



St. Joseph's Primary School and Nursery Unit Bessbrook

Anti-Bullying Policy

Signed:..... **Date:**
(Principal)

Signed:..... **Date:**
(Chair of BOG)

Review Date: December 2025
Reviewed By: Principal and BOG

We are a school committed to promoting the rights of our children as per the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools programme. Our work in this aspect of school life promotes the following articles:

Article 15- We have the right to choose our own friends as long as we are not harming others.

Article 17- We have the right to get information that is important to our well-being.

Article 14 –We have the right to think and believe what we want as long as we are not stopping others from enjoying their rights.

Article 23- We have the right to special care if we have a disability.

Article 30 - We have the right to expect respect for our diverse cultures.

Fás Le Léann

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

St Joseph's P.S. Bessbrook is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it.

Bullying is contrary to the values and principles we work and live by.

St. Joseph's P.S. Bessbrook is a warm and caring Christian school and as such will nurture in its children a sense of belonging, self-worth and integrity. We believe that all members of the school have the right to work in a secure and caring environment and it is our responsibility to protect and maintain such an environment. Positive relationships will be fostered. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form.

The staff of St. Joseph's P.S. Bessbrook are committed to a shared approach to acts of bullying, centred around a two pronged way forward, focusing on proactively developing:

1. A strong anti- bullying culture that complements our school ethos fully.
2. Effective responses to bullying behaviours when they do arise based around the 3 principles of: RESPONDING to the bullying that has taken place, RESOLVING the concern and RESTORING the well-being of all involved.

The following documents have been used for guidance in devising this policy:

- United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- NIABF: Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour-April 2013
- DENI 2001 Pastoral care for schools: Promoting positive Behaviour
- DENI circular 2003/13 'Welfare & Protection of Pupils' Education & Libraries NI

Order.

- DENI guidance on Cyber bullying
- NICCY 'Having Your Say In Bullying Policies'
- Criminal Justice (No. 2) (NI) Order 2004
- 'Pastoral care in schools – Child Protection' DE 1999
- C.R.E.D. Programme

Links with other school policies

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care Policy.

It links with the

Child Protection Policy: the school outlines the steps to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies.

Positive Behaviour Policy: the school outlines the types of behaviours which are considered appropriate and inappropriate.

Special Needs Policy: the school outlines how we facilitate the needs of individual children, including behavioural difficulties.

ICT/E-Safety Policy: the school outlines the steps we take to ensure children's safety in the school when utilising ICT.

PDMU Policy: Learning area of the Northern Ireland curriculum.

Newcomer Policy: The induction and integration of pupils from a variety of backgrounds.

Participation and consultation process

In accordance with the 2003 NI Education and Libraries Order, we have collect and variety of evidence to assist the review of our anti-bullying procedures during 2021-22.

This includes, but will remain a 'fluid' list and may change based on situations arising both in school and in the local and wider community.

A. Involving our pupils: (These are the steps followed when we update the policy.)

All staff were determined that this anti-bullying policy would be very much the outcome of combined pupil, parent, staff and governor input. As such work undertaken with the pupils took a full three months and the stages worked through are outlined below:

1. Pupils from P1 – P7 were audited re their perceptions of bullying.
2. Each teacher brought his/her pupils' work together and a whole school definition of the term 'bullying' was drawn up.
3. Teachers brought the definition back to their classes and did a lot of interactive work with pupils to ensure that they were clear as to what constitutes bullying as opposed to day-to-day disagreements.
4. Pupils engaged in circle time/ other activities/ discussions to explore:
 - The different types of bullying: Physical, Verbal, Exclusion, Cyber, Racist etc.
 - Common locations in which bullying takes place.
 - How a bully should be treated.
 - How someone who has been bullied should be supported.
5. The school council continues to develop as a very definite context for providing a pupil voice. Its remit will be developed to include playing a role in dealing with the bullying behaviour within St Joseph's PS.' Mrs Hannaway works with the school council to organise and deliver a planned training programme for school council in this.

B. Involving our parents:

1. From the outset it was seen as imperative that parents should have an input into our policy so that they could be confident in relation to the procedures within St Joseph's PS for responding effectively within this extremely emotive area. Therefore, a focus group of parents is invited participate when updating this policy. This group were presented with a draft copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy, in term 1 2021, to have input into the drafting process. The focus group represented a cross section of the school community experience.

