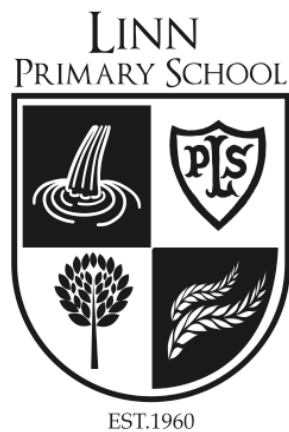


Linn Primary School and Nursery Unit



Anti-bullying Policy

May 2021

1.0

CONTEXT

This policy and procedures document reflects content of the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools' Act (Northern Ireland) 2016'

(Circular Number 2021/12)

2.0

POLICY AIMS

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone in Linn Primary School - pupils, staff (teaching and non-teaching) will have the opportunity to work, learn and teach in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse which we do not tolerate. It is made clear to everyone that this is a form of antisocial behaviour contrary to our core value of: 'Achieving Excellence Together'.

We believe that every member of the school community has the right to:

- feel safe and secure;
- be treated with respect and courtesy;
- have equal opportunities, regardless of sex, race, religion or ability;
- be able to learn; and
- be valued as a member of the school community.

Bullying behaviours of any kind are unacceptable within our school. If bullying does occur, everyone and especially pupils should be able to report incidents and feel confident that they will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Linn Primary School is a **TELLING** school - anyone (including parents/carers) who feels that bullying, whether alleged or observed is happening, is expected to tell a member of staff as soon as possible and all staff are expected to be vigilant and keep a record of alleged/observed incidents. Currently in a Bullying Concerns but gradually moving to SIMs (training to be provided August 2021).

3.0

THE LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

3.1 There is a broad range of legislation relating to preventing bullying taking place in schools. Schools must therefore, be aware of the relevant legislation and guidance material available when creating its 'Anti-Bullying' Policy.

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016;
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003;
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010;

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995; Policy Agreed;
- The Human Rights Act 1998;
- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978.

3.2 Policy & Guidance Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016;
- Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019);
- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001);
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017);
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Health Safety, 2016);
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017).

3.3 The International Context

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

4.0

ETHOS & PRINCIPLES

The following principles that underpin the ethos and values of our school community:

- We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying;
- We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying;
- We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity;
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school;
- 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;
- We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

5.0

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation with the staff, pupils, parents/carers and the governors is an integral part and requirement in the creation of this policy.

6.0

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

(1) Subsection 1 of the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools' Act (NI) 2016' defines bullying as including (but not limited to) the repeated use of:

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

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

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

Bullying is a behaviour that is usually repeated (but is not limited to), which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

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

1. It is normally repetitive and persistent (but is not limited to - sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time).
2. It is intentionally harmful - though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are responsible.
3. It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
4. It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

It is important that everyone, pupils, parents/carers, governors and staff in Linn Primary School:

- recognises the importance of distinguishing between those behaviours which while undesirable and unacceptable do not constitute bullying from those which are undesirable and unacceptable and do constitute bullying because they are proven to be deliberate, hurtful, targeted and/Or repeated over a period of time;
- is sensitive to different perspectives;
- understands bullying can take many forms from teasing and spreading rumours, to causing physical harm. It includes name calling and verbal abuse (face to face, in writing, by phone, on-line, by text message or making comments on social networking sites), mocking or taunting, hitting, writing or drawing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups, and threatening others including demanding money.

7.0

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The Responsibilities of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors must:

- (a) ensure that policies designed to prevent bullying involving a registered pupil at the school are pursued at the school.
- (b) determine the measures to be taken at the school (whether by the Board of Governors, the staff of the school or other persons) with a view to preventing bullying involving a registered pupil at the school:
 1. on the premises of the school during the school day;
 2. while travelling to or from the school during the school term;
 3. while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school; or
 4. while the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school.
- (c) review those measures:
 1. at intervals of no more than four years: or
 2. at such times as the Department of Education/Education Training Inspectorate may direct.
- (d) before determining or revising those measures, consult the Principal, the registered pupils at the school and the parents of those pupils.
- (e) in determining or reviewing those measures, have due regard to any guidance given by the Department of Education:
- (f) prepare a written statement of such measures and secure that:
 - I. a copy of that statement is given or otherwise made available in such a form as the Board of Governors considers appropriate, to the parents/carers of all registered pupils at the school and to the staff of the school;
 - II. copies of the statement are available for inspection at the school at all reasonable times in such form as the Board of Governors considers appropriate: and
- (g) secure that such measures are taken.

7.1.1 Duty to keep a record of incidents of bullying

The Board of Governors must ensure that a record is kept of bullying incidents or alleged bullying that occur:

A record must:

- (a) state what, from all of the circumstances, appears to be the motivation of the incident;
- (b) state the methods of bullying as defined in the definition above: and
- (c) include information about how the incident was addressed.

7.2 The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- be consistent in approach when dealing with bullying concerns/behaviour;
- foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
- discuss bullying with all classes, so that every child learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively.
- keep a record of alleged/observed incidents;
- check all the facts before determining whether or not bullying has taken place;
- keep parents/carers informed;
- use of the curriculum to address issues of bullying and how pupils can deal with it (Circle Time and the Learning Area of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding are particularly relevant in addressing the needs of the children);
- make use of inter-board Anti-Bullying Week materials (NIABF);
- access agencies as required support the school's position in trying to eradicate incidents of bullying. Examples of agencies/organisations that presently support the school in its anti-bullying programme include, PSNI, NSPCC, the Life Education Bus, the Education Welfare Service and 'Gateway'.

