

North Coast Integrated College

Addressing Bullying in Schools Policy

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North Coast Integrated College Anti Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

North Coast Integrated College does not condone bullying behaviour of any kind, to any member of the school community, by any member of the school community.

This policy is informed and guided by current legislation and the DE Guidance listed below:

2. The Legislative Context:

Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

Policy and DE Guidance:

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

Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour DE, 2001

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)

Cooperating 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)

3. Ethos and Principles

We acknowledge that:

- Bullying behaviour affects everyone, not just the pupils who display bullying behaviour or those who experience it. It also affects those other children who watch, or who are drawn in by group pressure.
- Bullying behaviour is not an inevitable part of school life nor is it a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.
- It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. Social media also adds a new dimension to this.
- No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying behaviour are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Policy Rationale

North Coast Integrated College believes that our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of bullying behaviour.

The College recognises that all institutions, both large and small, contain some individuals with the potential for bullying behaviour. The College aims to minimise the occurrence of bullying behaviour by following a clear policy based on its integrated ethos. Within these bounds it is clear that bullying behaviour does not fit into this ethos.

It is important therefore that the College has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both pupils and parents/guardians and staff are fully aware that any complaints of bullying behaviour will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly with the overall aim of solving both the cause of the problem, whilst supporting those involved.

College Aims

As a College we:

- attempt to minimise opportunities for bullying;
- have an on-going element within the PD and Preventative Curriculum programme in which bullying behaviour is covered. This includes using the opportunity to discuss:
 - the College policy regarding bullying behaviour
 - aspects of bullying behaviour

- the appropriate way to behave towards each other and to deal with problems as they occur.
- attempt to deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- review situations on an on-going basis to determine the degree of success.
- have a firm but fair positive behaviour procedure.
- attempt to be sensitive with relation to the use of teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people.
- treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from the College.

4. Consultation and Participation*

This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

The following consultations took place with pupils:

- Consultation with the Student Council
- Information presented at Assemblies
- Class-based discussion in form classes
- Whole school online questionnaires distributed to all pupils

The following consultation took place with parents/carers:

- Information events with parents/carers
- Consultative workshops with parents/carers
- Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers (online/paper?)
- Engagement with parent groups, eg. PTA

5. Defining Bullying Behaviour

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland)2016 definition of 'bullying':

- In this Act, 'Bullying' includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:
- Any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- Any other act, ('act' here also includes omission – exclusion)
- 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.

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.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there may be one-off incidents that may be considered as bullying. When assessing a one-off incident to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying behaviour, the College shall 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 the wider College community
- Previous relationships between those involved
- Any previous incidents involving the individuals

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed via our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Emotional and Physical Harm

In determining 'harm' the definition can be defined as:

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

Types of Unacceptable Bullying Behaviours

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered 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 spreading false rumours about others
- Trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil or pupils

Physical Acts:

- hitting
- pushing

- kicking
- shoving
- mental harm such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions.

Omission (Exclusion):

- Leaving someone out (of a game/activity)
- Refusing to include someone in groups work

Electronic Acts:

- 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 (photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

The items in this list are suggestive of possible bullying behaviours, but other types of bullying behaviours may fit the definition of bullying behaviour. As such, the College will consider each report of bullying behaviour individually.

Motivations Behind Bullying Behaviour

Regardless of the reason or motivation, bullying behaviour is never acceptable. Some of these motivations may be as a result of age, appearance, breakdown in peer relationships, community background, political affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, race, religion, disability/SEN, Ability, Child Looked After status or Young Carer status. This list is not exhaustive. The integrated ethos at North Coast Integrated College welcomes all pupils and staff. Bullying behaviour of any member of our College community is not acceptable regardless of the motivation.

We encourage all members of the school community to use appropriate language when dealing with bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is an emotive issue and therefore it is essential that supportive and understanding language is used when discussing these types of behaviours. For this reason, we encourage all members of staff to refer to pupils as a 'child/pupil displaying bullying behaviours' and 'child/pupil experiencing bullying behaviours'.

6. Preventative Measures

It is our aim at North Coast Integrated College to prevent bullying behaviours and to create a safe learning and working environment for all members of the College community. The Principal and the School Leadership Team in conjunction with all members of staff, will encourage good behaviour in and around the College at all times. The following key actions help reinforce this message:

The Positive Behaviour Policy raises awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations as set out in the policy.

