolved, the school’s Complaints Policy should be followed.

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

No information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parent/carer.

**PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A BULLYING INCIDENT**

(See Appendix 1)

**RESPONSE TO A BULLYING INCIDENT**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

The focus of any intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. As such, any strategy for responding to bullying concerns must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents. Where appropriate, staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NI Anti-Bullying Forum ‘Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour’ resource, the member of staff responsible will:

* 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

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.

No information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parent/carer.

**RECORDING**

The legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, is 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 motivation for the behaviour
* How each incident was addressed by the school
* The outcome of the interventions employed

Records will be kept centrally and securely on the online c2k SIMS Behaviour Management Module in the school office. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

Records will be kept and used to help inform future anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

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.

**POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOLLOWING INVESTIGATION**

1) The bully will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place in accordance with the school’s Positive Behaviour Policy.

2) In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.

3) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored and reviewed to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**STAFF TRAINING**

All staff will be made aware of this policy and its implications through in-school training sessions annually. This will impact the policy and procedures in a positive way. CPD records will be kept and updated regularly. Governors and staff will be provided with opportunities for safeguarding training.

**LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

The policies listed below share the goal of creating an environment where children feel secure and confident in the knowledge that their concerns will be listened to and dealt with by members of staff in a sympathetic manner.

In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors have been mindful of the related policies listed below.

* Pastoral Care
* Safeguarding and Child Protection
* Positive Behaviour
* Special Educational Needs
* R.S.E.
* E Safety
* Mobile Phone
* Educational Visits
* Staff Code of Conduct
* Health and Well-Being
* Health and Safety

**RACE, EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, disability or ability. Teachers plan work that is differentiated so that all groups and individuals can achieve their potential and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work, free from racial intimidation and harassment.

**MONITORING AND REVIEWING OF POLICY**

This policy was formulated by Maghera PS following consultation with School Governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers.

While the Principal has the overall responsibility for overseeing the policy and procedures and reporting back to Governors on the effective implementation and maintenance of the policy, it is important to remember that staff, pupils and parents all have an active part to play.

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Ant-Bullying 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

This policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before March 2026.

This policy has been approved by the Board of Governors.

Policy Date: \_ \_/\_ \_/\_ \_ \_ \_

Signature of Principal:……………………………………..

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors: …………………………………………

Review Date: \_ \_/\_ \_/\_ \_ \_ \_

**USEFUL WEBSITES & TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Department of Education [www.deni.gov.uk](about:blank)

Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum [www.niabf.org.uk](about:blank)

Think u Know [www.thinkuknow.org](about:blank)

Child-line NI 08001111

NSPCC 08088005000

**APPENDIX 1**

**PROCEDURE**

1. INCIDENT REPORTED
2. RECORD DETAILS (who, what, where, when, why, how)
3. ACTION TAKEN (Ref: Effective Responses to Bullying Incident NIABF)
4. SUPPORT CHILDREN INVOLVED WHILE INCIDENT IS BEING RESOLVED
5. EVALUATE ACTION
6. MONITOR SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN INVOLVED

*IT IS VITAL THAT ALL PARENTS ARE INFORMED AND THAT DETAILED RECORD KEEPING IS MAINTAINED DURING ALL PARTS OF PROCEDURE.*

**APPENDIX 2**

Exemplars of the entitlement and responsibilities of teachers, pupils and parents are included below.

**Entitlement of teachers within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* To teach without harassment or unwarranted disruption
* To expect co-operation
* To be consulted, be informed and be treated courteously
* To have agreed rules and regulations obeyed by pupils

**Responsibilities of teachers within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* Teachers should act as role models for pupils. They have the potential to influence pupils’ behaviours in a positive direction by promoting relationships that are characterised by respect, tolerance and a spirit of friendship and co-operation among and between pupils and staff.
* Teachers should be aware of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying, both within the classroom/teaching area and while on supervision duty around the school.
* By arriving at class punctually and in moving promptly between lessons teachers can reduce the possibility of bullying behaviour.
* In dealing with a particular incident of bullying, teachers should take steps to help remove sources of distress without placing the pupil at further risk.
* Teachers should, at the earliest opportunity, report suspected or actual incidents of bullying to the appropriate members of staff who will initiate necessary follow-up action.

**Entitlement of pupils within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* A communication right: the right to express oneself, share ideas, ask questions and be listened to.
* A treatment right: the right to respect from others, to be treated and equally.
* A safety right: the right to be free from intimidation in school and classroom, to be safe and secure and to be property protected.
* A problem-solving right: the right to expect rational settlement of problems and to be able to tell their sides of the story in a dispute.
* A learning right: the right to learn, without interference, to the level of their own ability in a secure working environment.

**Responsibilities of pupils within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* Pupils should be aware of the serious effect which bullying can have on another pupil and should refuse to become involved in any bullying action.
* f a pupil is present when bullying of another pupil occurs he/she should report the incident to any member of the teaching staff.
* A pupil who is being bullied should either –  
  (a) Report the matter to any member of teaching staff.

(b) Report the matter to his parent/guardian who should then contact a member of the teaching staff.

**Entitlement of parents within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* To be made aware of the school’s policy and procedures for minimising bullying in school.
* To expect that the school will take all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of bullying within the school.
* To be confident that the school will support any pupil who is being bullied.
* To expect to be consulted by the school in its procedures for dealing with any incident of bullying in which their child is either victim or bully.

**Responsibilities of parents/guardians within a whole-school anti-bullying policy**

* Parents/guardians should watch for common signs of bullying in their child, e.g. losing interest in school and becoming unwilling to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothing, bruising, changing usual route to school or asking to be taken to school and unexplained secretiveness, sullenness or unusual angry or distressed outbursts.
* Parents/guardians should take an active interest in their child’s social life and should know the company they keep.
* Parents/Guardians should strongly advise their child not to retaliate but to report any incident of bullying to either a member of the teaching staff or to the parent/guardian as a matter of urgency.
* Parents/Guardians should inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying of which they are aware, even if their own child is not directly involved.
* Parents/Guardians should be willing to co-operate with the school authorities if their child is involved in any incident of bullying.

(As taken from Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE) PP 87-89)