Mount Lourdes Grammar School

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

**Introduction**

The Board of Governors and staff of Mount Lourdes are dedicated to providing a safe and inclusive environment for students. The management of the school is completely opposed to bullying behaviour. All members of the school community have a right to work, learn, interact and develop in a safe and caring environment. All members of the school community have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. The Board of Governors accepts the obligations regarding safety placed on the body under the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016.

**Context**

**The Legislative Context**

* [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/25/contents)
* [The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2003/424/contents/made)
* [The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/annex-a-school-development-plans-regulations-2010.pdf)
* [The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)
* [The Human Rights Act 1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents)
* [The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1039)

**The 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)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf)
* [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017 updated 2019)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-in-Schools-A-Guide-for-Schools.pdf)
* [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland)
* [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)](https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/)
* Department of Education: Good behaviour at school. (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/english.pdf>)
* Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum Resources: <http://www.endbullying.org.uk>
* Good behaviour at school. <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/english.pdf> (DE)

**The International Context**

* [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.109765637.1827233515.1552648186-274690600.1552648186) (UNCRC)

**Key Points**

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 Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:

* + ‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (Article 17)

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

* + Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (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)

**Ethos & Principles**

The school strives to create a community atmosphere where each student and member of staff is respected as a person of importance and in which our positive behaviour expectations are explicit. Bullying behaviour in any form is contrary to the school’s ethos and positive behaviour expectations. Through the Pastoral System, Personal Development Programmes and Preventative Curriculum, we aim to equip students with the skills and attitudes necessary to speak out against bullying behaviour and to seek help and support when problems arise. We review and amend our policy and procedures in line with DENI directives and our statutory obligations. As a 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 has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

**Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

This definition has been arrived at through formal and informal consultation with students, parents, teaching ancillary staff, the Pastoral Care Team, SLT and the Board of Governors. It is also informed by the definition of bullying as laid out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

**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.**

As outlined in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016*, ‘Bullying includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:*

*(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,*

*(b) any other act (which includes omission), or*

*(c) any combination of those.’*

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 should consider the following criteria:

* Severity and significance of the incident
* Evidence of pre-meditation
* Impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
* Impact of the incidents on wider school community
* Previous relationships between those involved
* Any previous incidents involving the individuals

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

Our work to raise awareness of the problems caused by bullying behaviour and to promote a secure, positive learning environment for our students is informed by the definition outlined above and by our Christian ethos.

**Preventative Measurers**

At Mount Lourdes, we aim to create a safe learning environment, prevent and challenge bullying behaviour.

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 PD/LLW.
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and well-being (e.g. Health and Well-Being Committee).
* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities.
* Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day.
* Development of peer-led systems (e.g. School Council, Senior Prefect Team, Anti-Bullying Mentors) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school.
* Development of effective strategies for supervision, e.g. training for supervisors, split lunches, provision of lunch clubs to meet the needs of all pupils.
* Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
* Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch).
* Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, 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 a number of ways in which we as a school can further build upon this. In particular, in relation to the journey to and from school. 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, such as our bus prefects.
* Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. Translink, 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, service providers, residents, etc.), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.

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 term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil’s education at school. This may include:

* 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 (November) 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 areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Bring Your Own Device Policy, Mobile Phone Policy etc.)

**Responsibility**

Everyone has 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.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

* Foster positive self-esteem.
* Behave towards others in a mutually respectful way.
* Model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour.
* Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour.
* Inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour.
* Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
* Refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour.
* Intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
* Report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.
* Emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed.
* Explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others.
* Listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken.
* Know how to seek support – internal and external.
* Resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties.

**Reporting a Bullying Concern**

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 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.

Pupils may wish to raise concerns in a:

* Verbal Form:
  + - Speaking to a member of staff
    - Speaking to our Anti-Bullying Mentors
* Written Form:
  + - Writing a note to a member of staff
    - Sending an email/online contact form to a member of staff

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.

