



Rathfriland High School

Addressing Bullying Policy

Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory		December 2022	June 2021	June 2024	R Chalmers

Related Documents and Location

- Pastoral Care
- Code of Conduct and Positive Behaviour
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- Special Educational Needs
- Health and Safety Policy

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Introductory Statement

The school community in Rathfriland High School will not accept bullying type behaviour of any kind, to any member of the school community, by any member of the school community.

This policy has been written in line with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016, up-to-date legislation and guidance provided by the Department of Education, training supported by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum, and in consultation with all stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, Board of Governors. The purpose of this policy is to promote an anti-bullying culture in Rathfriland High School, to help staff support pupils who have experienced bullying type behaviours and to provide restorative support for pupils displaying bullying type behaviour.

Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001) paragraph 125 states the following:

“As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with accepted school policy and procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour”.

Rationale

Bullying type behaviour affects everyone, not just students experiencing and displaying bullying type behaviours, but also their families. It also affects pupils who watch and other pupils who can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying type behaviour is neither an inevitable part of school life, nor a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. Rathfriland High School is completely opposed to all forms of bullying type behaviours and will not tolerate it. All members of the school community have the right to learn and work in a secure and caring environment, and the responsibility to contribute to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Legislation

This policy is informed and guided by current legislation and DE Guidance listed below:

The Legislative Context

- Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 Article 3 – see DE 1998/25
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- The Education (2006 Order) (Commencement No.2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

DE Guidance

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour DE 2001
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools DE 2017 – to be read in conjunction with
 - *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's (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017*
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019

Duties placed on the Board of Governors and the Principal

Members of the Board of Governors will be trained in their role and responsibilities within the statutory expectations. The Board of Governors is required to

“safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school” (Article 17:2)

The primary duties of the Board of Governors are to:

- Secure measures to prevent bullying type behaviour
- Keep a record of all incidents of bullying type behaviour involving a registered pupil at the school

The Principal must ensure that measures to prevent bullying type behaviour are included in the positive behaviour policy.

All stakeholders must be consulted on general principles and measures to prevent bullying type behaviour.

Duties relating to pupils attending through BALC arrangements

The Board of Governors has responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of unregistered pupils attending Rathfriland High School from other schools. Any policy pertaining to discipline and behaviour is extended to pupils attending Rathfriland High, whether registered or not. Any effective response/consequence in relation to socially unacceptable or bullying type behaviour must be reported to the school at which the pupil is registered and may only be imposed by the principal.

Ethos

All institutions, both large and small, have individuals with the potential for displaying bullying type behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying type behaviours. Rathfriland High School has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it has made clear that bullying type behaviours are a form of socially unacceptable behaviour. Rathfriland High School actively promotes positive interpersonal relationships between all members of the school community and values their opinion in the development and maintenance of our anti-bullying ethos. The school's ethos is stated below:

Statement of Ethos

The Addressing Bullying policy of Rathfriland High School supports the school's Mission Statement which is 'To instill, through the teaching and learning within the school, the pursuit and realization of excellence alongside values, attitudes and beliefs which foster self-growth, self-confidence and an appreciation of cultural identity coupled with an understanding and acceptance of diversity'.

Aims and Objectives

The Addressing Bullying Policy works in hand with other policies focused on safeguarding, welfare of pupils and promoting positive behaviour. As such, the policy has the following aims and objectives:

All members of the school community are expected to:

- Treat bullying type behaviour as a serious matter and take every possible action to eradicate it from school.
- Address all issues of bullying type behaviour so that each child will be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at Rathfriland High School.
- Have a shared and clearly understood definition of bullying type behaviour.
- Promote the importance of mutual respect and developing positive relationships.
- Create a supportive, caring, and safe environment where teachers teach, and pupils learn without fear of experiencing bullying type behaviours.
- Create opportunities to develop self-esteem.

Related Policies:

- Pastoral Care
- Code of Conduct and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- Special Educational Needs
- Health and Safety Policy

Promotion of Good Behaviour

Central to the prevention of bullying type behaviours in school is the promotion of positive behaviour within all aspects of the school community. The school's Positive Behaviour Policy sets out clear systems and processes for all to build an environment which promotes aspiration, achievement, and restoration. The wellbeing and welfare of every pupil is promoted, and effective guidance and support is provided for those who need it.

The PD programme provides additional opportunities to promote self-reliance, resilience, and effective interpersonal skills, and works with outside agencies to enhance the work taught through the PD and LLW programmes.

Consistent application of the Positive Behaviour Policy is essential in setting and maintaining high standards of behaviour. Good behaviour is acknowledged and affirmed; socially unacceptable behaviour is effectively responded to using strategies from the positive behaviour policy.

