Anti - Bullying Policy

February 2022

CONTENTS

Section 1

Introduction and Statement

At St Mary's Primary School, we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment. School Mission Statement

In St. Mary's Primary School, we strive to create a secure, stimulating and happy learning environment where all pupils are of equal importance.

We work in close partnership with our parents, promoting catholic values and providing the best education for our pupils, so that the children are given important life skills to use in their role as future adults.

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

The school aims to foster values of tolerance and mutual respect through promoting the self-esteem of all members of the school community.

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

The Anti-Bullying Policy applies at all times whilst in school, when travelling to/from school in school uniform and whilst on Educational Visits.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent or reduce bullying in any form.
- Promote a school ethos where children's core rights are known, respected and upheld.
- Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- Create an emotionally safe environment where positive relationships can develop.
- Ensure all school community, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying behaviour is, and what they should do if bullying behaviour arises
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying behaviour is reported
- Adopt a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success.

Section 2

Context

At St Mary's Primary School, we have based our Anti Bullying Policy on the following legislative and policy guidance:

The Legislative Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19) – Welfare and Protection of Pupils

- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 Article 3 – DE 1998/25

- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

- The Human Rights Act 1998

- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978

- The Education (2006 Order) Commencement no. 2) order (Northern Ireland) 2007

The Policy and Guidance Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)

- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)

- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)

- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)

- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)

The International Context

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

Key Points

At St Mary's Primary School, we take the legal definition of bullying from 'The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016':

- Provides a legal definition of bullying.

- Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.

- Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.

- Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:

- In school, during the school day
- While travelling to and from school
- When under control of school staff, but away from school (e.g. school trip)
- When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the Area Learning Community)

- Requires that the policy be updated at **least every four years**.

• The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child's right to:

- Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (Article 19)

- Be protected from discrimination. (Article 2)

- Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (Article 12)

- Education. (Article 28)

Section 3

Ethos and Principles

At St Mary's Primary School, we have based our Anti Bullying Policy on our school ethos and principles which underpin everything which we do in school:

• 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.

Section 4

Consultation and Participation

At St Mary's Primary School, we have based our Anti Bullying Policy in consultation with registered pupils and their parents/carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

We worked with pupils through the following consultation processes:

• Class-based activities

We worked with parents/carers through the following consultation processes:

• Displayed on the school website

We worked with staff members of the school community through the following consultation processes:

• Engagement activity for all staff at meeting, teaching and non-teaching

• Teaching members of staff involved in writing the anti-bullying policy

We worked with the Board of Governors through the following consultation process:

- All Governors were given a draft copy of the proposed policy and amendments were made after feedback had been given.

Section 5

What is Bullying?

At St Mary's Primary School, we take the legal definition of bullying from 'The Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of 'bullying':

1. – (1) In this Act 'bullying' includes (but is not limited to) the **repeated** use of:

(a) Any verbal, written or electronic communication,

(b) Any other act, or

(c) Any combination of those, by a pupils 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 behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there may be instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

• Severity and significance of the incident

• Evidence of pre-meditation

• Impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)

• Impact of the incidents on wider school community

• Previous relationships between those involved

• Any previous incidents involving the individuals

• Cognitive and SEN ability, imbalance of power, age and size

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Unacceptable Behaviours

At St Mary's Primary School, the following unacceptable behaviours, on the school premises, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:

This list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Physical Acts	Verbal or Written Acts
• Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts • Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, spitting, hair pulling: throwing things • Material harm, such as taking / stealing money or possessions or causing damage to another's property • Making signs or gestures • Writing or drawing offensive notes / graffiti about another.	• Saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others • Making fun of others • Calling another pupil mean and hurtful names • Telling lies or spreading false rumours about others • Trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s • Making threats to others
Omission (Exclusion) • Leaving someone out of a game • Refusing to include someone in group work	**Electronic Acts** **(on our school premises)** Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above Impersonating someone online to cause hurt Sharing images (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone
Emotional or Psychological Harm • Intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem • belittling another's abilities or achievements • menacing looks, stares; rude signs or gestures; negative body language	

SIGNS OF STRESS IN PUPILS WHICH MAY INDICATE BULLYING

- Child's unwillingness to attend school/ lateness/ erratic attendance
- Avoidance, hanging back from playground or staying late at school
- Deterioration of work/ 'mislaid' books, money, equipment or belongings/ under achievement
- Serious illness/ non -specific pains, headaches, tummy upsets, withdrawn, loss of appetite
- Nail biting/ flinching/ jumpiness/ forgetfulness/ distractibility/
- Impulsive hitting out/ out of character temper 'flare up' or restlessness/ sudden aggressiveness
- Stresses manifested at home – bed wetting/ insomnia/ nightmares/ restlessness and irritability
- Reluctance to sit beside or near certain pupils/ hesitant to walk home

At St Mary's Primary School, we acknowledge the various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

Age	Appearance	Breakdown in Peer Relationships	Community Background	Political Affiliation
Gender identity	Sexual orientation	Race	Religion	Disability / Special Educational Needs
	Looked After Child Status	Young Carer Status	Ability	

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 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 incidents.