Safe-Guarding Team

Primary School

Designated Teacher for Child Protection:	Mrs A Duff
Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection:	Mr A Ritchie & Mrs G Date
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator:	Mrs A Duff
Deputy Pastoral Care Co-ordinator	Mrs G Date

Nursery Unit

Designated Teachers for Child Protection:	Mrs A Duff & Miss V Thompson
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:	Mrs L McKinstry

7.3 The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- report concerns of bullying to staff at once or as soon as is practical. This will help staff to investigate concerns quickly and without information potentially being distorted;
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

7.3.1 Anyone who becomes the target of a pupil displaying bullying behaviour should:

- not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

7.4 The Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

We ask parents/carers to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- advising their children to report any concerns to a member of staff as soon as possible. Parents/carers should also explain to their children the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- checking all the facts - before determining whether bullying has occurred. i.e. the behaviour was deliberate, hurtful, targeted and/or repeated over a period of time. The target found it difficult to defend him/herself;
- co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth, and pointing out the implications of

bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

7.5 The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

8.0 PROCEDURES IN LINN PRIMARY SCHOOL

All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the target and to discipline the pupil/pupils who has/have displayed bullying behaviours. Parents/carers of both victim and bully will be contacted by the school.

Any complaint by a parent/carer that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated, and team action will be taken to protect the target should bullying be identified. A parent/carer making a complaint about bullying will have a response from the school normally within one week of making the complaint. This response will indicate the outcome of any investigation and if it was necessary to take action.

A record of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation are currently kept in a Bullying Concerns book, this will transfer to SIMs following a series of staff training in August.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but may include the one or more of the following:

- *being subject to careful monitoring of behaviour/social interaction until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped;*
- *being kept in at break time and/or lunch time;*
- *shadowing an adult in the playground;*
- *losing any privileges or position of responsibility he/she holds in the school;*
- *being placed on report,*
- *being suspended in accordance with the Education Authority's procedures;*
- *facing expulsion in accordance with Education Authority's procedures.*

Depending on the needs of the pupils, it may be appropriate to provide staff support beyond that of the child's class teacher in the form of behaviour management programmes such as anger management and solution focused strategies.

Peer mediation may be appropriate when pupils have been trained in peer mediation techniques. Trained and supervised mediators (Buddies) through early intervention can help pupils resolve difficult situations and

build trust between the children concerned. Training may be provided by outside agencies such as Childline, Education Welfare and the NSPCC.

9.0 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is linked with the following school policies:

- Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Pastoral Care Policy;
- Health & Safety Policy;
- Relationships & Sexuality Education
- E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of the Internet;
- Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Related Technologies
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers;
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

10.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Board of Governors. However, the policy will be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review. It must also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of education and in light of new guidance.

The pastoral care co-ordinators will collate and review all documentation relating to bullying issues on a termly basis. This will allow the school to identify trends, e.g., individual/groups of pupils displaying bullying behaviour or hotspots where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. This will allow the SLT to provide feedback to the Board of Governors regarding changes in procedures, sanctions, supervision levels, the effectiveness of the definition of bullying etc.

Staff, pupils and parents/carers will complete baseline audits every three years to provide a snapshot of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy and positive behaviour policy.

The School Council provides children with an opportunity to highlight concerns and collaborate with adults when discussing how bullying can be reduced or dealt with.

This is a valuable monitoring and evaluating mechanism. Discussions will take place on a termly basis.

Teachers have worry boxes which may highlight issues that can be addressed in class or in assemblies etc.

This policy was reviewed by representatives of Governors, parents/carers, teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils in line with DENI recommendations.

This policy will be reviewed to assess its implementation and effectiveness in 2024 or as appropriate in line with new legislation, guidelines or as deemed necessary after an incident.

Policy approved by the Board of Governors: 24th May 2021

ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER

Bullying of any sort is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated in Linn Primary School. The following steps are undertaken to ensure that bullying should rarely happen and is stopped immediately:

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Subsection 1 of the Addressing Bullying in School Act (NI) 2016 defines Bullying.

It states, '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.

Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated (but is not limited to), which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of others.

CARING ETHOS

Children are reminded regularly of the importance of working together in harmony and all reports of bullying are taken seriously. Bullies are made aware of the total unacceptability of their actions. The atmosphere in the school is such that bullying is seen as unacceptable and all incidents of it are dealt with promptly.

POSITIVE ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURES

- Every opportunity is used to reinforce the anti-social nature of bullying and the consequences in terms of suffering.
- All school staff have a responsibility to look out for children not playing with others and identify the reasons.
- Assemblies are used to reinforce the importance of looking after younger children and of reporting any incidents of bullying promptly.
- A list of instructions is displayed in prominent locations in the school corridors informing children what to do and who to speak to, if they are unhappy in school.

- We are continually working with staff, pupils and parent/carers to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying **policy** on a regular basis. Good practice suggests the policy should be reviewed on average at least every three years and approved by the **Board of Governors**.
- Supports **staff** to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately;
- Ensures that **pupils** are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy;
- Reports back quickly to parents/**carers** regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy;
- Seeks to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilises the support of the **Education Authority and/or other relevant organisations** when appropriate.