Maintaining a positive ethos

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to continue to promote the school's ethos, and to create an affirming learning and teaching environment for all. Strategies to maintain a positive ethos include:

- Organise the community to minimise and prevent opportunities for bullying type behaviours.
- Maintain a firm but fair discipline structure with rules that are simple and easy to understand.
- Ensure that all staff and pupils understand the addressing bullying procedures.
- Make national Anti-Bullying Week a high-profile event each year.
- Raise awareness through regular anti-bullying assemblies.
- Display anti-bullying posters around school and distribute the Anti-Bullying Information leaflet for pupils.
- Encourage pupils to treat others with mutual respect.
- Raise pupils' self-esteem by celebrating success.
- Promote the house system to contribute to raising self-esteem.
- Reward positive behaviour.
- Model high standards of personal socially acceptable behaviour.
- Encourage pupils to report bullying type behaviour when it happens in person, through the Worried@ email, the post box or the QR Code form.
- Deal quickly and fairly with any complaints, involving all concerned and parents.
- Restrict use of mobile phones in school.
- Deliver training/workshops on social media and Bullying Type Behaviour (Emotional Resilience);
- Continue to promote resilience and character education through visiting speakers through Personal Development.
- Provide 'safe' zones for pupils (seating plans in classrooms, Chill-out Room).
- Connections with Anti-Bullying Ambassadors across the year groups.
- Support parents through the Parent Leaflet and the Parent Toolkit Resource.

The Consultation Process

The school will consult with all stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff, members of the Board of Governors) during the writing process of any policy. Other methods of consultation used in devising this policy are:

- Pupil surveys
- Governors, staff, and parents are given the opportunity to read the policy and submit any comments, amendments, or additions to the policy

Findings from these surveys and consultations will be used to inform and guide amendments to policy and procedures, identify training needs, inform the SDP, and monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

The Participation Process

Schools are advised to 'create an ethos of participation'. Active participation will be encouraged through the following activities:

- Activities during the annual NIABF Anti-Bullying Week
- Pupil questionnaires
- Assemblies
- The preventative curriculum through taught programmes such as PD, LLW and Form time
- Engagement in extra-curricular activities
- Promotion of school ethos through the school website & Facebook
- Contributing to the consultation process in the development of policies
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Worried@ email & QR Code
- Pupil & Parents information leaflets
- Parent Toolkit

The Addressing Bullying in Schools ACT 2016:

“(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 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”.

Any allegations of bullying type behaviour will be determined against the following criteria:

- It is repeated, persistent behaviour that happens over a period.
- It targets a specific pupil or group of pupils.
- It is intentionally harmful behaviour.
- It causes physical, emotional, or psychological harm.
- Omission.

The following statement definition will be used to reflect the legal definition:

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

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that we may consider as bullying type behaviour. When assessing a one-off incident, to decide 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.

All socially unacceptable behaviour must be challenged, whether it is bullying type behaviour or not. All socially unacceptable behaviours will be dealt with in line with the school Positive Behaviour Policy. Discretion will be applied regarding a student's capacity to understand the impact of their behaviour from a SEN perspective and about the resilience of the student/students involved.

There are many ways that bullying type behaviour can be displayed. This could include:

Physical: being hit, kicked, punched, tripped up or knocked over; being forced to do something you do not want to do or know that is wrong.

Verbal: being called nasty names, teased, made fun of, threatened, or put down; Having rumours or gossip spread about you, or people talking about you behind your back.

Indirect: having belongings stolen or damaged; being left-out, excluded, or isolated.

Cyber Bullying: cyber bullying is bullying behaviour that is displayed through mobile/smart phones or the internet. This could include:

- Hurtful, embarrassing or threatening material posted online (e.g. on social network websites);
- Nasty messages sent as texts, emails or other websites or apps.
- Being excluded from an online game.
- Fake profiles on a social network to make fun of others.

Preventative Measures

The focus of this section is to set out the measures to be taken by the school to prevent bullying type behaviours, as defined in the section above. Beyond this, the measures set out here aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community. Under the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work should be on prevention.

Examples of preventative measures include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying type behaviour, including the methods and motivations, through PD/LLW (e.g. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness training)
- Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day
- Development of peer-led systems e.g. Peer Mentors to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- Development of effective strategies for unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch) e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of play areas, and provision of the Chill Out Room to meet the needs of pupils
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying
- Development of effective strategies for the management of Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer relationships and networks, e.g. sporting activity, creative arts, leisure, and games, etc.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are several ways schools can further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
- Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. EA Transport, etc.) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (e.g. local shops, cafes, etc.), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff on bus duty).

Awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying type behaviour and support for pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible, and respectful way will be facilitated through:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PD/LLW, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g. C2K, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Involving local experts e.g. O2 guru.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy)

As technology is constantly changing, the policy will be monitored, and changes will be made when necessary.

Responsibilities

Pupils (experiencing bullying type behaviours)

- Be assertive towards the pupil displaying bullying type behaviours, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group; students displaying bullying type behaviours usually target individuals
- Try not to let the students displaying bullying type behaviours know you are feeling upset
- Tell someone you can trust – a teacher, peer mentor, lunch-time supervisor, parent, friend, another pupil, family member
- Ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone
- Save copies of electronic forms of bullying type behaviours (text messages, pictures, threads of conversations etc.)
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening

Pupils (displaying bullying type behaviours)

- Acknowledgement of their involvement in socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviours be it independently or with support
- Seek support (pending personal capabilities) to prevent further display of socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviours via a teacher, supervisor, parent, or family member
- Understand that all behaviour is communication, accepting interventions to address their behaviour and to assist them to move forward to manage their emotions, challenges, and needs positively (pending personal capabilities)
- Develop and enhance their level of emotional regulation, empathy, and inclusivity (pending personal capabilities)

Pupils (bystanders)

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation
- Don't rush over and take on the student displaying bullying type behaviours
- Don't be made to join in
- If possible, encourage the students displaying bullying type behaviours to stop
- If you can, let the student displaying bullying type behaviours know that you do not like his/her behaviour
- Shout for help
- Let the person experiencing the bullying type behaviours know that you are going to get help
- Tell someone as soon as you can
- Encourage the person experiencing the bullying type behaviours to tell someone
- Ask someone you trust what to do
- Don't contribute to online conversations where cyber bullying type behaviour is occurring

Staff and the Bullying Support Team

As part of the preventative measures across school, all staff should endeavour to:

- Foster self-esteem, self-respect, and respect for others in all pupils
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- Discuss bullying type behaviours with classes as requested, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is experiencing and the pupil displaying bullying behaviour, and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying type incidents when they happen
- Listen to children who have experienced bullying type behaviours, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
- Report suspected incidents of bullying type behaviour using the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)
- Follow the procedures for intervention as outlined in this policy
- Act promptly and effectively in accordance with agreed procedures
- Pupils may be referred or request referral to the school counsellor for further support

When responding to a bullying type behaviour, staff should adopt a positive mind set. They should be prepared with options for how to respond to incidents of alleged bullying type behaviour in a planned,

deliberate, and positive way. Confronting pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour requires a high amount of self-control as well as preparation to know what to say and do.

The following are important factors when managing an alleged bullying type behaviour incident:

- **Be calm**
- **Be positive**
- **Be assertive**
- **Be confident**

Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying type behaviour which conforms to the school's agreed definition of bullying, aligned with legislation, and outlined in this policy.

Assess the situation and its severity level. Summarise the incident clearly and concisely using the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) within SIMS (see appendix for details on how to complete the BCAF).

Staff should take account of the following:

- The nature of the bullying type behaviour – for example deliberate teasing, excluding, or hitting. There is a tendency among those who have a duty of care to rate some bullying type behaviour, particularly violence, as more serious than other subtle forms. This can be a dangerous mistake and leaves us vulnerable to ignoring 'teasing' or 'omission'
- The frequency of the bullying type behaviour: daily, weekly, or less often
- The duration of the bullying type behaviour: whether over a short or prolonged period
- The perceptions of the child experiencing bullying type behaviours – the seriousness can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the pupil experiencing the behaviour. "It can be defined as bullying only by measuring the effects the acts have on the vulnerable child." (Besag, 1989)

All these findings should be noted in Part 1 of the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF).

Any member of staff can respond to a bullying type concern. For most staff completion of the first section of the BCAF is the extent of involvement. Thereafter the incident will be followed by either the pastoral team or the Bullying Support Team (BST). The BST will:

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS)
- Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying type behaviour
- Identify any themes or motivating factors
- Identify the type of bullying type behaviour being displayed
- Identify intervention level
- Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences **and supports** 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 type behaviour 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 effective responses for those displaying bullying type behaviour.

Please note that information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

It is essential that pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and Non-Teaching staff. Pupils can report a concern by:

- Talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g., in a homework diary)
- Speak to one of the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Use the red post-box in the foyer
- Use the Worried@ email
- Scan the QR Code and complete the online form

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying type behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. All pupils are encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying type behaviour that they experience or is experienced by another.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

All concerns about bullying type behaviour will be taken seriously and will be followed up in line with this policy. If the parent/carer is unsatisfied with the way the bullying type behaviour has been addressed, a complaint may be made through the Complaints Procedure.