C. School Governors:

1. Members of the Boards of Governors are asked to ensure that the Anti-Bullying Policy is updated, implemented and fit for purpose.
2. The Designated Governor for Child Protection will work the staff of St. Josephs to overseen the delivery of the policy in physical form.

3. Bullying issues or concerns are set as an agenda at every BOG meeting under the heading Children Protection. Governors will be informed of any and all incidents and how they are being addressed.

Agreed definition of bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is usually repeated behaviour by one or more pupils carried out to intentionally hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others. While this behaviour is usually repeated, single incidents may be considered bullying behaviour. When an alleged incident of bullying occurs, and it has been reported to a member of staff, recorded and assessed as a bullying behaviour, St. Joseph's P.S. will intervene through the use of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Bullying, however, is not the same as 'unacceptable behaviour'. An example of unacceptable behaviour would be when a pupil loses their temper during a game and strikes out at another pupil. Unacceptable rough behaviour which leads to another pupil being hurt is not tolerated at St Joseph's and pupils will be given support and encouragement to change this type of behaviour. When behaviour of this nature occurs a 'Playground Report form' will be filled in (page 8). Staff of St. Joseph's P.S. Bessbrook will respond to unacceptable behaviour which does not fall within the category of bullying behaviour through the appropriate policy e.g. Positive Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, S.E.N. Policy or Suspensions and Expulsions Policy.

This policy does agree that a one off incident may be identified as bullying behaviour and in such cases the appropriate interventions will be implemented as with any reported bullying incident.

Examples of bullying behaviour include, (but not limited to):

- Physical: hitting, jostling, interfering with personal property, nipping, punching, kicking, tripping, and biting.
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, taunting, offensive remarks, sarcastic remarks, spreading rumours.
- Indirect/Emotional: some forms of exclusion/omission, talking behind backs, threats, circulating nasty notes, belittling another's abilities or achievements, leaving people out of games or activities intentionally, enticing others to intentionally other
- Non-Verbal: rude gestures, spitting, pulling faces, dirty looks, staring
- Cyber Bullying: text messages, phone calls, sending inappropriate images

As a school which stands against bullying we aim:

- To promote self discipline and respect for authority among pupils
- To encourage good behaviour and respect for others
- To strive to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils
- To ensure an acceptable standard of behaviour
- To protect our pupils by helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe

The staff will:

- Foster self esteem, self respect and respect for others in our pupils
- Be alert to signs of bullying behaviour
- Deal with instances of bullying behaviour promptly and effectively
- Discuss bullying and its effects with our pupils e.g. Circle Time and PDMU
- Listen to children who have been bullied and strive to deal with it effectively
- Listen to and act on any complaint made by a parent
- Report and record suspected cases of bullying to Principal/Designated teacher using Bullying Concern Assessment forms (App 1 Page 9)
- Inform other staff e.g. Classroom Assistants and Supervisory Assistants
- Encourage pupil to take responsibility for his/her actions, reflect on behaviour and modify his/her actions (App. 3-4 p18-19.)

Prevention of bullying behaviour:**Pastoral Care and Ethos:**

Our School Council members put forward the views and opinions of our pupils and represent very clearly the 'pupil voice'. We encourage our pupils to express their feelings, fears and concerns. This is facilitated through our Grow In Love and PDMU programmes. We promote and reward positive behaviour through praise, Dojo points, Golden Time and other awards.

Break and Lunch-time play:

We support classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors in the promotion of positive play and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying. Pupils in each class from P3-7 act as playground buddies and are given roles of responsibility to help prevent bullying occurring. We provide a wide range of play equipment to ensure that pupils are happily engaged in appropriate playtime activities. (C-19 has limited the implementation of this. To be reviewed based on NHS Guidelines.)

Curriculum:

Teachers in P.1 and P.2 fully implement the PDMU programme which helps children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness and communication skills. Young pupils are taught the 'High Five' strategy:

1. Ignore 2. Talk Friendly 3. Walk Away 4. Talk Firmly 5. Report.

Anti-bullying Week:

We register with the N.I. Anti-Bullying Forum and have an anti-bullying week where we highlight and discuss this issue throughout the whole school, which includes, Nursery, Main Stream, Learning Support Class 1 and 2 and Autism Classes 1 and 2. We use resources from the N.I. Anti-Bullying Forum throughout the school year. Each year one class presents an informative 'Anti-Bullying' assembly for the whole school/key stages. We highlight aspects of anti-bullying on our school website, Class Dojo and Twitter accounts.