Section 6

Preventative Measures

At St Mary's Primary School, we aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community.

We aim to create a safe learning environment.

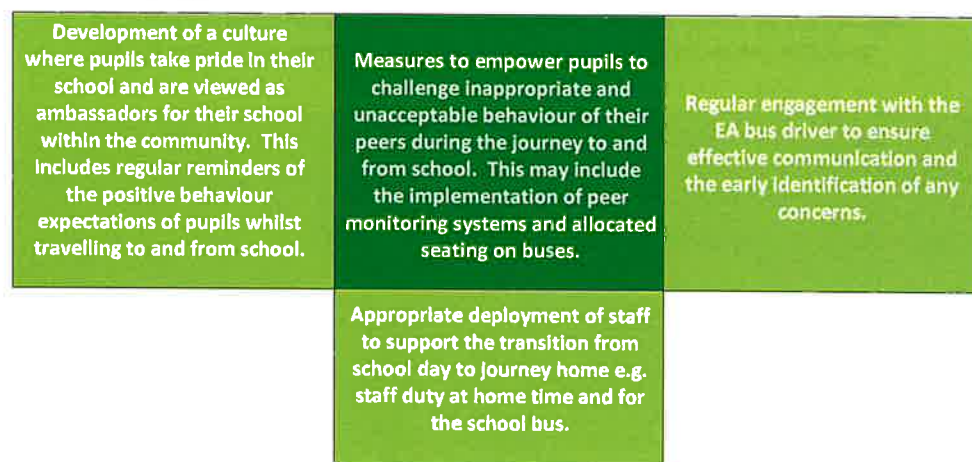Examples of these preventative steps include:

Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy	Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion	Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU/PATHS/NSPCC Keeping Safe	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. resilience building, NSPCC Speak out and Stay Safe Programme)	Development of effective strategies for supervision e.g. training of lunchtime supervisors, zoning of the playground and a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils	Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day	Development of peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
Participation in the NI Anti-Bullying Forum Annual Anti-Bullying Week activities	Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues for example anti bullying assembly, school council, celebration of us.	Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times e.g. break and lunch times	Provision and promotion of extra and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks, for example bus and school prefects, sporting activities, creative arts, leisure and games etc...
e-Safety policy issued to parents and on the school website	Vigilant supervision in school / playground	Consultation with the school council.	Recognise and reward good behaviour

Travelling to and from school -

Ultimately parents are responsible in ensuring their children behave appropriately on the way to and from school. In conjunction with this, we at St Mary's Primary school will take preventative measure to educate against inappropriate behaviour on the way to and from school.

While many of the measures outlined previously will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways our school can further build upon this including:

This includes:

Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.	Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring systems and allocated seating on buses.	Regular engagement with the EA bus driver to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
	Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home e.g. staff duty at home time and for the school bus.	

Online Communication

Ultimately parents are responsible in ensuring steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils. As the pupils in our school are under the age of 12, it is the responsibility of the parents and guardians to be fully aware of what their child is doing online.

Parents are also responsible for the age restrictions that are evident for social media applications. The school's 'Duty of Care' will not be used in situations where pupils behave inappropriately on platforms, as this is the responsibility of parents.

Should incidents of online bullying and abuse be reported to our school by a concerned parent we will advise these parents as to how to report this behaviour to the appropriate authority i.e. PSNI.

If evidence of aspects of bullying become integrated into school life, we will play an active role.

The legislation also gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during the term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school.

St Mary's Primary School will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way.

This may include:

Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.	Participating 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.
	Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.	Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related area e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Mobile Phone Policy etc...

It is important to remember that our Anti Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies.