- Look for signs of distress or unusual behaviour which might be evidence of bullying type behaviour.
- Advise their children to report any bullying type behaviour to their Year Tutor, VP or any member of staff they feel comfortable with.
- Advise their children not to retaliate violently, either verbally or physically, nor by using social media.
- Be sympathetic and supportive and reassure their children that appropriate action will be taken by school.
- Inform the school of any suspected bullying type behaviour, even if their children are not involved.
- Co-operate with the school: if their child is accused of bullying type behaviour, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying type behaviour, both for the child who is experiencing, and those displaying bullying type behaviour.
- Appreciate that the school needs time to fully investigate the incident.

Feedback on the process of addressing an ongoing bullying type behaviour 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 parents/carers.

Guidance for staff working in partnership with parents/carers

Bullying is often reported to schools by parents/carers. Such complaints should be met openly and sympathetically.

School staff and parents/carers meet on bullying type behaviour issues because of:

- Parents/carers participating in the development of the school's Addressing Bullying policy.
- Parents/carers expressing concern about their child's involvement in a bullying type behaviour incident/situation, particularly if their child has experienced this behaviour.
- The school requesting a meeting with parent/carers regarding a bullying type incident.

Staff should consider the following when meeting with the parents/carers of pupils displaying and experiencing bullying type behaviour:

- Acknowledge that the parent/carer may be under stress because of having to come into school to discuss an incident with a member of staff.
- Try to get clear facts from the parent/carer.
- Ensure that they have already gathered as much reliable information as possible and be clear that the behaviour does meet the criteria.
- Ensure that the parent/carer understands how their child's behaviour conforms to the school's agreed definition.
- Share concerns about what has been happening to the child experiencing bullying type behaviour.
- Emphasise that it is aspects of their child's behaviour that must change; try to refer to their child's positive qualities.
- Be understanding.
- Make it clear that school cares and will do what is possible and will act in accordance with the school's Addressing Bullying policy.
- Tell the parent/carer that school will need time (be specific) to gather information and that they will be kept informed. Request that the parent/carer be understanding while the incident is being investigated.

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 by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

- A child displaying bullying behaviours
- A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying type behaviours.

Guidance for the Bullying Support Team

The Bullying Support Team is comprised of members of staff: The Tutor Team, Senior Teachers and Vice Principal. This group will assess all alleged bullying type behaviours as they arise and proceed through the different steps of the procedure, as set out on the legislative BCAF and the flowchart.

Once an alleged bullying incident has occurred:

1. Ensure that Part 1 of the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) has been completed clearly by the member of staff referring the concern.
2. Check that the behaviour constitutes bullying type behaviour, as defined in this policy. Proceed to Parts 2 and 3 of the BCAF if the incident is deemed to be bullying type behaviour. Incidents not regarded as bullying type behaviours must be dealt with through the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. These will be referred to the appropriate Year Tutor. Check for any records for any previous incidents.
3. Based on this assessment:
 - Choose an appropriate intervention(s) from the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviours Intervention Levels, for all involved in the incident (both those experiencing bullying type behaviour and those displaying bullying type behaviours);
 - Ensure effective communication amongst all parties. Consider the possible need for:
 - Parental involvement
 - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) involvement
 - Consequences – as appropriate
 - Risk assessment
 - External agency involvement, e.g. the Child Protection Support Service for School (CPSSS)
(This is not an exhaustive list)
4. Refer to the support materials provided on the intervention/strategy you have selected, e.g. Think Time Discussion and Review Sheets and Method of Shared Concern
5. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of your chosen intervention/strategy. Note findings on the BCAF in Part 4
6. Record of actions taken, and outcomes achieved on BCAF
7. Review the outcomes to determine whether further action is required and progress accordingly. Complete the BCAF and store it electronically in a Private Folder.

Implementing the above process will provide opportunities for self-reflection, development and learning for all parties concerned, resulting in the effective management of bullying type behaviours. This reflection should inform and guide the on-going review and development of the school's Addressing Bullying Policy, procedures, and practice.

Recording Bullying Concerns

The school will centrally record and digitally store all relevant information related to reports of bullying type behaviours, including:

- how the bullying type behaviour was displayed (the method)
- the motivation for the behaviour
- how each incident was addressed by the school
- the outcome of the interventions employed

Records will be kept electronically in a Private Folder. 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 type behaviour will be used to inform the future development of Addressing Bullying Policy and practice within the school.