Anti-bullying Workshops:

Pupils in KS2 participate in a range of activities, including workshops delivered by outside agencies such as Women's Aid, PSNI and NSPCC which help them identify strategies to use if they observe or are subjected to bullying behaviours. We have Digital Leader who promote the need for online safety throughout the year.

Information Evenings for parents:

Parents are presented with opportunities to attend workshops dealing with issues such as cyber safety and anti-bullying. These take place annually through our Extended Schools Cluster

Posters:

Pupils create and display anti-bullying posters. Commercially produced posters are also displayed which present pupils with messages and strategies to counteract bullying behaviour.

Assemblies:

The weekly assembly is used to present information to pupils and aspects of acceptable and or unacceptable behaviour are often discussed. The principal regularly visits each class to discuss matters which affect pupils and listens carefully to suggestions from pupils. These suggestions are implemented, if appropriate. (Due to C-19 regulations. Assemblies have been posted on Class Dojo sites for parents, pupils and staff to use as discussion points.)

Responding to a bullying Concern:

Pupils are

If you are being bullied, you can do something about it. **You** can make a difference!

- **TELL, TELL, TELL**
- Talk to someone who you feel comfortable with
- Talk over what to do with a friend, a teacher, your mum or dad or someone you trust
- Report any incident of bullying behaviour you may witness to an adult immediately
- Refrain from bullying behaviour of any kind

Remember – it's right to tell an adult that you are experiencing bullying behaviour and to ask them for help.

We will encourage our parents to:

- Watch for any signs of their child experiencing bullying behaviour
- Inform the school of any suspected bullying behaviour within school
- Encourage their children to report any incidents of bullying behaviour to a member of staff
- Co-operate fully with the school.

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying behaviour

- Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned
- When an incident is reported the information will be passed onto the following people:

The teacher of the pupils involved

Mrs Hannaway (as principal)

Mr Doran (as designated teacher for Child Protection)

Mrs Early (Deputy-designated teacher for Child Protection)

Mrs Nicks (Deputy-designated teacher for Child Protection)

- An investigation will be carried out by Mrs Hannaway in consultation with Mr Doran and/or Mrs Early and in co-operation with any staff concerned

- The child being bullied and any witnesses will be interviewed separately. Written records will be made using the school's 'Bullying Concern Assessment Form, (App 2 Page 9)
- If deemed appropriate the bully and the child being bullied will be interviewed together (if the victim is agreeable to this)
- The bully and the child being bullied will be reminded about the seriousness of bullying behaviour and what effect it can have on others
- If bullying is proved to have taken place a verbal warning will be given and evidence will be recorded
- Parents of pupils involved will be informed by the principal in accordance with Child Protection Procedures. Parents will be informed of the details of actions taken and any sanctions put in place
- In the event that the bullying is still not resolved parents should detail complaints in writing to the principal, outlining everything that has taken place, including dates of incidents, reporting to school and action taken by the school. Parents will receive a written response to their complaint
- If the complaint is not dealt with satisfactorily, parents will be referred to Board of Governors.

Recording Incidents of bullying:

If the school have reason to believe bullying is taking place they will complete the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (App 2 Page 9.) Incidents of Bullying Behaviour will also be recorded on SIMs by the class teacher. (*"Using SIMS Behaviour Management to Record a Bullying Concern - Guidance for Schools 2019" and the "Anti Bullying Quick Reference Help sheet"*)

When recording and completing the Bullying Assessment Form the staff of St. Joseph's will investigate the 'motivation' behind the incident/allegation.

Motivations behind bullying behaviour are wide ranging.

Motivations include, but are not limited to:

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

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal/Vice Principal, Designated Teacher or Deputy-Designated Teacher in consultation with staff, parents and children. Parents will receive a copy of the policy and are encouraged to comment as appropriate. This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed every two years.

**St. Joseph's P.S. Bessbrook
Playground Report**

Name of Child: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Who was involved in the incident?

