Mill Strand

Integrated

School

& Nursery

Anti-Bullying

Policy

DRAFT POLICY

Contents

DRAFT POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTORY STATMENT

Mill Strand Integrated Primary School strives to provide a safe and enriched environment where all members of the school community have a right to be part of a secure and caring school. The school aims to foster values of tolerance and mutual respect through promoting the self-esteem of all members of the school community. In Mill Strand Integrated PS bullying behaviour is contrary to the school ethos. We recognise that bullying is a concern for all of us, including pupils, teaching, non-teaching staff, parents and governors.

2.0 CONTEXT

The section set outs context in which the policy has been developed, including the legislative and policy/guidance framework applicable. This includes:

The Legislative Context:

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

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

- o Provides a legal definition of bullying.
- o Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- o Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
- o 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 (eg. school trip)
- o Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years

➢ The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)
➢ 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 Policy & Guidance Context

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

DRAFT POLICY

- ➤ [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)

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. (A.19)
- ○ Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)
- ○ Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)
- ○ Education. (A.28)

3.0 ETHOS AND PRINCIPLES

- ○ 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 safes 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.

4.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

CURRENTLY UNDER CONSULTATION

5.0 DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which must be used.

5.1 Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of "bullying":

1.— In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of

(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,

(b) any other act, or

(c) any combination of those, by a pupil or 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.

5.2 Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF):

'Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or

adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.'

Emotional or psychological harm is defined within DE Guidance as intentionally causing or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem. Physical harm is defined as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

5.3 When bullying is talked about in school, teachers explain that bullying is when someone means to do it (intentional) and it usually repeated and happens over a period of time (sustained).

5.4 Examples of bullying behaviours

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

- Verbal or written 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

- o try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
- o Physical acts
- o Hitting
- o kicking
- o pushing
- o shoving
- o material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions
- o Omission (Exclusion)
- o Leaving someone out of a game
- o Refusing to include someone in group work
- o Electronic Acts
- o Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above
- o Impersonating someone online to cause hurt
- o Sharing images (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that occur which may fit the definition of bullying.

5.5 Whilst bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are 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:

- o severity and significance of the incident
- o evidence of pre-meditation
- o impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
- o impact of the incidents on wider school community
- o previous relationships between those involved
- o any previous incidents involving the individuals

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

.

5.6 Motive

• Understanding the motive behind bullying behaviour can be key to resolving it.

• Motivations can be complex and can relate to emotional issues within

relationships as well as the impact of adverse childhood experiences.

• At Mill Strand we recognise, value and celebrate equality, diversity and difference. We

acknowledge that bullying can be motivated by prejudice and may relate to race,

faith, culture, gender, sexuality, age, political affiliation, pregnancy, marital

status, personal attribute and disability. This list is not exhaustive and other

prejudices or differences may motivate bullying.

 5.7 Language used to describe incidents of bullying

 Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussion these matters. For that reason in Mill Strand we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'. Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

> A child displaying bullying behaviours

> A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussion bullying incidents.

6.0 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

6.1The focus for all anti-bullying work should be on preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment. In Mill Strand we do this by:

- o Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- o Promoting 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
- o Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU and R.E
- o Involvement in meaningful and supportive integrated education projects e.g integration week/month therefore supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity
- o Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- o Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day
- o Development of peer-led systems e.g. Pupil Council and Buddy System to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- o Development of effective strategies for playground management e.g. training for
- o supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources to meet the needs of all pupils
- o Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying

6.2 Preventing bullying behaviour on the journey to and from school:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for Mill Strand 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 – discussion during PDMU/ Circle time sessions, visits from local community policing team (schools liaison)
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home e.g. hometime duty rota and procedure for safe handover

6.3 We raise children's awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support our pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. We do this by:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU, R.E and ICT, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies e.g. NSPCC, 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
- ICT suite code of conduct
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy and E-Safety Policy

7.0 RESPONSIBILITY

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

- o emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
- o explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others.
- o listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
- o know how to seek support – internal and external
- o resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

8.0 REPORTING

8.1 Pupils Reporting a Concern Children and young people have told NIABF that when they have a concern about a potential bullying situation, they would like the opportunity to discuss this with a member of staff that they trust. Pupils are therefore encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. As such, all pupils should be encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

8.2 Pupils can make staff aware of bullying related concerns:
- o Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- o By writing a note to a member of staff
- o By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

8.3 Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern
- o In the first instance, bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- o 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 Pastoral care and Safeguarding Team and Head of Key Stage.
- o Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Senior Team Member to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.
- o Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

8.4 Communications

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**.**

9.0 RESPONDING

9.1 The focus of any intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. As such, any strategy for responding to bullying concerns must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

9.2 The school's process outlined below provides a framework for how we will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

- o Clarify facts and perceptions
- o Check records
- o Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour

If bullying behaviour has been identified:

- o Identify any themes or motivating factors
- o Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- o Identify intervention level for pupil displaying/ experiencing bullying behaviour
- o Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved
- o Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- o Review outcome of interventions
- o Select and implement further interventions as necessary

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.

If an incident does not meet the criteria for bullying behaviour it will be dealt with in accordance to our school positive behaviour policy.

As previously stated, no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

10.0 Recording

10.1 Schools are legally required, under the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 (enacted September 2021) to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

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

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

10.3 Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, 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.

10.4 Records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

11.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF

11.1 We are committed to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing Continued Professional Development (CPD) provisions.

11.2 The school is committed to providing staff with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provision as resource and operational capacity allows.

11.3. Records of training will be maintained as part of the schools in service training log and training will feed into policy review and procedural development.

12.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

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

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

- o maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted
- o identify trends and priorities for action
- o assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour
- o assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

DRAFT POLICY

12.3 It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. The next review should therefore take place in the Autumn of 2025 if not before.

13.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

13.1 The Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care Policy. It links with the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies

13.2 It also links with the school's E-Safety Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy. The school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered to be appropriate and inappropriate along with the sanctions which will be used as part of the positive behaviour promotion process.

14.0 APPENDICES

ATTACH FLOW CHART & BCAF FORM

DRAFT POLICY