Procedures

- When a concern is made to any member of staff, notes must be taken to complete Part 1 of the BCAF.
- The member of staff must complete this swiftly, clearly and with all the required detail and email it to Year Tutor.
- The Bullying Support Team/Tutor Team will assess the concern as
 - Bullying type behaviour and then proceed
 - Socially unacceptable behaviour and refer the concern to the appropriate Year Tutor
- The Bullying Support Team/Tutor Team will complete the process.
- Parents will be contacted as appropriate.
- Restorative work will be carried out for both the person experiencing bullying type behaviour and the person displaying bullying type behaviour.
- The completed BCAF will be saved in a Private Folder;
- Outcomes for pupils experiencing and displaying bullying type behaviour will be reviewed after a period.

The Bullying Concern Assessment Form should be completed when addressing alleged or bullying type behaviour at any level. This must be done digitally.

Completing the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) and SIMS

Part 1 of the Bullying Concern Assessment Form must be completed by all members of staff making a referral about any incident of bullying. The Bullying Support Team will assess the incident based on the information provided in Part 1, and impartial detail is essential in making the correct assessment.

Parts 2 - 4 will be completed by the Bullying Support Team through the process. All details should be saved in Private Folder by the Vice Principal.

Part 1

1. Part 1 of the BCAF must be completed for every alleged or bullying type concern, with clear detail
2. If the concern is found to be bullying type behaviour (as outlined in the definition in the policy) further details are needed in Parts 2 and 3 of the BCAF.

If the concern is not found to be bullying (as outlined in the definition in the policy), this finding should be noted on the BCAF and further action should be taken, in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. The incident will be referred to the appropriate Year Tutor.

3. The member of staff making the referral should include details of:
 - Pupils involved
 - Role in the incident
 - Date
 - Gender
 - Motivation of the incident
4. When adding information to the BCAF keep your language factual and do not express opinion.
5. Once this section is completed, please email it to the relevant Year Tutor.

Part 2

This section of the BCAF will be completed by the Bullying Support Team. This part of the form clarifies the main points of the incident following the initial assessment to establish if the concern is bullying type behaviour or socially unacceptable behaviour. The updated BCAF saved in a Private Folder.

Part 3A: Supporting pupils experiencing bullying type behaviour

This section must be completed by the Bullying Support Team. This part of the BCAF records strategies used to support the pupil(s) experiencing bullying type behaviours, in the form of an action plan. Interventions to use can be found in the 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour', pages 16-19. Targets set should be SMART and be understood by all involved. Regular dialogue should be used to build up and maintain resilience. Copies of the agreed strategies should be made available to others (parents, Year Tutor, SENCo); this will ensure buy-in and wider ranging development of the strategic targets to be employed.

Part 3B: Supporting Pupils Displaying Bullying Type Behaviour

This section must be completed by the Bullying Support Team. This part of the BCAF records strategies used to support the pupil(s) displaying bullying type behaviours, in the form of an action plan. Interventions to use can be found in the 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour', pages 16-19. Targets set should be SMART and be understood by all involved. Regular dialogue should be used to build up and maintain resilience. Copies of the agreed strategies should be made available to others (parents, Year Tutor, SENCo); this will ensure buy-in and wider ranging development of the strategic targets to be employed.

Pupils who are displaying regular socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviour may need additional support from outside agencies. This should be explored by the relevant Year Tutor.

Any pupil involved in any bullying type behaviour as either the pupil experiencing or displaying bullying type behaviour should be supported in a restorative manner, with regular interaction to measure the effectiveness of the strategies used in the action plan set out in Parts 3A/B.

Part 4: Review of Bullying Concern and Actions to Date

This section must be completed by the Bullying Support Team. In this part of the BCAF, progress is recorded and further support, if necessary, is noted.

Any updates to any section of the BCAF must be saved electronically in a Private Folder to maintain a full and detailed record of events, procedures used and outcomes.

The BCAF is attached at the end of this policy in the appendices.

Assessing the effectiveness of the Addressing Bullying Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly, and necessary amendments will be made. Training needs will be addressed as these arise. The views of stakeholders will be sought and used to make any adjustments necessary, within the statutory guidance.

Matters to assess include:

- The effectiveness of the Addressing Bullying Policy in recording incidents/concerns.
- Patterns and trends, impact on levels of achievement, efficacy of intervention and support given.
- Reporting and recording processes.
- Effectiveness of identifying motivation and maintaining restoration.
- How the policy integrates with other related policies, and the School Development Plan.

The policy will be reviewed at intervals of no longer than 2 years by the Board of Governors; to assure compliance with all forms of safeguarding, the policy will be reviewed annually. When legislation changes occur, or amendments are deemed necessary at school level, these will be made. Behavioural trends and data gathered through recording of concerns will also be considered during policy review.