Where did it happen?

What did incident involve?

☐

hitting

☐

biting

☐

punching

☐

spitting

☐

inappropriate
Language

☐

name calling

☐

other

My understanding of what occurred: _____

Action taken: _____

Name of person who dealt with incident: _____

Is any further action needed?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Signed (C.A) _____

Teacher _____

App 2:
Incident Date:

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments

PART 1

<p>ASSESSMENT OF CONCERN</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date: </p> <p>Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:</p> <p><i>“bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication</i> <i>(b) any other act, or</i> <i>(c) any combination of those,</i> <p><i>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.</i></p>									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;"></th> <th style="width: 30%;">Name(s)</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Gender M / F</th> <th style="width: 30%;">DOB/Year Group</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 50px; vertical-align: top;">Person(s) reporting concern</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Name(s)	Gender M / F	DOB/Year Group	Person(s) reporting concern				
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Person(s) reporting concern									
<p>Check records for previously recorded incidents</p> <div style="height: 100px;"></div>									

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff). Include dates of event(s), the type of information gathered and where the information is stored (i.e. on paper or in SIMS).

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met: The school will treat any incident which meets these criteria as bullying behaviours.	
Is the behaviour intentional?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour repeated?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	YES / NO
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	YES / NO

One-off Incident

When determining whether a one-off incident may be classified as bullying, the school shall take into consideration the following criteria and use the information gathered to inform and guide the decision making process:	
Criteria:	Information gathered:
severity and significance of the incident	
evidence of pre-meditation	
Significant level of physical/emotional impact on individual/s	
Significant level of impact on wider school community	
Status/nature of previous relationships between those involved	
Records exist of previous incidents involving the individuals	

YES the above criteria have been met and bullying behaviour has occurred.	NO the above criteria have not been met and bullying behaviour has not occurred.
The criteria having been met, proceed to complete Part 2 of this Bullying Concern Assessment Form	The criteria having not been met, proceed to record the details in the Behaviour Incident section of this Behaviour Management Module. Refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy of your school, continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate.
Agreed by:	
Status:	
On:	

PART 2

2.1 Who was targeted by this behaviour?

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Individual to individual 1:1
- ☐ Individual to group
- ☐ Group to individual
- ☐ Group to group

2.2 In what way did the bullying behaviour present?

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Physical (includes for example, jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking)
- ☐ Any other physical contact (which may include use of weapons)
- ☐ Verbal (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)
- ☐ Indirect (includes omission, isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)
- ☐ Electronic (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)
- ☐ Written
- ☐ Other Acts - Please specify:

2.3 Motivation (underlying themes): this is not a definitive list

Select one or more of the following:

- ☐ Age
- ☐ Appearance
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Political Affiliation
- ☐ Community background
- ☐ Gender Identity
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)
- ☐ Looked After Status (LAC)
- ☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown
- ☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)
- ☐ Ability
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Race
- ☐ Not known
- ☐ Other – Please specify:

PART 3A

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR **PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent / carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carers:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 3B

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR **PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent / carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carers:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 4

REVIEW OF BULLYING CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO DATE

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Date of Review Meeting:

Part 4A Following the Review Meeting, to what extent have the success criteria been met?

- ☐ 1 – Fully
- ☐ 2 – Partially
- ☐ 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give
details:

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Part 4B If the success criteria have not been met, continue to:

- ☐ Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level
- ☐ Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention
- ☐ Follow Anti-bullying policy
- ☐ Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on
- ☐ Follow Safeguarding Policy
- ☐ Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- ☐ Engage with Board of Governors

Agreed by:

School	Signed:
	Date:
Parent	Signed:
	Date:
Pupil	Signed:
	Date:

App 3:

Restorative Questioning

	Adult Questions	Pupil Reflection
1.	Tell me what happened?	
2.	What were you thinking that led you to behave that way?	
3.	Who has been affected by what you have done?	
4.	Can you tell me how that person has been affected by your behaviour?	
5.	What do you think you need to do to make things right?	

App 4:

Worth a Re-Think (For Pupil Displaying Bullying Behaviour)

Happenings → thoughts → feelings → behaviour → consequences

What happened?	What did you think?	How did you feel?	What did you do?	Consequences