School assemblies are used by the Principal to reinforce acceptable behaviour, college rules, knowing the difference between right and wrong, respecting others, being responsible, having consideration for the feelings of others and knowing who to tell if something is bothering a pupil, or if someone is displaying bullying behaviour towards a pupil.

Heads of Year and Form Teachers similarly reinforce these messages in Head of Year assemblies and form time.

Good behaviour is promoted by classroom assistants, teachers, supervisors and all members of staff in the College at all times, and in all areas of the College.

Staff in the Behaviour Support Hub work to effectively support both those students who engage in bullying behaviours as well as those who have experienced bullying behaviours. Our School Based Counsellor and Home/School Community Liaison Officer also work to support pupils who may struggle in this area. The EA provide a youth worker who works across Key Stage 3 groups on a variety of issues including peer pressure, resilience and friendships. These areas can be adapted specifically if required to address issues of bullying behaviours.

Lunch time staff are vigilant in their supervision at lunch and report any concerns about behaviour or attitude to the teacher on lunch duty.

All staff generally observe the children in their care and any change in a child's behaviour is addressed through the correct pastoral channels. Appropriate action is then carried out to enact a positive change in the child's behaviour or to offer support in conjunction with the pastoral team.

Supervision strategies at break and lunch times also facilitate effective management of behaviours. Supervisory staff and teachers monitor key areas around the College site. Specific year groups are grouped to be on break and lunch together and year groups are zoned into specific areas to ensure adequate space and effective use of resources.

Lunch time clubs, quiet spaces in the library and Behaviour Support Hub also offer suitable alternatives for pupils who wish to take part.

The College's Personal Development Programme and the Preventative Curriculum encourage students to develop the ability to identify, understand and express their emotions in an acceptable way. The Preventative Curriculum also actively promotes the Anti-bullying message and positive emotional health and wellbeing. Our 6th year pupils are trained as Mental Health Ambassadors and are initially working with year 8 pupils in this area.

The student council also support the promotion of the Anti-bullying message across the College community. Student Council also represent the student voice of the College and are consulted on the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.*

Various forms of bullying behaviour, including the motivations for such behaviour and how this behaviour can happen are addressed through PD, LLW and the Preventative Curriculum and this is reinforced across all year groups through assemblies.

Other curriculum subject areas also address the issues and motivations around bullying behaviours. Certain subjects lend themselves more readily to this, eg: English, History, Religion, Health and Social Care.

The College also engages in key national and regional campaigns to promote positive behaviours and mindset and to reinforce the message of kindness and respect, eg: NIABF Annual Anti-Bullying week activities, Safer Internet Day, Act of Kindness.

Preventative Measures to and from School

[*For the purposes of this policy, NCIC clarifies that travelling to or from the school during term time is interpreted as "while wearing school uniform for example to travel daily directly to school at the start of the day and directly from school to home at the end of the school day when: on foot; on the school bus; on a 'school' taxi to an off-site educational provider" (2001 Anti-Bullying Policy Framework: updated to include implications arising from "Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, "Inspection and Seof-Evaluation Framework" ETI 2017 and "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools, A Guide for Schools" DE 2017)]

The specific measures mentioned above already support the prevention of bullying behaviours and the development of an anti-bullying culture. This is further supported specifically in relation to travelling to and from school by:

Using assemblies and other opportunities to promote a culture where our pupils take pride in being members of our College community and view themselves as ambassadors for the College within the community.

This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations we have of our pupils whilst on the way to and from school.

We work with Translink and EA Transport to ensure effective communication to identify any early concerns around all unacceptable behaviours including bullying behaviours. Staff may be deployed to the bus station if necessary.

We also engage with the local community shops to ensure good communication and effective early detection of any concerns.

Staff are also deployed at key exits to the College at the end of each day to support the transition to the journey home. Effective communication is also maintained with the EA Crossing Patrol Staff to enable early detection of any concerns.

7. Responsibility

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment in our College community.

Everyone in the College community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the College 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 College 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 ourselves 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

Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Pupils are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have with their Form Teacher, however, they may raise concerns with any member of staff they trust, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

Pupils may raise concerns in the following ways:

- Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff
- By sending an email to a member of staff
- By asking a parent/carer to contact their Form Teacher
- By asking a friend to raise the concern for them with their Form Teacher or trusted member of staff

Any pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. The emphasis here is not on 'telling' but on 'helping others to get help'.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the College at the earliest opportunity. The College expects that parents/carers will encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

Parents/carers may raise concerns in the following ways:

- By reporting all bullying concerns in the first instance to their child's Form Teacher. The Form Teacher will consult with the Head of Year and take appropriate action as applicable, following the advice of this policy.
- Where the parent/carer 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 Head of Year. The Head of Year will consult with the Vice-

Principal, and take appropriate action as applicable, following the advice of this policy.

- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Year/Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the College's complaints procedure should be followed. See Appendix 5.

Concerns reported by Others

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the College will investigate all concerns received. In the first instance, these concerns will be forwarded to the relevant Form Teacher for initial investigation.

9. Responding to a bullying concern

Staff should adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns. The focus of any response or intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Any strategy for responding to the bullying concerns must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the College will respond to any bullying concerns identified. Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying resource, the member of staff responsible shall:

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

At this point, College staff should also:

Complete the **Bullying Concern Assessment Form**.

On the basis of this initial assessment:

- Choose an appropriate intervention(s) from the Intervention Levels
- Ensure effective communication amongst all parties.
- Consider the possible need for:
 - Parental involvement
 - Pastoral Care Team Involvement
 - Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) involvement
 - Risk assessment
 - External agency involvement e.g. the Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSS).

When responding to a bullying concern, College staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, the College staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and 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.

They should be prepared with options for how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way. Working with pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour requires a high amount of self-control as well as preparation to know what to say and do.

Important factors for staff to consider when managing a situation involving bullying behaviours:

Be calm. It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control.

Be positive. Have in mind the *importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the pupil*. A pupil is much more likely to modify their behaviour if they perceive that a teacher cares.

Be assertive. Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop the bullying behaviour, but also make restitution with the child who has experienced these bullying behaviours.

Be confident. It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have an impact on the pupil's future behaviour. It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the pupil.

Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying behaviour which conforms to the school's agreed definition of bullying as identified in the school's current anti-bullying policy. Assess the situation and its severity level. Determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively. Once the Incident Level has been determined, one or more responses from the appropriate column(s) (see Levels 1-4 Responses, p16-19) may be selected from the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour.

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

The **nature** of the bullying behaviour- for example deliberate teasing, excluding or hitting. There is a tendency among those who have a duty of care to rate some bullying, particularly violence, as more serious than other subtle forms. This can be a mistake and leave us vulnerable to ignoring 'teasing' or 'exclusion'.

The **frequency** of the bullying behaviour: daily, weekly or less often.

The **duration** of the bullying behaviour: whether over a short or prolonged period of time.

The **perceptions** of the child being bullied – The seriousness of bullying can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target. ***"It can be defined as bullying only by measuring the effects the acts have on the vulnerable child"*** (Besag, 1989).

10. Recording

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 sets out the requirement to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

The College 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 has been addressed by the College
- The outcome of the interventions employed

This information will be recorded using the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) format and attached as a document to an individual pupil's name on the Sims Behaviour Management Module. Access to these records is restricted and only provided to those members of staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the College'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 College.

11. Professional Development of Staff

North Coast Integrated college is committed to ensuring opportunities for the continued training of College staff, teaching and non-teaching, in the area of pastoral care, anti-bullying and safeguarding as part of the College's on-going CPD/PRSD provisions.

Opportunities for safeguarding training are also afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching through the EA training portal for Governors and through in-house training by the College's Safeguarding Team.

This Anti-Bullying Policy will be updated as necessary, as a result of the impact of this training and CPD records are kept and updated.

12. 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 achieve this, the Board of Governors will:

- 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 behaviours
- Assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, at intervals of no more than four years, on or before November 2025.

Links to Other Policies

In the development of this policy, The Board of Governors have been mindful of other related College policies, including:

Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Health and Safety Policy

RSE Policy

Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Educational Visits

Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Understanding the Levels of Intervention

Level 1 Intervention - Low Level Bullying Behaviour Stage 1 Student Support Register

Interventions at Level 1 are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to “get them back on track” while listening to and supporting/strengthening the targeted pupil(s). **NEVER ignore low level bullying behaviour.**

Staff will:

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with the school’s values.
- Identify possible consequences if the bullying behaviour continues.
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the targeted pupil.
- Talk with the targeted pupil to explore whether they have in any way provoked the bullying behaviour.
- Help the targeted pupil to identify ways in which they may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support.
- Encourage reparation to be made, if appropriate.
- Monitor the situation carefully.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

Level 2 Interventions - Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour Stage 2 Student Support Register

While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is shift from individual support to group interventions initiated by the Head of Year, but which may also be supported by staff from the Behaviour Hub and/or Home/School Liaison worker or Youth Service worker.