***The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Verbal or written acts* | *Physical acts* | *Omission (Exclusion)* | *Electronic Acts* |
| Saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others  Making fun of others  Calling another pupil mean and hurtful names  Telling lies or spread false rumours about others  Trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s | *Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.*  Hitting  Kicking  Pushing  Shoving  Material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions | Leaving someone out of a game  Refusing to include someone in group work | 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 as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil’s self-esteem.*

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

There may be 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 | * Pregnancy * Marital status * Race * Religion * Disability / SEN * Ability * Looked After Child status * Young Carer status |

Bullying is an emotive issue; therefore, it is essential to ensure that we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, we will not refer to a child as ‘a bully’, nor will we refer to a child as ‘a victim’.

Instead, we will refer to the child 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.***

**Responding to a Bullying Concern**

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

Using the NI Anti-Bullying Forum’s (NIABF) ‘Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource’, the member of staff responsible shall:

* Clarify facts and perceptions
* Check records (SIMS)
* Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
* Identify any themes or motivating factors
* Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
* Identify intervention level
* Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
* Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
* Review outcome of interventions
* Select and implement further intentions as necessary

**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

Records will be kept online which is part of the C2k system in schools. 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 (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 the anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

**Professional Development of Staff**

Mount Lourdes recognises 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 that 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.

**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 incidents of bullying will be noted.
* Identify trends and priorities for action.
* Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour.
* Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour.

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.

**Appendix 1 – Application of Anti-Bullying Policy**

Mount Lourdes reserve the right to modify this process and/or stage of entry as deemed appropriate by the Senior Leadership Team or as circumstances require.

***Appendix 2 – Support Services***

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

***Appendix 3: Bullying Concern Assessment Form***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pupils Involved** | **Role** | **Incident Date** | **DOB** | **Year and Reg.** |
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| --- | --- |
| **Incident** |  |
| **Incident Date** |  |
| **Bullying Concern** | Yes / No |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PART 1 - Assessment of Concern**  Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:  *“bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —*   1. *any verbal, written or electronic communication* 2. *any other act, or* 3. *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)** | **DOB** | **Year Group** |
| 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 target | | |
| **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 behaviour**. | |
| 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 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 SIMS. Use the Positive Behaviour Policy, continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate. |
| Agreed by  Status  Date | |

# **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 |

**Part 3a: Record of Support and Interventions for Pupil Experiencing Bullying Behaviour:**

***Refer to school Anti-Bullying Policy and to level 1-4 interventions in effective responses to bullying behaviour***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupil Name |  |
| Year Group / Class |  |
| Parent/ carer informed | *Yes / No* |
| Date |  |
| By whom |  |
| Staff Involved |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Stage on Code of Practice** | **Intervention** | **Success Criteria** | **Action taken by whom and when** | **Outcomes of intervention** | **Review** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| --- | --- |
| **Record of participation in planning for interventions** | |
| **Pupil** |  |
| **Parent / Carer** |  |
| **Other Agencies** |  |

**Part 3b: Record of Support and Interventions for Pupil Displaying Bullying Behaviour**

***Refer to school Anti-Bullying Policy and to level 1-4 interventions in effective responses to bullying behaviour***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupil Name |  |
| Year Group / Class |  |
| Parent/ carer informed | *Yes / No* |
| Date |  |
| By whom |  |
| Staff Involved |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Stage on Code of Practice** | **Intervention** | **Success Criteria** | **Action taken by whom and when** | **Outcomes of intervention** | **Review** |
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| --- | --- |
| **Record of participation in planning for interventions** | |
| **Pupil** |  |
| **Parent / Carer** |  |
| **Other Agencies** |  |

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

**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**?   * Fully * Partially * Further intervention/support required   Give details: | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Agreed by:** | |
| **School** | Signed  Dated |
| **Parent / Carer** | Signed  Dated |
| **Pupil** | Signed  Dated |