All policy amendments should

- Be signed and dated by the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Principal to confirm ratification of the review process.

- Should state how and when parents/carers were consulted.
- Should note when changes were made considering consultation.

The previous Addressing Bullying Policy should be retained to all response to any retrospective concern that arises.

Continuous Professional Development

Staff will receive training on the most up-to-date methods required to respond to any bullying type behaviour, and how to ensure the best records are kept securely.

Training of staff and members of the Board of Governors should be in line with the most current legislation and practice.

CPD records should:

- Include details (date, provider) of training for all involved.
- Identify future training needs based on PRSD outcomes, baseline audit responses and in conjunction with eth SDP process.
- Note how training outcomes are disseminated to staff.
- Monitor impact of training on practice and policy.
- Detail how and when policy amendments have been made to the current Addressing Bullying Policy and procedure because of specific CPD training

Complaints Procedure – At a Glance

Stage One

Write to the Principal

Stage Two

Write to the Chairperson of Board of Governors

Time Limit

To enable complaints to be resolved, please contact the school as soon as possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only be considered within 6 months of the date of the incident(s) about which you are complaining.

Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. **If the complaint is about the principal, proceed to Stage Two.** The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process.

When writing your complaint, please provide clear information and include the following:

- Your name and contact details
- What your complaint is about – please try to be specific
- What you have already done to try to resolve it and
- What you would like the school to do to resolve your complaint

The Principal will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but within 10 school-working days. This will be a short response and you will be sent a copy of, (or a link to) the school's Complaints Procedure. A final response will normally be made within 20 school-working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld. **If, for any reason, the consideration of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.**

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage One, the complaint may be progressed to Stage Two which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two

If your complaint is about the Principal or if the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process. The letter can be left at the school office and marked 'private and confidential'. The Chairperson will convene a committee to consider the complaint.

In the case of the complaint being about the Principal, this committee will investigate the complaint.

Please provide clear information and include the following:

- Reason(s) why you disagree with the stage one findings
- Any aspect in which you think that the school's complaints procedure was not fully followed

The Chairperson of the committee will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but at least within 10 school-working days. A final response will normally be made within 20 school-working days from date of receipt of the second letter. The response will be issued by the Chairperson of the committee and will indicate, with reasons, whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

If, for any reason, the review of a complaint takes longer to complete, complainants will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) www.nipso.org.uk

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent, and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the school. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Contact details for NIPSO are provided below.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

Progressive House

33 Wellington Place

Belfast

BT1 6HN

Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO

Telephone: 02890 233821

Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk

Web: www.nipso.org.uk

What To Expect Under This Procedure

Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with complaints we will ensure:

- Fair treatment
- Courtesy
- A timely response;
- Accurate advice
- Respect for privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility of consultation with other appropriate parties about the complaint
- Clear reasons for decisions

Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

When making a complaint it is important that you:

- Raise issues in a timely manner
- Treat our staff with respect and courtesy
- Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised
- Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels

Rights of parties involved during the investigation

Where a meeting is arranged parties may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

Complainant: - should be informed that they may be accompanied but not represented by another person during the process e.g. spouse, friend, family member or interpreter, provided this person is not offering legal representation or acting in an official capacity.

If the complainant feels unable to speak on their own behalf, they may avail of support from outside agencies as agreed with the school. (Local MLAs / Councillors / Citizens' Advice Bureau / Parenting NI / Children's commissioner)

Staff Members: - should be informed that they may be accompanied or represented by another person during the process e.g. union representative, colleague¹

Pupils: permission should be sought from parents / guardians and parent, guardian or other nominated adult should accompany pupils.

It may be appropriate to seek a written statement if a person is unable to meet for any reason.

Parties should normally be informed when a complaint is made against them and be able to see relevant correspondence.

This Procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

¹ For information on workers' statutory rights to be accompanied, this should be read in accordance with Section 3 of the LRA's Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (Paras 110-116).