We ensure our policies align and provide consistent messages for parents and pupils. The measure set out here to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication will also be included in our school's e-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Section 7

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone in the St Mary's Primary School Community has a responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

The responsibility of Staff

Our Staff will:

- Ensure that all pupils know the school definition of Bullying
- Ensure that the pupils know the school rules and use a rules reminding script when pupils do not follow them.
- Ensure the pupils know the schools Core Right of Children and use a rights respecting script when dealing with potential bullying behaviour or mis-behaviour.
- Foster in our pupil's self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils and behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
- Through PATHS, NSPCC Keeping Safe and PDMU lessons discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens;
- Promote and participate fully in the activities for Anti Bullying week in November.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- Listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
- Investigate and record any complaint of bullying
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken. A written confirmation must be kept in the child's personal file and details must be passed onto Mrs Copeland or Miss Robinson.
- Report to the parent of the pupil displaying bullying behaviours or unacceptable behaviours which could lead to bullying.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures and resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties
- Explain the implications of allowing bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and / or others
- Continue to follow-up and monitor the situation until satisfied that the situation has been resolved.
- Know how to seek support – internal and external

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- Follow school rules and classroom rules;
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- Refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour
- 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;
- Help create a climate where bullying is not accepted;
- Value and respect others rights according to the schools Core Rights
- Help others achieve;
- Keep others safe.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies 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.

What Pupils Need to Recognise About Bullying.

Pupils need to understand:

- That they have a right not be bullied at school;
- That they are not to blame if they are bullied; that they need to speak out and should trust the teachers to take their concerns seriously and to help them; that they are not alone.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask parents 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 bullying to their class teacher and explain 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;
- Keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their child/children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Treat school staff with the respect they would expect to receive themselves

The Responsibilities of Governors

Our Governors will:

- Keep up to date with relevant legislation relating to Bullying
- Engage with the principal to resolve issues of bullying where intervention and strategies from the school have not been successful
- Ensure that the school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying. See the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.
- The Chair of the Board of Governors will assume lead responsibility for managing any complaints/ allegations relating to bullying that parents do not agree with the outcome after an investigation and intervention have been implemented by the school
- The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to: 'Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils' (Article 17)

Section 8

Reporting a Bullying Concern

This section outlines the various ways in which pupils, parents and anyone else with concerns can make these known to the school.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, we are open to receiving such reports from anyone.

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

However, it must be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Whilst there are key pastoral staff in school with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour, we encourage pupils to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

Here are some of the ways that pupils can report bullying concerns:

• Verbally – talking to a member of staff

• By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. message through Seesaw, in their homework book…)

• By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour.
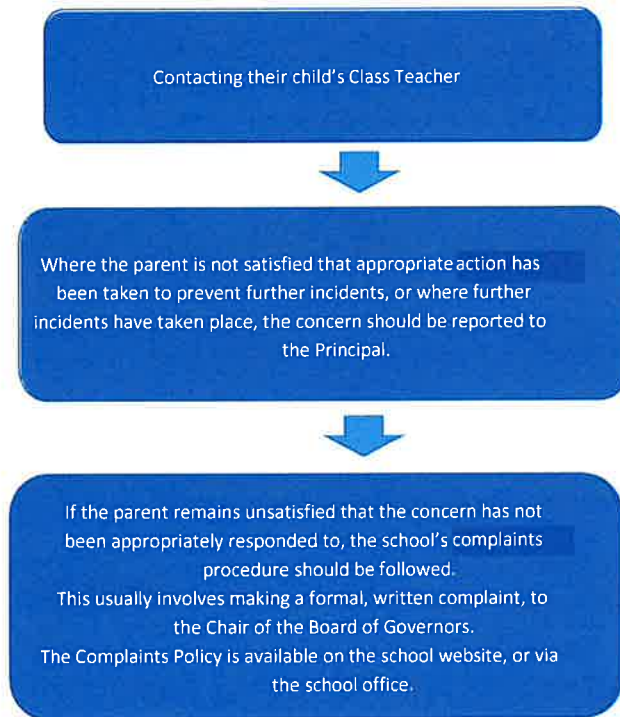
We encourage all members of our school community to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents and carers should raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. We encourage parents/carers of the need to encourage their child to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

Parents are reminded that whilst on the school premises they should ensure they follow school protocol and never address issues with a child or parent. Please follow the procedures below.

Parents can raise a concern about alleged bullying behaviour by:

Contacting their child's Class Teacher

Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal.

If the parent remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.
This usually involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors.
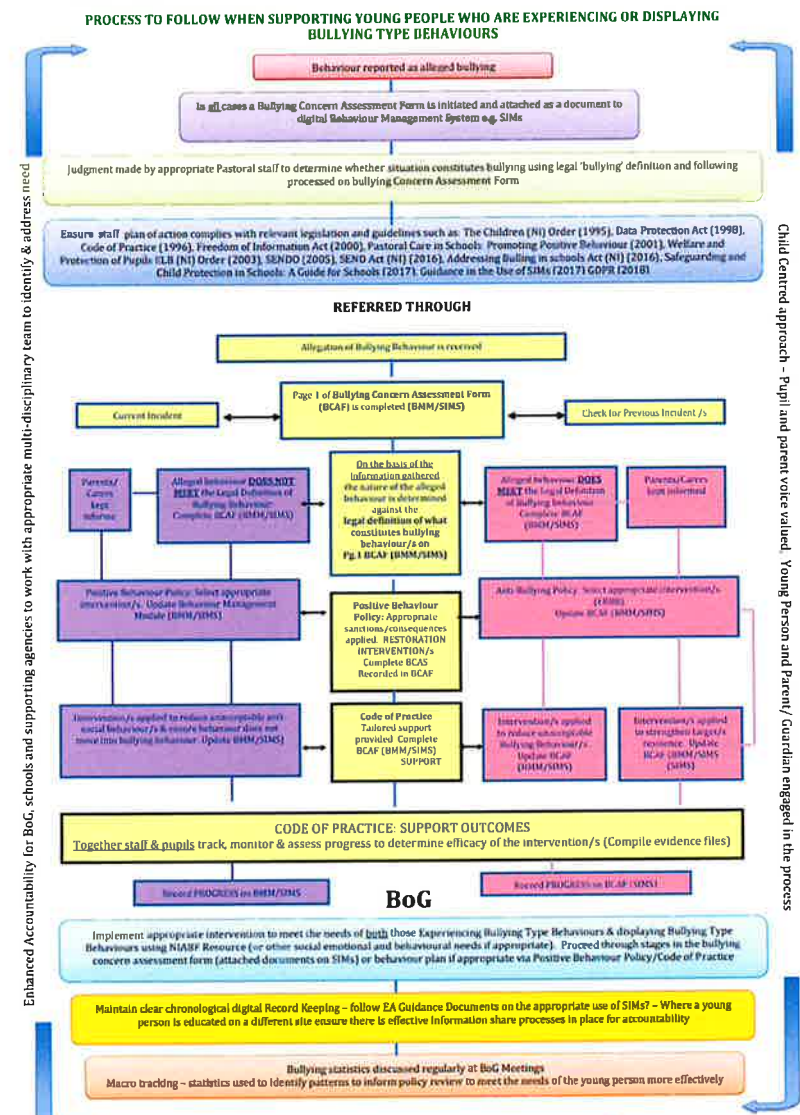The Complaints Policy is available on the school website, or via the school office.

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) have created a parent toolkit, which is a helpful resource for parents. It can be accessed here:

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/NIABF-Parent-Carer-Toolkit.pdf

Section 9

Dealing with a Bullying Concern Flowchart: An Overview of the Processes Involved

Procedure for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour. Refer to Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy for consequences and sanctions used.

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

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

> **Step 1**

REPORTING OF AN INCIDENT (significant/repeated/intentional incidents or serious one-off incident)

When such a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the teacher of any child involved. That teacher will then investigate the incident.

⬇

CLARIFYING THE FACTS AND PERCEPTIONS

- This will be carried out by the class teacher of the child or children involved
- Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's report form (See appendix 1) As far as is possible the pupil's actual words will be recorded and questions asked, which clarify rather than lead.
- The teacher will use Restorative Questions for both the Child displaying bullying behaviour and the child who has experienced bullying behaviours (This can be found in the teachers bullying handbook 2022)

⬇

Where it is considered by the class teacher to be reasonable the child who has been displaying the bullying behaviours and the child experiencing the bullying behaviours will be brought together to resolve their issues. (Parental consent maybe required for this)

⬇

The actions taken by the class teacher will then be reported to the Designated (Mrs Copeland) who may consult with the Principal depending on the nature of the incident or the severity of the situation.

⬇

Parents of **all pupils involved** will be informed of the school's action up to this point and kept informed of subsequent action.

⬇

The situation should continue to be monitored by the class teacher and regular checks should be made for both the child who has experienced bullying behaviour and the child displaying bullying behaviour.

> **Step 2**
>
> **Should the Bullying Behaviour Continue**
>
> Should the bullying behaviour continue the class teacher should report to the Designated Teacher for child protection who will agree a plan of action

⬇

AGREEING A PLAN FOR RESOLUTION

⬇

The Designated teacher and the class teacher will devise a plan for resolution. This may involve whole class circle time/peer mentoring or small group sessions based on conflict resolution (A behavioural Educational plan may be required)

⬇

Targets for acceptable behaviour will be set out including support measures for ALL pupils concerned

⬇

Any disciplinary action required will use system of sanctions as set out in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy

⬇

All Parents concerned will be kept informed during all these actions.

