



# Anti-Bullying Policy

*Policy Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Principal:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Review Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

# Gortin Primary School

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Introduction

**This school community repudiates bullying behaviour of any kind, to any member of the school community, by any member of the school community.**

This Policy has been developed through a process of consultation with pupils and parents consistent with the legal requirements. (see Appendix 1 – legislative context)

We in Gortin Primary School are committed to the provision of a happy and secure environment for every child.

We believe in the dignity and worth of each individual. Accordingly, we work to create an environment within which positive relationships are fostered and actively promote the development of rights respecting relationships, between all members of our school community. We aim to promote those values which will make our pupils caring, responsible citizens. In this way, we hope that all our pupils will feel confident and secure in their own personal worth as a member of our School Community.

### Principles and values

- Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- The welfare and well-being needs of all children are paramount and pupils' needs, whether pupils displaying bullying behaviour or targeted pupil are our priority.
- Pupils needs have to be separated from their behaviour. In our school we do not want to label pupils unfairly so we use the term '*child who has experienced bullying behaviour*', or '*target of bullying*' instead of Victim. Also instead of describing any pupil as '*a bully*', we will use the term '*child who is displaying bullying behaviour*'. In this way we are separating the pupil from their unacceptable behaviour, emphasising that this pupil's unacceptable, inappropriate and unkind behaviour can change.
- When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a 'Restorative' and 'Solution Focused' way, to achieve the necessary changes in behaviour and to restore relationships between the pupils involved, consistent with the NI Anti Bullying Forum document.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to, supported and strengthened.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.
- Interventions will be implemented to meet the needs of all pupils involved.
- Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention, including implementing effective and appropriate strategies for intervention.

Parents are made aware in our schools 'Pastoral Care' summary leaflet of how to report any concern or complaint they may have in relation to their child's safety or well-being. Information sent out bi-annually and posters displayed in the school remind pupils that we are 'a listening school' and that they should tell a member of staff if they have any worries or fears.

During parent evenings, through consultation processes, classroom workshops and in written policy documents, both pupils and parents are made aware of our school's aim and practice to prevent bullying behaviour occurring and of our policy and our practice when responding restoratively to any bullying concerns which may arise. We obtain the consent of pupils and parents when implementing interventions.

## **The process of Participation and Consultation**

Questionnaires have been distributed to pupils, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff. These have been completed and returned for evaluation by staff. As a result, we have reviewed our anti-bully policy in light of recent statutory recommendations and made amendments to meet the needs of the whole school community.

### **Consultation**

The 2003 Statutory Requirements (Education & Libraries NI Order) require schools to “encourage **good behaviour and respect for others**” and in particular **prevent** all forms of bullying.

This legislation also requires The Board of Governors and Principal to consult with pupils, parents and staff regarding positive behaviour and bullying prevention measures which must be in place.

We in Gortin Primary School have met this requirement in the following ways;

- Class based PDMU workshops to negotiate and agree a Code of Conduct for Positive behaviours within the class group based on the Golden Rules.
- Awareness-raising programmes through Curriculum and involvement in NI Anti-Bullying Week
- Obtaining the views of elected pupil representatives e.g. school’s council
- Survey/questionnaires distributed to all pupils, parents and whole school staff. Challenging Bullying Behaviour Questionnaires
- Awareness raising programmes e.g. DELTA information booklet, School Prospectus issued, AGM meeting, Posters, Newsletters, Involvement in NIABF Anti-Bullying Week annual events.

### **Links with other School Policies**

Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care. Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is addressed through school policies, such as Positive Behaviour, Pastoral Care; Child Protection. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Within the Positive Behaviour Policy, the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the response and ‘measures’ which the school uses to promote positive behaviour and to address and change inappropriate behaviour. In this way we are actively preventing bullying behaviour occurring.

This policy links with the Child Protection Policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies. Very rarely, in extreme situations bullying behaviour and its impact on pupils may cause such ‘significant harm’ that a referral to the Social Services Trust Safeguarding Team is necessary and this will be progressed following the normal Child Protections procedures.

## Definition of Bullying

As a school community we have sought to understand what bullying is and the different forms it can take as the starting point for tackling bullying effectively. We understand that not all unacceptable, unkind, hurtful behaviour is bullying behaviour. Following consultation with teachers, pupils and ancillary staff, the following definition of bullying behaviour has been agreed in our school:

***Bullying Behaviour is unacceptable, unkind behaviour, which is recurrent or persistent in which a more powerful pupil, or group, deliberately 'target' a more vulnerable pupil and causes unnecessary distress.***

The term 'Bullying Behaviour' refers to those situations in which a range of harmful behaviours, physical and psychological occur with the additional following four features presenting:

- The hurtful behaviour is repetitive and persistent
- It is intentionally harmful behaviour which is 'targeted' at an individual
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving 'the targeted pupil' feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it
- It causes distress

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- **Physical:** kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping
- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours
- **Indirect:** includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, interfering with personal property) and includes Cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include misusing mobile phones/ computer and internet programmes to humiliate, threaten and isolate another, bullying through Social Networking Sites, messaging and chat rooms.

Pupils may be targeted on the basis of race, religion, culture, gender, homophobic bullying including perceived sexual orientation or identity.

## Preventative Measures

### Ethos and Pastoral Care:

- Relationships are at the 'core' of everything we do in Gortin Primary School.
- We are a rights respecting school and encourage pupils to recognise and respect themselves and each other.
- We aim to be a 'caring', 'listening school' in which pupils are encouraged to become aware of their feelings and express their fears and concerns and to develop a sense of their responsibility and empathy for others. This process is facilitated through activities such as PDMU lessons (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) in which children explore their needs, rights and feelings and how to deal with situations they may experience.

- Within our Curriculum we provide children with the opportunity to develop a range of skills, including assertiveness and communication skills, in a wide variety of contexts, both inside and outside the classroom. The School Curriculum (PDMU, Religion) address prejudice, discrimination and Social/Emotional Learning.
- We also provide opportunities for developing Positive Peer Relationships during Circle time strategies and in School Council.
- Within our school community we have agreed and communicated our school expectations for 'Positive Behaviour', summarised in the Golden Rules, during School Assemblies Displays of Posters & classroom charters.
- We promote positive behaviour reinforcing the School's Golden Rules at all times and we reward and incentivise pupils with awards for their 'Golden Behaviour' in weekly 'Golden Time' and in pupil of the week/day, student of the month awards displays.
- There is school wide supervision and effective, consistent behaviour management by all staff.
- When any inappropriate behaviour is observed or reported, staff use 'Rule Reminder Scripts' and 'Rights Respecting Scripts' to help pupils recognise their 'behavioural mistake' and 'to help restore' this pupil into acceptable, positive behaviour.

Should concerns regarding bullying behaviour arise, we aim to implement effective, appropriate interventions and a primary aim is to ensure the safety of the targeted pupil. To this end we can create *Safe Havens* or *Safe Spaces* through changing seating arrangements and implement *Peer Support arrangements*, including establishing a Circle of Friends to 'befriend and support vulnerable pupils when moving around the school environment. As appropriate we address issues and concerns restoratively with individuals who engage in bullying behaviour and within the wider group using a range of strategies, consistent with The NI Anti Bullying Forum 'Effective Interventions' document.

Should bullying behaviour persist, despite early interventions by a class teacher, additional support to review their assessment, their actions and to implement further appropriate interventions will be made available from the Principal or Senior Teachers with Pastoral responsibility.

*(From Promoting Positive Behaviour 2001)*

### **School Staff**

Our staff will

- Foster in our pupil's self-esteem, a sense of their rights and their responsibilities to others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying behaviour with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the pupil who is targeted and the pupil who engages in bullying behaviour.
- Emphasise the importance of telling a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and respond appropriately.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Respond to bullying behaviour promptly and effectively, in an assertive and confident manner, with an expectation of change in accordance with agreed procedures

### **Pupils**

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to support any pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe for them to do so.
- Report any concerns or instances of bullying witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

### **Parents**

We ask our 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/principal or supervisory staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying behaviour.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keeping written records of any reported instances of bullying behaviour
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is involved in a bullying concern, to resolve the difficulty in a restorative way, aiming to stop the behaviour recurring, to meet the needs of all children involved and to restore positive relationships within the group.

### **Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying**

**(Includes steps taken to support and respond to the needs of all pupils involved, those who are targeted and those who engage in bullying behaviour)**

- We will use Appendix 1 to record incidents, the planned intervention to address the issue and the action taken.
- We will gather information, using the Responding to Alleged Bullying Behaviour Resource's Assessment Form.
- We will assess and plan appropriate interventions with reference to the School's Positive Behaviour Policy and NIABF Interventions Framework and Guidance Document, Responding to Alleged Bullying Behaviour.
- Through this assessment, roles and responsibilities will be defined for all staff in responding to an incident ensuring that communication between all involved is maintained. Actions agreed and named person will be noted. Time frames involved in responding will be noted and adhered to.
- We may obtain advice, support or make a referral to a relevant Support Services eg. Behaviour Management Team, EWO, Education Psychology, Pupil Personal Development Team, Child Protection Support Services.
- We will continue to monitor and support all pupils involved.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy**

Our policy will be reviewed annually and/or in the light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

## Appendix 1 – Legislative Context

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

- **Health and Safety at work NI order 1978 The children (Northern Ireland) order 1995**
- **The Human Rights 1998**
- **The Education (Northern Ireland) 1998 Article 3 – see DE 1998/25**
- **Welfare and Protection of pupils education and libraries (Northern Ireland) order 2003**
- **The Education (2006 order) (commencement NO. 2) order (Northern Ireland) 2007**
- **The Education (School Developments Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010**
- **Addressing bullying in schools act (Northern Ireland) 2016**

### DE Guidance

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour DE, 2001
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools. A guide for school DE 2017 – to be read in conjunction with the following:
  - Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland, Dept.of Health, Social Services and Public Safety 2016
  - Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland’s (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017
- **Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019**

### Duties placed on Board of Governors

- **Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016**
  - Duty of Board of Governors to secure measures to prevent bullying
  - Duty to keep a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a Registered pupil at the school
- **Welfare and Protection Pupils Education Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 –DE circular No. 2003/13 –which amends article 3 of 1998 N.I. order as follows:**
  - Article 17 Duty to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Pupils**
    - The Board of Governors is required to:**
  - **“safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of staff of the school” (Article 17:2)**
  - **Consult with registered pupils on the general principles which will be reflected in the schools discipline policy (Article 19:13 & 14)**

**The Principal**



- When deciding on measure which will be used to encourage good behaviour in the school must specifically include measures to prevent bullying among pupils (Article19:14)
- Before deciding on measures to encourage good behaviour must consult with pupils registered at the school and their parents.

## Appendix 2 - Recording form

### Bullying Concern Assessment Form

#### PART 1 - Assessment of Concern

Our School's Definition of Bullying is			
	Name(s)	Gender	DOB & Year Group (if Pupil)
Person(s) reporting concern		M / F	
Target			
Other(s) involved in incident/concern			
Does the behaviour involve? <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to individual 1:1 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to Group <input type="checkbox"/> Group to individual			

**Type of incident and Theme (if applicable):**

Physical bullying (includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons)

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Verbal bullying (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)

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Indirect bullying (includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)

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Cyber (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)

Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)

Homophobic (related to perceived or actual sexual orientation)

Racist (related to skin colour, culture and religion)

Sectarian (related to religious belief and/or political opinion)

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

Does this incident conform with your school's agreed definition of bullying? Yes  No

Is there persistence/recurrence of this behaviour? Yes  No

Is it targeted behaviour Yes  No

Is there a power imbalance? Yes  No

Is it intentionally hurtful behaviour? Yes  No

Give details of any previous incidents reported

## PART 2 – Details of interventions to be implemented in response

Outline action/support to be undertaken with pupil(s) who has been targeted:

(please tick all that apply) \***Refer to Levels Guidance for Interventions**

- Intervention with  individual(s)  peer group  whole class
- Ongoing support/monitoring from \_\_\_\_\_ (named staff)
- Have parent(s) been informed/involved? Yes  No  (Give details)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Referral to other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Any other details (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Outline action/support to be undertaken with pupil(s) who has been displaying bullying behaviour: (please tick all that apply) \* **Refer to Level 1-4 Interventions Resource**

- Intervention re bullying concern with  individual(s)  peer group  whole class  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Ongoing support/monitoring from \_\_\_\_\_ (named staff)
- Have parent(s) been informed/involved? Yes  No  (Give details)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Referral to other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Any other action (please specify)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Suspension
- Expulsion

## PART 3 - Status of Concern

**This record is now:**

- Filed (**Interventions complete, issue resolved, record maintained**)

### Further intervention/ Required

- Copied to Class Teacher/Group Tutor
- Passed to Head of Pastoral
- Copied to Principal
- Referred to external agency, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 4 - Ongoing record of support and interventions**  
(Refer to Levels Guidance for interventions)

**PAGE**

Date	Details of Intervention	Action Required Action Taken (Dated and signed)

Name and designation of the teacher completing this form:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_