Timeframes

Stage One – Normally acknowledge as soon as possible but at least within 10 school-working days, with final response normally provided within 20 school-working days

Stage Two – Normally acknowledge as soon as possible but at least within 10 school-working days, with final response normally provided within 20 school-working days

If, for any reason, the consideration / review of a complaint takes longer to complete, complainants will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Equality

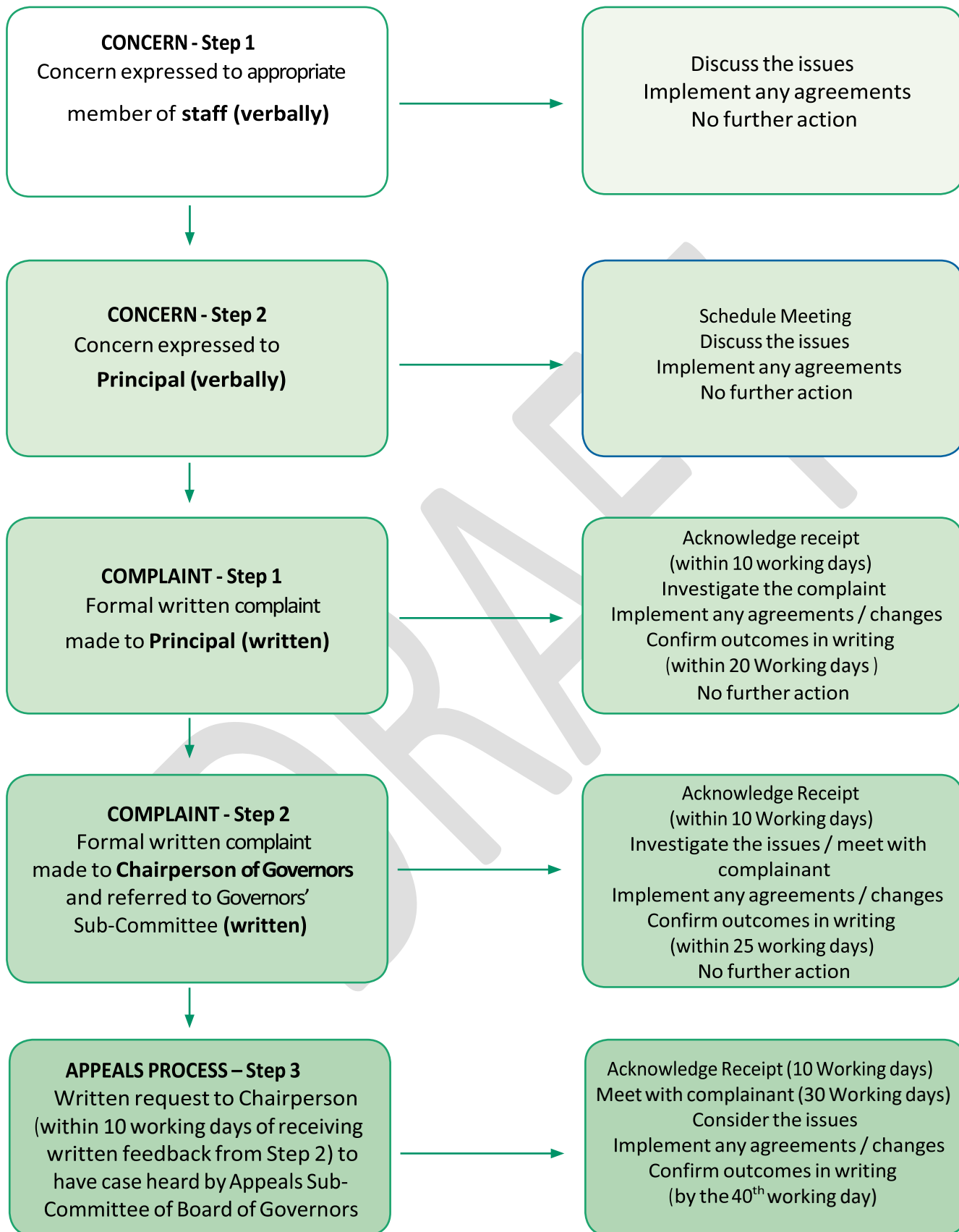
The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process.

Unreasonable Complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the Complaints Procedure having been completed and the complaint has been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. The school must balance the rights of an individual to make a complaint and have it fairly investigated with the rights of staff not to be subjected to unacceptable actions or behaviour.

Any decision to treat a complainant as unreasonable must consider the need to ensure that the Complaints Procedure is being fairly applied and every attempt has been made to communicate and address concerns about behaviour/conduct with the complainant. In the event that such a decision has been taken, the complainant will be advised accordingly.