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Situation monitored and formally reviewed within one month of initial report

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> **Step 3**
>
> No Improvement in Behaviour

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Where necessary the school will draw on support of Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Management Team, Educational Psychology Service.

Section 10

Choosing an appropriate intervention

The school will use a range of interventions to respond to bullying behaviour within the school. This will depend on the nature of the bullying behaviour and the severity of the behaviour.

The main aim will always be to:

RESPOND to the bullying behaviour

RESOLVE the concern

RESTORE the wellbeing of all those involved

(NIABF – Effective responses to bullying behaviour 2022)

In selecting an intervention, our school will take account of:

- The level of severity.
- The age and ability of those involved.
- Whether an individual pupil or a group is involved.
- The support of the parents/carers in adopting a restorative, behaviour-changing approach.
- Whether the pupil displaying bullying behaviour acknowledges the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately.
- The extent to which the young person experiencing bullying can be supported to develop resilience and coping skills, with or without external support.
- The legal status of the act e.g. assault.
- The need to ensure all interventions selected are recorded and outcomes tracked and monitored to assess efficacy of the interventions.

To determine level of severity, staff should take account of the following:

- The nature (method) of the bullying behaviour- for example deliberate: teasing, excluding or hitting.
- The frequency of the bullying behaviour: daily, weekly or less often.
- The duration of the bullying behaviour: whether over a short or prolonged period of time.
- The perceptions of the child experiencing bullying. It is important to understand the impact of the bullying behaviour to help identify the interventions required.

Levels of Intervention

Socially Unacceptable Behaviour

Incidents where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but which fail to meet the legal definition of bullying on the basis of the information gathered, can often be addressed through the use of interventions suggested in our Positive behaviour policy.

Level 1 - Individual Interventions

Interventions at Level 1 are designed to help pupils displaying socially unacceptable behaviours or bullying-type behaviours to recognise and reflect on their behaviour and to "get them back on track". These interventions should be taken forward while listening to, supporting and strengthening the pupils involved. It is essential that schools NEVER ignore either low-level socially unacceptable behaviour or bullying-type behaviour.

The interventions at this level support staff to:

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with the school's values
- Identify possible consequences if the socially unacceptable behaviour or bullying behaviour continues.
- Point out the level of distress felt by the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- Enable pupils to adapt their behaviour with targeted interventions.
- Talk with the pupil(s) involved to explore coping strategies and to build resilience by helping the pupil(s) to identify ways in which they may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support.
- Promote appropriate reparation to be undertaken.
- Monitor the efficacy of the outcomes/impact on the situation carefully.
- Review the situation with the pupils involved to determine further intervention if required.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the behaviour is resistant to change.

Level 2 – Group focused Interventions

While interventions at Level 2 may involve continuing with the above, there may be a shift from individual support to larger group or whole-class interventions.

To be effective group work needs:

- The consent and involvement of the pupils whether experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour.
- To be planned and timetabled, with the length of the session dependent on age and ability of those involved.
- Parental / carer consent and agreement from participating pupils.
- Careful and balanced selection of membership for group support.

- To take place in a suitable, sensitive and comfortable environment.
- To be uninterrupted.
- To be facilitated in a positive manner for all - ideally by two adults whose roles may alternate allowing one to participate and one to observe.
- Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion amongst participants.
- Decisions taken and outcomes agreed and recorded.
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- A solution focused approach to the situation.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their actions in a safe and supported environment.
- To ensure regular feedback on agreed actions is given to all parties (staff, pupils and parents/carers).

Level 3 – Complex Group Dynamics and/or Multi-Agency Interventions

Interventions at this level, address situations of more complex bullying behaviour. These situations may have been ongoing over a longer period of time, or as a result of previous interventions being ineffective in resolving the situation.

Responses to bullying behaviour at this level will involve the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and the school principal, working in partnership with the pupils, and their parents/carers, to determine the way forward in affecting change.

All interventions at this level will planned in advance. As a school we will use our risk assessment and planning procedures to assess and manage any risks of further bullying concerns. All those involved with the pupil will contribute to both the risk assessment process and be clear about their individual ongoing role in the implementation, evaluation and review of the plan. Planning may require multi-agency discussion, with involvement of Education Authority services and other external support agencies, in line with the Code of Practice procedures.

Bullying at this level can involve complex group dynamics where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying behaviour. Consequently, interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement, along with individual support and strength building programmes.

Level 4 - High Risk Interventions

Bullying behaviours assessed as requiring intervention at Level 4 are complex and severe, involving a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to ongoing interventions and therefore assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved. As such, the school's

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures must be invoked, including the involvement of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and the Safeguarding Team. Advice and support will be sought from the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

Responses to incidents at this level will require a multi-disciplinary approach, involving a range of partner agencies including the Education Authority, Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services CAMHS, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and other relevant support agencies contributing to a multi-agency RAMP and/or UNOCINI.

In addition to safeguarding procedures and practices, including referral to external support services, the school's interventions at Level 4 should also continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

Dealing with Relationship Issues

Staff deal with concerns relating to fallouts and friendship issues on a regular basis. Such incidents are often temporary and, when challenged in a timely manner, are relatively straightforward to resolve. Many of the interventions discussed in Level 1 can be used in such instances.

The school work hard to establish and maintain positive teacher-pupil and pupil–pupil relationships which create a safe and secure nurturing environment in which staff and pupils feel valued and supported.

By effectively supporting young people to understand the need for respectful behaviour towards their peers, school staff continually promote a restorative, anti-bullying culture within the school and the wider community.

We believe it is important to foster the development of strong, supportive mutually respectful peer relationships and friendships within the school, however we must be clear that pupils will not be friends with everyone they meet. The focus will be on displaying respectful 'friendly behaviour' as opposed to 'being friends'.

Section 11

Closure of a bullying situation

It is difficult to identify when it is appropriate to close the case on a bullying situation. This is usually where everyone involved is satisfied that the situation has been appropriately resolved. The final section of the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (Appendix 1 ((Part 4: Review of Bullying Concern and Actions to Date) provides space to reflect on the incident(s), the interventions, the effectiveness of those interventions and the current relationship between the young people involved.

Those leading on the bullying situation should make sure their judgement to close the case based on all evidence available. This decision should be reached in conjunction with the young people involved, their parents/carers and any other relevant agencies involved.

Once resolved the record of the incidents(s), interventions and effectiveness of those interventions should be maintained. Should any further incidents occur at any point in the future, a check of records would show the history of the relationship between the pupils involved, providing valuable information for the planning and implementation of any future intervention.

Where a case is deemed ongoing, further interventions should be considered and implemented, in line with BCAF Part 4.

Section 12

Recording

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

• How the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)

• The motivation for the behaviour

• How each incident was addressed by the school

• The outcome of the interventions employed

The NIABF form will be used to record incidents of bullying. All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation (GDPR) and guidance will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

Section 13

Professional Development of Staff

St Mary's Primary School recognise the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff.

This includes:

• Ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions

• Noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures – e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc...

• Ensuring opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching

• Continued Professional Development / Performance Review and Staff Development records will be kept and updated regularly

Effective Facilitation Skills

At St Mary's we understand that it is important that the adults in our school have the required skills to support the effectiveness and implement the interventions suggested within this policy. A good facilitator will have developed solid skills in verbal communication, knowing how to ask questions, pose prompts, summarise and reframe, as well as when to be silent and let silence sit within a space. Doing this well requires facilitators to be able to listen actively, with full attention, while also demonstrating compassion and understanding and having genuine regard for the young people involved.

All staff who will be dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour will be given a toolkit including the policy, a rights respecting script, a rule reminder script, and a range of other resources for each level of intervention. An overview of this pack is given in Appendix 2

Section 14

Linked Policies

In the development and implementation of this Anti Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors of St Mary's Primary School have been mindful of related policies, including:

• Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

• Pastoral Care Policy

• Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

• Special Educational Needs Policy

• Health and Safety Policy

• Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

• e-Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

• Mobile Phone Policy

• Educational Visits

• Staff Code of Conduct

Section 15

Monitoring and Review of Policy

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

• Maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incident of bullying will be noted

• Identify trends and priorities for action

• Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour

• Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. However, the policy will be reviewed:

• Following any incident which highlight the need for such a review

• When directed to by the Department of education and in light of new guidance

Consultation with Governors:

Date   _Feb. 2022_

Signed: _Rita Robinson_____ (Principal)

Signed: _Tommy Mc Kee_____ (Chairperson)

                                    30/3/2022

St Marys Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by staff   January 2022

Parental consultation February 2022

Ratified by Board of Governors

Review Date   2025/2026

Support Services

Pupils and parents can contact the following organisations for information and support.

Northern Ireland Anti- Bullying Forum 028 90875006 www.niabf.org.uk	**Kidscape** 020 77303300 www.kidscape.org.uk	**Family works Counselling** 028 91821721	**National Child Protection Helpline** 0800 800 500
Chat Danger www.chatdanger.com	**Urzone website** www.urzone.com	**Thinkuknow** www.thinkuknow.co.uk	**Kidsmart** www.kidsmart.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline 0808 8005 000 www.nspcc.org.uk	**Parents' Advice Centre** 028 90238800	**Lifeline** 0808 8088 000 www.contact.org	**Childline** 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
Parenting NI 0808 8010 722 www.parentingni.og	**CEOP The Centre for Exploitation and Online Protection** www.ceop.gov.uk	**Police Service of Northern Ireland** 101 www.psni.police.uk	**Internet Watch Foundation** www.iwf.org.uk

Appendix 1 -St Mary's Maghery Primary School - Bullying Concern Assessment Form

Incident Date: _____

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident:	
Bullying Concern	Yes / No

PART 1 - Assessment of Concern   Date: _____

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:

"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.

	Name(s)	Gender	DOB	Class
Person(s) reporting concern				
Name of pupil(s) experiencing alleged bullying behaviour				
Name of Pupil(s) demonstrating alleged bullying behaviour				

Check records for previously recorded incidents

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff) including date(s) of events, if known, SIMS record.

Date		Information gathered	Location (stored)

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?	Y/N
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	Y/N
Is the behaviour repeated?	Y/N
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	Y/N
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	Y/N

The criteria used above is fully compliant with the legal definition provided within the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

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 criterial 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 _____/_____/_____	

St Mary's Primary School - Bullying Concern Assessment Form 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 (pregnancy, 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 _____

St Mary's Primary School - Bullying Concern Assessment Form Part 3a

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name: Class:

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	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

St Mary's Primary School - Bullying Concern Assessment Form Part 3b

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name: **Class:**

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	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

St Mary's Primary School - Bullying Concern Assessment Form Part 4

REVIEW OF BULLYING CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO DATE

Date of Review Meeting:

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:

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

☐   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:**

APPENDIX 2

Overview of Interventions – All staff that may be dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour will be provided with a Responding to Bullying Behaviour Support Pack. Below is an overview of some of the documents included. Staff will choose suitable resources and strategies after an investigation has begun.

Class/Group Interventions

Circle Time	Use circle time to provide a safe space for pupils to share and explore concerns, issues, emotions and aspirations related to anti-bullying.
Social Skills Training	Plan to meet the needs of individual/groups of pupils by providing support in emotional literacy and empathy in order to promote social skills and coping mechanisms.
Designated Supportive Adult	In response to a bullying concern being raised, identify a named member of staff that the pupil or group of pupils can go to at any time in school. Involve the pupil(s) in deciding who this member of staff could be. It is important to ensure that it is someone the pupil(s) trusts and is comfortable with. Having a named point of contact can prove comforting to the pupil(s) and their parents/carers.
Peer Support	Consider the most appropriate form of peer support. This may involve a range of methods, including befriending, peer ambassador, peer mentoring, peer mediation etc.
Bystander Role	Support pupils to identify appropriate ways to help/support/defend pupils who are experiencing bullying behaviour, rather than ignoring or offering passive support. www.endbullying.org.uk

Level 1: Early Interventions: Individual / Small Group Interventions

A Rights Respecting Script:	This script can be used to remind the pupil displaying bullying behaviour of everyone's right to be safe.
Rule Reminder Script:	This script can be used to remind the pupil displaying bullying behaviour of the rule, which has been broken.
Expectation Discussion:	This non-confrontational script requires the pupil displaying bullying behaviour to commit to behaving appropriately and take responsibility for subsequent behaviour.
Shared Control Discussion:	This five-step intervention requires the pupil displaying bullying behaviour to choose how they will respond to requests to change behaviour, through being made aware of the consequences of their unacceptable behaviour.
Restorative Questions:	These SEVEN sequential, self-reflective, restorative questions enable the pupil displaying bullying behaviour to understand and take responsibility for their behaviour and to identify appropriate actions they could take to promote resolution.
The Debrief:	Debriefing is a post-incident process which helps a young person reflect on and understand how their thoughts and feelings lead them to choose certain actions; how changing how they think and feel may help them to make different choices; how different choices have different outcomes.
Worth a Rethink:	This process helps pupils to consider responses that are more appropriate by reflecting upon what happened, their thoughts/feelings/actions and the consequences.
Think Time Discussion	The discussion questions support the pupil(s) to reflect on their behaviour, identify how the situation could be rectified and to take action accordingly.
Circle of Friends:	This approach works by mobilising the peer group to provide support and engage them in problem solving/solution focused activities. The circle acts as a resource for the pupil to help them set targets, devise, and implement strategies to deal with difficulties identified and discussed. It is about motivating pupils to build relationships around those who require support Inclusive Solutions - Circle of Friends article. See also "Promoting Positive Behaviour", DE 2001, Pg 74 Pastoral care in schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour
Seeking Help Plan	Agree with the pupil(s) how they will seek help from an adult to let them know if there has been an incident or if they need to talk.
Briefing to Staff	Establish an agreed plan to communicate the necessary information to the relevant staff in order to increase vigilance and support for the pupil(s) involved.
Alternative Arrangements (Unstructured Time)	Incidents may be happening at break and lunchtime, therefore alternative break/lunchtime arrangements e.g. clubs or structured activities could be used to introduce some additional structure/supervision.
Alternative Arrangements (Travelling to & from school)	This may include agreeing an earlier or later exit from school, a review of transport arrangements, liaising with EA Transport or other private transport providers.
Pupil Strength Building	Bullying is based on an imbalance of power; therefore, it is useful to support pupil(s) with strategies to promote assertiveness. Actively teach pupils assertiveness skills e.g. fogging, using powerful words such as thank you, please, sorry, stop etc.

