



# **Abbey Community College**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**2018/19**

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## **Whole School Ethos**

In Abbey Community College we aim to provide a child-centred, positive learning environment to facilitate effective learning and teaching for all. All stakeholders connected to the school community will work together to ensure that the school meets the Department of Education's legislation and guidance for school on bullying.

*Bullying, in whatever form and for whatever reason, has no place in schools. The Department has taken pro-active steps to tackle bullying through the development and publication of guidance.*

*The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, requires all grant-aided schools to include within their discipline policy, an anti-bullying policy which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. The effectiveness of these measures is monitored through the regular cycle of school inspections of pastoral care arrangements.*

*Guidance for schools in developing effective anti-bullying policies is included in the Department's publication 'Pastoral Care in Schools - Promoting Positive Behaviour'.*

[www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

The Anti-Bullying Policy at Abbey Community College supports the Positive Behaviour Policy and aims to meet the following legislative requirements:

1 "Promote good behaviour and discipline" within our school (Article 3, 1998/25) The policy when fully implemented will:

- \* promote positive attitudes
- \* maintain sound relationships
- \* facilitate effective learning and good teaching
- \* maintain an orderly and safe working environment for all.

2 "Safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils" including those attending from within the Learning Community (Article 17,2003/13; Article 21, 2007/20) This Positive Behaviour Policy will work in conjunction with the other pastoral policies such as Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Special Educational Needs, etc. to promote positive behaviour, health, well-being and safety for all.

3 "Ensure consultation with and active participation in the decision making process by pupils" (Article 19, 2003/13: DE Pupil Participation 2014/14) Members of the school community i.e. pupils, staff, parents/carers and Governors will be involved in the review of this draft policy. The review process will involve:

- \* staff and student participation in review
- \* discussions with members of the Student Council/Parent representatives/BoG

Responses will be monitored & outcomes used to inform policy development and review.

In addition Education and Libraries (N.I) Order 2003, Article 19 requires that '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.'

Our school ethos is child centred and promotes values of respect and compassion for one another with an emphasis on developing and sustaining caring and supportive relationships. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and is in contravention to our school ethos and values. All stake holders within the school community will endeavour to work closely with students and parents to prevent bullying and to ensure any child being bullied is supported and protected.

### **Core Values**

Our focus is on building positive relationships. Our principles and standards of behaviour expected at Abbey Community College reflect our core values:

- Ambition
- Equality
- Respect
- Responsibility

### **Mission Statement regarding Anti Bullying**

All stake holders at Abbey Community College are committed to making the school community a caring, safe and secure family school where everyone is valued and feels a sense of belonging.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To ensure all stake holders are aware of and follow the Anti-Bullying Policy in Abbey Community College.
- To create greater understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour and the different types of bullying.
- To identify the impact of bullying for others including the person who has harmed and the person who has been harmed.
- To support the Positive Behaviour Policy with the aim of, providing strategies to prevent acts of bullying.
- To create an environment where pupils feel safe and secure in reporting acts of bullying and outline the procedures a pupil should follow.
- To ensure a suitable and consistent response to all reported incidents of bullying.

### **Consultation**

The Anti-Bullying Policy was drawn up after consultation with various stakeholders with a focus on the student voice. Students made a significant contribution to the policy and their views are very much the foundation of its design. Many of the strategies for preventing and dealing with bullying are ideas generated by members of the school community.



### Definition of Bullying

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as:

*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.*

### Types of Bullying

Bullying can be physical, verbal, social, and emotional or prejudice based bullying. Bullying, no matter how it happens or why it happens, is always wrong. To better understand the behaviour and our response, it can be helpful to think about different themes of bullying. Some forms of prejudice based bullying include:

Type of Bullying	Definition
Racial Bullying	When a child or young person experiences bullying based on the colour of their skin, their ethnic or perceived ethnic origin or cultural or religious background
Sectarian Bullying	When a child or young person experiences bullying based on their real or perceived religious or cultural background within the context of the society in Northern Ireland
Disablist Bullying	Bullying behaviour that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised based on a perceived or actual disability or special need. (specific interventions for Disablist Bullying available in the Anti-Bullying Toolkit, in the Staff Safeguarding Folder.)
Homophobic Bullying	When a child or young person experiences bullying because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or because others think they are
Trans phobic Bullying	Bullying behaviour that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised based on their real or perceived gender identity

**Bullying Involving Looked After Children (LAC)** - Bullying involving looked after children is often related to their care status. Whilst we do not have evidence of the prevalence of bullying behaviours involving looked after children in Northern Ireland, children and young people who are looked after, may experience bullying or demonstrate bullying behaviours due to their circumstances. See Anti-Bullying Toolkit Supplement for more information. This is in the Staff Safeguarding folder.

### **Forms of Bullying**

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- name-calling, taunting, mocking, and making offensive personal comments
- threatening and intimidating
- creating situations in which someone is humiliated, or made to look ridiculous, or gets into trouble; playing tricks and pranks
- spitting, kicking and hitting; pushing and jostling, and ‘accidentally’ bumping into someone
- hiding, damaging or taking belongings
- cyber - sending malicious text messages, emails and photographs
- exclusion - leaving people out of groups, games or social occasions
- spreading hurtful and untrue rumours.

Several of these behaviours plainly involve the use of words. Several, however, equally plainly, may be non-verbal, involving body language, gesture and facial expression. Non-verbal behaviours can be just as hurtful and intimidating as those that involve abusive language.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Due to globalisation and the accessibility of modern technology students and staff are susceptible to cyber bullying through the use of computers, mobile phones and hand held devices. Some examples can include:

- receiving nasty or threatening phone calls, text messages or emails.
- nasty or threatening comments, photos or videos posted on chat rooms, instant messenger or social networking sites.

Cyber bullying is different from other forms of bullying because it can happen at any time and can intrude into spaces which are personal and previously safe, such as home electronically forwarded content is very difficult to control and can reach a large audience very quickly. Impersonation is also an issue and involves stealing or naïve sharing of passwords and sending messages under false identity -Cyber-bullying by proxy

Specific types of cyber bullying include:

- fraping (stealing someone’s Facebook profile)
- flaming (multitude of nasty messages sent or on bulletin boards/message groups)
- false identity in chat rooms
- signing up classmates for junk/ pornographic mail
- sexing (coerced?)
- Internet trolling

- cyber stalking
- spreading rumours about friends/teachers on social networking sites
- group de-friending on social networking sites
- creation of Facebook group for example “Why I hate Colin”
- comments on Wall (Intentional harm?)
- sharing confidential information/best friend secrets.
- tagging photos with nasty comments
- setting up fake website/Facebook page inviting comments and/or giving personal information about someone
- posting video footage of bullying (“happy slapping”)
- internet polling (e.g. who is the ugliest girl in the class?).

### **Consequences of Bullying**

Pupils who are bullied suffer:

- psychological stress, depression, anxiety, suicide
- they have trouble fitting in
- they find it difficult to manage their emotions
- they struggle in school
- they respond to stress aggressively.

### **Risk Factors (The person who is bullying and the person bullied)**

The risk factors for being a bully and also being the person who experiences bullying are the same. There is no single cause of bullying. A range of factors place students at risk for bullying or becoming someone who bullies.

#### **Family Risk Factors**

- Witnessing or experiencing abuse.
- Having permissive parents who do not set boundaries or rules.
- Seeing or experiencing bullying by other family members.

#### **Personality Risk Factors**

- Exhibiting low self-esteem.
- Difficulty connecting and building relationships.
- Craving and enjoying power negatively.
- Difficulty showing empathy.
- Gets frustrated easily.

#### **Behaviour Risk Factors**

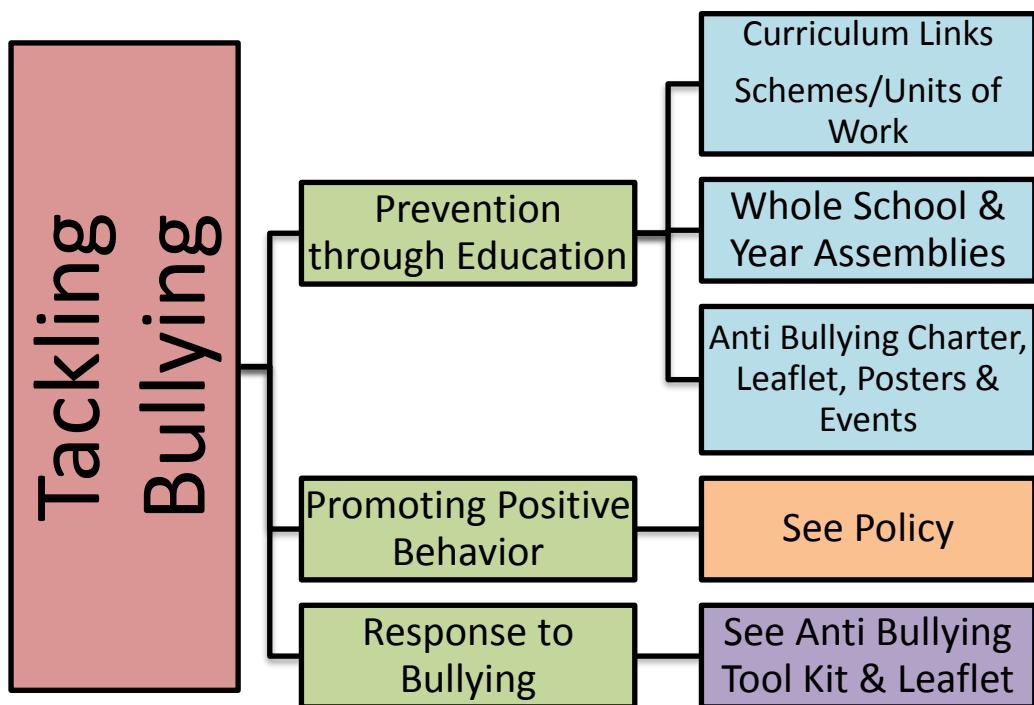
- Acting aggressively.
- Using physical strength to intimidate.
- Excluding others.

If you recognize some of these risk factors in students, take action.



### Approach in Response to Bullying

It is essential that students understand the schools ethos and engage with it to create an environment in which bullying of any kind is not acceptable. In order to tackle bullying we will use a range of strategies to help prevent and transform bullying type behaviours.



### Responsibilities of all Stake Holders

#### Governors Responsibilities

Head teachers and Governors have a legal duty of care to all personnel within the school community under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 to create procedures in order to prevent and tackle bullying. All stake holders must be aware of these procedures. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014) has further enhanced the duty of schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. This is delivered through staff inset days, policy reviews and staff professional development.

#### Pupils Responsibilities

We expect our students to:

- Respect and value everyone within the school community
- Be a responsible member of the school community.
- Report all incidents of suspected bullying to a member of staff within the school community.

### **Parents Responsibilities**

We expect parents to:

- be vigilant and watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour displayed by their child
- inform the school of any suspected bullying or concerns about bullying for their own child or other students
- support staff within the school community in dealing positively with any suspected bullying.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

We expect staff to:

- foster in all students' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- create a safe and secure learning environment within classrooms
- be vigilant and alert to the signs of bullying and act accordingly.
- listen empathetically and respectfully to all reports of suspected bullying and reassure the student
- record the details of the suspected bullying and complete relevant forms (appendix 1&2) and share information with Year Head, Head of School and the Designated Teacher.

### **Year Head/ Head of School Responsibilities**

We expect Year Heads and Heads of School to:

- follow up on every reported incident of suspected bullying
- offer reassurance and support for all students
- use appropriate strategies to reconcile and restore the relationships between those involved
- keep all stake holders within the school community informed where necessary
- monitor and review the situation regularly to ensure the safety of all students and keep relevant personnel informed.

It is important that students who report bullying are listened to, supported and protected. Students who engage in bullying behaviour should be given the opportunity to make amends and change their behaviour.

### **Conclusion/Statement of Intent**

Abbey Community College is committed to providing a happy, safe environment for everyone where students can focus on their academic achievement.

The policy will be reviewed annually and shared with all stake holders within the school community.

## **Anti-Bullying Toolkit**

The Anti-Bullying Toolkit will provide the necessary tools to enable staff to deal with any reports or concerns of suspected bullying. The processes allow for opportunities for self-reflection, development and learning for all parties concerned. A copy of the Anti-Bullying Toolkit is available from the Designated Teacher.

## **Responding to Bullying Guidelines**

Staff should maintain a positive mind-set when dealing with cases of suspected bullying. Dealing with both the person harmed and the person who is allegedly responsible for causing the harm requires a range of skills including questioning and listening skills as well as self-control and understanding. Important factors that will help staff manage a bullying concern include:

**Be calm.** It is vital that staff think clearly and be emotionally in control.

**Be positive.** The priority is maintaining positive relationships with all involved while addressing bullying behaviour with a view to modifying the negative behaviour.

**Be assertive.** Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the student to stop bullying but to also make restitution with the student being bullied.

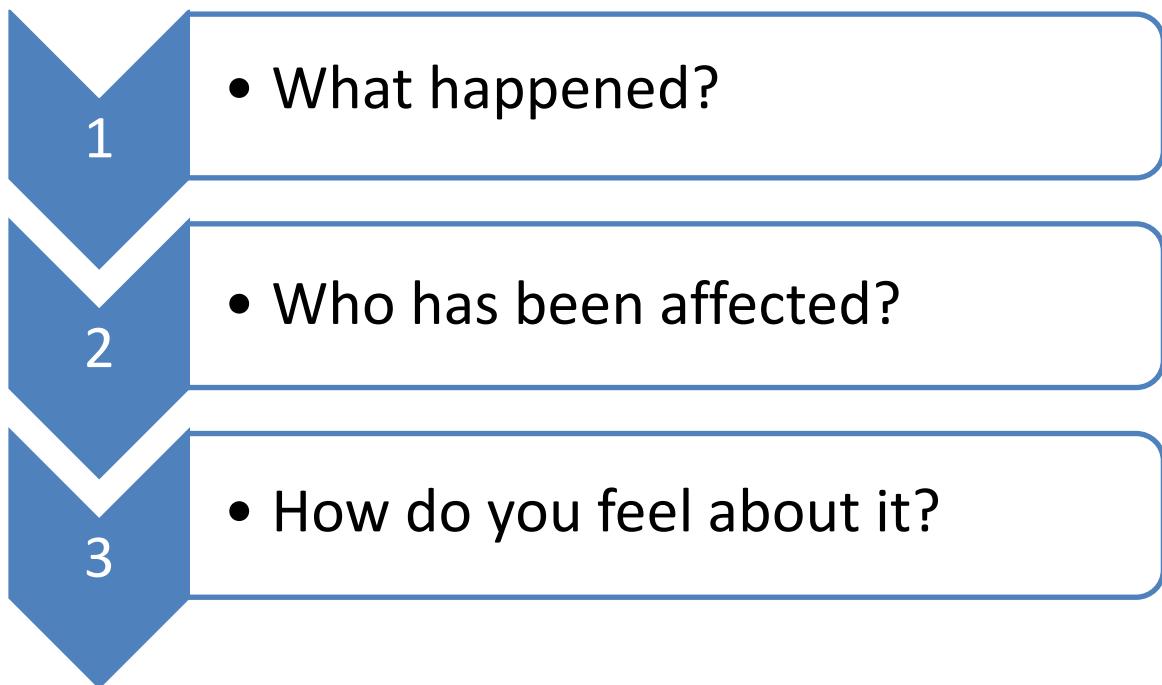
**Be confident.** Trust that you can help and deal with the situation positively by implementing the practices that will have an impact on the student's future behaviour.

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

- The **nature** of the bullying behaviour – for example teasing, exclusion or hitting. There is a tendency among those of us who have a duty to care to rate some bullying, particularly violence as more serious than subtle forms. This can be a dangerous mistake and leave us vulnerable to ignore 'teasing' or 'exclusion'
- The **frequency** of the behaviour
- The **duration** of the bullying behaviour
- The **perceptions** of the student being bullied – The seriousness of the bullying can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target.

### **Initial Restorative Fact Finding Questions**

When a pupil or parent reports suspected bullying these questions should be used to help investigate the issue and help complete the initial bullying concern form.



In selecting the intervention the school will consider:

- the severity
- the legal status of the act
- whether a group or individual is involved
- the level of staff agreement, confidence and competence in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.

## Teacher Response to Bullying Behaviour



## **Parent Guide**

**What to do if you think your child is being bullied:**

1. Inform your child's Head of Year immediately
2. It is helpful to have a record of dates, times, location and nature of the incidents occurring.
3. The Year Head will have a meeting with the student to identify the most suitable strategy to resolve the issue. It may be necessary to involve the Head of School or the Designated Teacher.
4. The Year Head/Head of School will continue to monitor the situation and complete a review.

## **Student Guide**

What to do if you are being bullied

It is really important to tell somebody. Talk to someone in school you are comfortable with. This might be your Head of Year, the School Counsellor, the Family Works Counsellor, School Nurse or a Mentor. It could also be any other member of staff. In most cases

**These people cannot promise not to tell**

These people might have to tell your parents, Year Head or the Designated Teacher to ensure your safety.

The staff member will use anti-bullying strategies to help you. You will be kept informed about what action is being taken.



## Appendix 1

### BULLYING CONCERN FORM

*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.*

Your Name: Position:		Report Date:	
Name of Student:		Class of Student:	
Name of Student(s) Involved:		Class of Student(s):	
Details:			
Is there persistence/recurrence of this behaviour?		Yes/No	
Is it targeted?		Yes/No	
Is there a power imbalance?		Yes/No	
Does it meet the school's agreed definition of bullying?		Yes/No	
Referred to:		SIMS updated:	Yes/No
Signed:		Date:	

Appendix 2



**BULLYING RESPONSE FORM**

Your Name: Position:			Response Date:
Name of Student Harmed:	Class of Student:		
Name (s) of Student Causing Harm:	Class of Student(s):		
Details of Response (refer to level 1-4 Interventions)	Person being bullied	Person displaying bullying behaviour	
Parents Informed:	Yes/No	Yes/No	
Referral Required:	Yes/No	SIMS updated?	Yes/No
Concern Resolved:	Yes/No	If 'No' Review Date is:	
Review Details:			
Signed:	Date:		