To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent and involvement of the targeted pupil.
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability.
- Parental / carer consent and agreement from participating pupils.
- Carefully selected group membership.
- To take place in a suitable and comfortable environment; to be uninterrupted.
- To be facilitated in a positive manner, ideally by two adults whose roles may alternate allowing one to participate and one to observe.

- Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity.
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- A solution focused approach to the situation.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- Regular meetings of the group; to ensure regular feedback is given on agreed actions.

Level 3 Interventions - Complex Bullying Behaviour Stage 3 Student Support Register

Interventions at Level 3 will often involve senior members of the Pastoral Care Team, Vice Principal, SENCo, and the Principal, in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents to determine the way forward in affecting change.

The College may use individual Risk Assessment procedures to help determine a plan of intervention and risk management that will be communicated to all.

This planning may occur through a multi-agency discussion, involving external support agencies, eg: Targeted Advisory Support Service or Outreach Behavioural Support. The manner in which teachers and others are involved in planning and how they are kept informed about the implementation of the plans will vary.

Bullying at this level often involves complex group dynamics, where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and targeted pupils. Consequently interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement. These will often require group interventions along with individual support and strength building programmes.

Level 4 Interventions - High Risk Bullying Behaviour Stage 4 Student Support Register

Bullying behaviours assessed as Level 4 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved. As such, the school's Child Safeguarding Procedures will need to be invoked.

*In addition to safeguarding procedures and practices including referral to external support services, the school's interventions at Level 4 should continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

Appendix 2: Cyber-bullying Policy

At North Coast Integrated College we embrace the advantages that modern technology can offer in terms of educational benefits whilst recognising that mobile phones, devices and social media have the potential for bullying to occur.

Most pupils in today's society carry mobile phones to school and many parents prefer their child to have a mobile phone as part of a personal safety plan. If a pupil brings a mobile phone to school it must remain switched off during the school day and it must not be used at break or lunch. The camera and recording capabilities of the mobile device must not be used on the school premises. Occasionally, teachers may request that a mobile device be used in the classroom as part of a lesson, however, this must only be done as part of a planned scheme of work that has been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team.

Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

What's different about cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is different to other forms of bullying because:

- it can occur anytime, anywhere – the victim can even receive bullying messages or materials at home
- the audience to the bullying can be large and reached very quickly and easily if messages are passed around or things are posted online
- it can be unintentional – people may not think about the consequences of sending messages or images

The most common ways of cyberbullying are through:

- chat rooms, blogs and forums – although many of these are moderated, people involved in discussions can be sent abusive responses
- text messaging – abusive and threatening texts can be sent to mobile phones
- abusive or prank telephone calls – these can be made to your child's mobile phone
- picture and video clip messaging – offensive images can be sent to mobile phones
- email – new addresses can be set up in minutes and used to send offensive messages and images
- social networking and personal websites like Snapchat, Tiktok, Instagram – offensive or humiliating messages and images can be posted on these sites

- identity theft – in many cyber environments fake profiles can be set up pretending to be someone else with the aim of bullying others
- instant message services – quicker than email, these allow users to have 'real time' conversations, and offensive messages or content can be sent in this way
- webcams – usually used to view each other when chatting online, children can also be sent abusive images or encouraged to act in an inappropriate way while being filmed
- video hosting sites (like YouTube) – children may find themselves the subject of films being shown or be accidentally exposed to pornographic images
- gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds – chatting is possible within many games, and name calling, abusive remarks and picking on particular players can occur

Legal Issues

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies to cyberspace.

- It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

At North Coast Integrated College, we educate our pupils in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PD, LLW and outside speakers, in ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate our pupils in these fast-changing areas.

It should be noted that, where necessary, North Coast Integrated College will involve the PSNI in matters that may amount to the illegal mis-use of telecommunications and online communications.

Appendix 3: Practical Advice for Students and Parents/Guardians Regarding Bullying

Advice for Students:

What to do.

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. This person could be a parent/guardian, your Form Teacher, Head of Year or anyone from the Pastoral Care Team. You will get immediate support.
- In school, tell a teacher and let them help you with the situation.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.

If you know someone is being bullied:

- TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully behaviour without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with someone who is deliberately displaying bullying behaviour.

Advice for Parents:

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your own son or daughter that it is not his or her fault that they are experiencing this.

- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and tell them not to be afraid to ask for help.

Advice For students:

If you believe that you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, your Form Teacher, Head of Year or anyone from the Pastoral Care Team.

Do not answer abusive messages but do take a screen grab and report to a parent/ guardian or a responsible adult.

Do not delete anything until you have shown it to your parent/guardian, or to your Form Teacher if it is related to school in any way.

Do not give our personal IT details like passwords etc.

Never reply to abusive emails. Keep them and show them to an adult.

Never reply to someone you do not know.

Stay in public areas in chat rooms.

Advice for Parents/Guardians

It is vital we work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. North Coast Integrated College informs parents/guardians of the Cyber-bullying Policy so that we can work together. Parents/Guardians can help us to work together in the following ways:

- by making sure your child understands the school's policy on cyber-bullying.
- by ensuring your child understands how serious it is to be involved in cyber-bullying.
- by explaining legal issues relating to cyber-bullying to your child, especially those surrounding inappropriate images.
- by saving any offending material relating to cyber-bullying if it is in any way related to school as proof of cyber-bullying having taken place.
- by contacting your child's Form Teacher, Head of Year or any member of the Pastoral Care Team as soon as possible if you have a concern.

Protecting your child from Cyber-bullying

As with other types of bullying it's important for you to listen to your child and react with sympathy. Your child should know that bullying is always wrong and that seeking help is the right thing to do.

It's important for them to learn to respect and look after their friends online and to think before they post or text. To keep them safe, make sure you:

- encourage them to talk to you or another adult about anything that's upsetting them
- watch out for them seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone
- try to understand the ways in which they are using their digital technologies
- ask them to think about how their actions affect other users
- suggest that they only use moderated chat rooms
- encourage them to show you any abusive or offensive emails or messages they've received and keep a record of them
- help them report any abuse to their school, the internet service provider, the website manager/moderator, the mobile phone company or the police
- tell them never to respond to any abusive messages or calls – this is often what the abuser wants
- discuss keeping their passwords safe and avoiding giving their name, email address or mobile phone number to people outside their circle of friends and family
- change email address or telephone number if the abuse continues
- turn on in-built internet safety features and install computer software to make sure that you only receive emails from people you have chosen and to block unwanted images

Appendix 5: Bullying Concern Assessment Form

Incident Date:

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments
Bullying Concern	

PART 1 - Assessment of Concern

Date:

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:

“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.

	Name(s)	Gender	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 targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff) including date(s) of events, if known, SIMS record.

Date	Information gathered	Location (stored)

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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 behaviours.

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

One-off Incident

When determining whether a one-off incident may be classified as bullying, the school shall take into consideration the following criteria and use the information gathered to inform and guide the decision making process:

Criteria:	Information gathered:
severity and significance of the incident	
evidence of pre-meditation	
Significant level of physical/emotional impact on individual/s	
Significant level of impact on wider school community	
Status/nature of previous relationships between those involved	
Records exist of previous incidents involving the individuals	

YES the above criteria have been met and bullying behaviour has occurred.	NO the above criteria 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 the Behaviour Incident section of this Behaviour Management Module. Refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy of your school, continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate .
<p>Agreed by _____</p> <p>Status _____</p> <p>On ____/____/____</p>	

PART 2

<p>2:1 Who was targeted by this behaviour?</p> <p>Select one or more of the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual to individual 1:1 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual to group <input type="checkbox"/> Group to individual <input type="checkbox"/> Group to group</p>
<p>2.2 In what way did the bullying behaviour present?</p> <p>Select one or more of the following:</p>

- 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:						
Pupil Name:			Year Group/Class:			
REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR						
Parent/ carer informed:			Date:		By whom:	
Staff Involved:						
Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review
Record of participation in planning for interventions						
Pupil:						
Parent/carers:						

Other Agencies:

Part 3b ck interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

Year Group/Class:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent/ carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff Involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcome of Intervention	Review

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?

- 1 – Fully
- 2 – Partially
- 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give details:

Part 4b- If the success criteria have not been met, continue to:

- Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level
- Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention
- Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on
- Follow Safeguarding Policy
- Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- Engage with Board of Governors

Agreed by:

School

**Signed
Date:**

Parent

**Signed
Date:**

Pupil

**Signed
Date:**

Appendix 6: Complaints Procedure

A copy of the complaints procedure can be made available on request.