Level 2: Interventions

Continue to use Level 1 interventions, as appropriate.

Individual / Small Group Interventions

Quality Circles:	Pupils volunteer and agree to meet regularly with a member of staff to focus on a specific topic related to bullying (e.g. racist bullying, homophobic bullying, name-calling, bullying on the way to and from school, etc.), they develop proposals and ideas for how to tackle the issues.
Support Group Method	This is a seven-step, participative, long-term approach, designed to engage peers in supporting the resolution of the bullying concern. It involves the peers of the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour as well as the peers of the pupil(s) experiencing bullying behaviour. The focus is on changing the group dynamic to take a problem solving approach.
Solution Focused Approach	Encourages pupils to explore existing strengths and personal qualities in order to develop solutions to resolve issues and help the pupils within the group to meet their needs without compromising the rights of others.
SEND Code of Practice (COP) and Personal Learning Plan (PLP)	The Code of Practice (COP) is statutory guidance regarding the identification, assessment and provision to be made for pupils who may have special educational needs, including social, behavioural, emotional and well-being needs (SBEW). Staff should consider how a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) could be used to support pupil(s) in the resolution of a bullying concern.
Access to Independent Schools Counselling Service	Support from this service may be helpful for both the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. Alternatively, parents/carers can request a referral for counselling through their GP for additional support.
Mediation	Mediation involves engaging directly and separately with the pupils involved, to understand the difficulties that have arisen and to agree a way forward, which allows all pupils to access education in a supported way. This may include the development of a tailored pupil Code of Conduct behaviour plan, agreed by all pupils involved.
Confliction Resolution:	Conflict resolution is the process by which two or more young people are supported to reach a peaceful resolution to a dispute/disagreement.
Team around the child	Create an identified group of school staff who will work together to formulate and agree a plan of support for a pupil experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour. This group of staff will continue to monitor and review support on a regular basis.

Level 3: Interventions

Continue to use Level 1 & 2 interventions, as appropriate.

Individual / Small Group Interventions

Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction Action Plan (RRAP)	When a risk has been identified through the risk assessment process, implement a risk reduction action plan to identify preventative and reactive strategies for the pupil, school staff and parents to implement with a view to reducing the risk. DE Circular 13 of 2021 - Interim Guidance Restraint and Seclusion
PIKAS Method of Shared Concern:	A non-punitive multi-stage strategy used with groups of pupils who may be displaying bullying behaviour. It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bullying concern through a series of interviews and discussions with the pupils involved.
Code of Practice	Implement a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) and consider the need for a referral to EA Support Services/outside agencies e.g. Behaviour Support and Provisions (BSP&P), Education Welfare Service (EWS), Autism Advisory Intervention Service (AAIS).
Referral to appropriate External Agencies / Support Programmes	Give consideration to making appropriate onward referrals for the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and/or the pupil displaying bullying behaviour with parental permission. These may include CAMHS, GP, the Family Support Hub, (a multi-agency network of statutory, community and voluntary agencies that signpost and provide support as required) or other Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) services. Where there are safeguarding concerns school should consider the need for submitting a UNOCINI form through the Gateway Service.
Emotional Mentoring	Provide an adult mentor in school who will support the pupil to review positive and negative experiences using a restorative framework e.g. using restorative questions – What happened? What did you do? How did that make you /others feel? What would help next time something similar happens?
Multi-Disciplinary Meeting	School arranges for outside agencies such as. EA Support Services/Social Services/CAMHS etc. to come together and plan/review support for the pupil(s)/school.