Concern & Complaints Process Flowchart

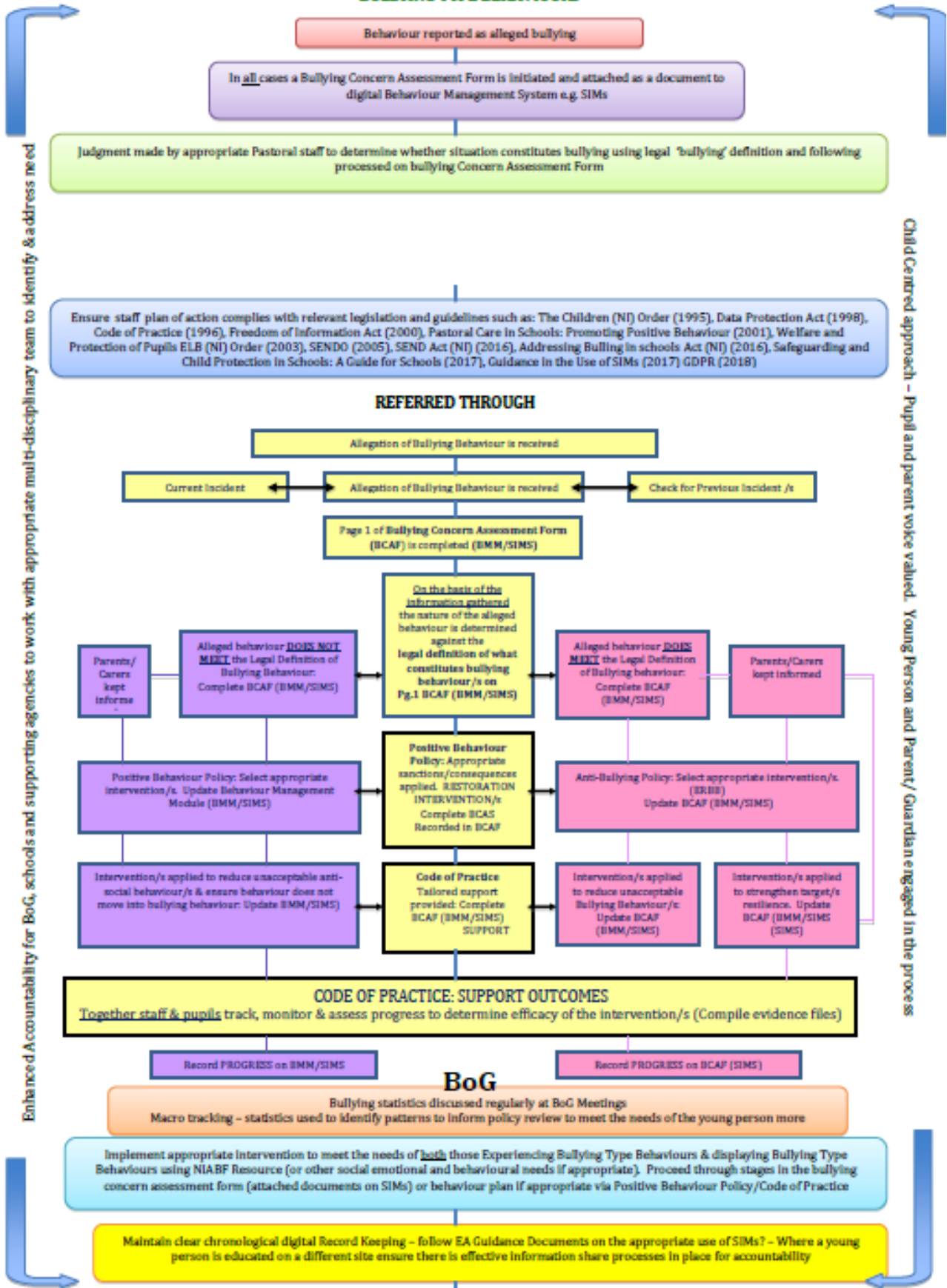


Appendices

- Procedures Flow Chart
- Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour
- Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)

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PROCESS TO FOLLOW WHEN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING OR DISPLAYING BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOURS



Enhanced Accountability for BoG, schools and supporting agencies to work with appropriate multi-disciplinary team to identify & address need

Child Centred approach - Pupil and parent voice valued. Young Person and Parent/ Guardian engaged in the process

Effective responses to bullying behaviour...



Keep Children and Young People Safe

Access full resource at www.niabf.org.uk

Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)

Incident Date:

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments

PART 1

<p>ASSESSMENT OF CONCERN</p>	<p>Date: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></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"> (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication (b) any other act (including omission), or (c) any combination of those, <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>			
	Name(s)	Gender M / F	DOB/Year Group
Person(s) reporting concern			
<p>Check records for previously recorded incidents</p>			

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 on 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

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Community background	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender Identity	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Looked After Status (LAC)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Relationship Breakdown	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ability	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Race	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Known	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other – Please specify:	<input type="text"/>

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PART 3A

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ADDRESSING 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/carer:
Other Agencies:
Continue to track interventions until an agreed satisfactory outcome has been achieved

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PART 3B

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

REFER TO SCHOOL ADDRESSING 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/carer:

Other Agencies:

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

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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 Addressing 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: