

LARNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying, whether it is intentional or not, constitutes a form of abuse by of one person by another, although in most cases it would not set in train the Child Protection procedures. Bullying can be defined as “deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself.” (Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection DE 1999/10). Symptoms may include behaviour change such as withdrawal, lack of concentration, marked deterioration of school work or absenteeism. All forms of bullying, whether pupil by pupil, pupil by staff or staff by pupil are unacceptable.

1.1 There are different forms of bullying; the four main types include:

- Physical:** hitting, kicking, throwing things or using implements to cause deliberate injury to another pupil, spitting, deliberately damaging, destroying, taking or hiding another pupil’s belongings (including money).
- Verbal:** threats, name calling (including sectarian, homophobic or racist name-calling), teasing, insulting, taunting or disparaging a pupil.
- Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, giving looks, sending unpleasant notes.
- Cyber:** making nasty or threatening phone calls, or sending nasty or threatening text messages or emails. Posting humiliating, abusive or threatening comments, images, or videos on, for example, chat rooms, instant messenger or social networking sites.

If unchecked, bullying can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and longer term, emotionally or physically or both, and can seriously disrupt or impair the capacity to learn or develop.

People react differently to bullying and it may not always be possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset.

2. AIMS

Larne Grammar School is a closely knit community in which all its members are entitled to equal rights, opportunity, respect and worth.

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for students, staff and parents that bullying is totally unacceptable. In Larne Grammar, we wish to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear. We believe that every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected from bullying. In order to fulfil these objectives, this school adopts a strong and active anti-bullying stance.

3. PROCEDURE

- 3.1 In Larne Grammar, we aim to create an atmosphere where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and that action taken will be swift and firm but sensitive to their concerns. It is therefore essential that the school is made aware of any bullying incidents as soon as they arise.
- 3.2 Bullying is considered to be, and is treated as, a serious offence. The person engaging in bullying behaviour must be made aware that this behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. The person subjected to the bullying behaviour must realise that revenge is inappropriate. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem by arranging pastoral support for both parties (if they so wish), and if appropriate, sanctions will be applied. In serious cases, counselling will be offered to both parties.
- 3.3 Parents of all those involved will normally be informed, as soon as possible, of what has happened and the manner in which the matter has been handled.
- 3.4 If the bullying behaviour continues then further sanctions will follow. These sanctions will be decided by the Principal in consultation with the Vice Principals and the Year Head(s), taking into account the nature of the incident. Those who persist in bullying behaviour after having been warned to stop will be dealt with particularly sternly and punished severely. It is important however that counselling is facilitated for both parties even when sanctions have been applied.

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- 3.5 The School will maintain a central record of all reported bullying incidents, and their outcomes. The School will also monitor the data to inform the implementation of any strategies or initiatives specific to a particular group of pupils or a particular type of bullying behaviour.
- 3.6 The School may request the involvement of outside agencies.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is responsible for the formulation, implementation, operation and review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and associated procedures.

The Designated Governor (currently Rev Dr C McClure) will take the lead responsibility for the Anti-Bullying policy and procedures.

The Board of Governors delegates the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the policy to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff of the school.

4.3 Staff

If you think that bullying is happening, talk to the pupil or pupils concerned and enquire what has been happening. Ask the pupil(s) to write it down and make a record yourself so that this can then be passed onto the appropriate Class Tutor. It is the School's view that the most effective way of dealing with bullying is through the persistent and determined action of all members of staff. Staff need to be particularly vigilant at break and lunch times, around the circulation spaces between lessons and in the areas of the playground and the cloakrooms. These are times and places where pupils are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily detected. Staff should also be aware of inappropriate language or actions by pupils both inside and outside the classroom and try to prevent such behaviour.

Through the taught curriculum and the pastoral role, staff will emphasise the need for the development of positive, mutually supportive relationships and will educate pupils on acceptable and unacceptable attitudes and behaviours.

4.4 Pupils

If you are being bullied or you know that someone else is, please inform a teacher immediately so that it can be dealt with. Not telling means that the bullying behaviour may continue.

Everyone has a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not tolerated in Larne Grammar.

4.5 Parents

If you think that your child may be being bullied or he/she tells you that they are, please inform the appropriate Class Tutor immediately. Reassure your child that it will be dealt with sensitively but firmly. Where it is discovered that your child is being bullied or is directly involved in bullying, you will be contacted so the school can discuss with you how the situation can be improved and any necessary action taken.

5. APPLICATION

The School will support this anti-bullying policy by:

- 5.1 Using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
- 5.2 Dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties. This topic will be covered in assemblies, as part of the Learning for Life and Work Programme and during Anti-Bullying Week (usually November).

6. REVIEW & EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually by the Safeguarding Team in consultation with the school Pastoral team and pupils.

APPENDIX 1 – USEFUL CONTACTS



*Do you need someone to talk to?
Do you need advice but you aren't sure where to go for help?*

Designated Teachers for Child Protection

Miss Hunter
Mr McKay
Mr McAuley

Vice Principal's Office
A9
Vice Principal's Office

School Counsellor

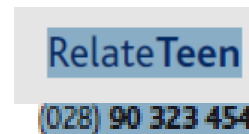
An independent counsellor is available 1 day each week. To request an appointment, post your name and class on a piece of paper in the box outside the Medical Room.

School Nurse

Mrs Clarke is available in the Medical Room during school hours and provides medical help and can point you in the right direction if you need advice.



www.childline.org.uk



(Families going through divorce or separation)

**Family Works
Counselling Service
028 9182 0341**



CALL US
08457 90 90 90* (UK)

EMAIL US
jo@samaritans.org

**Child Sexual
Exploitation (CSE)
Helpline
0800 389 1701
(NSPCC)**



Daytime Helpline: 0844 477 9400
Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Don't forget to use your family doctor for help and advice.

Don't suffer alone. Talk to someone