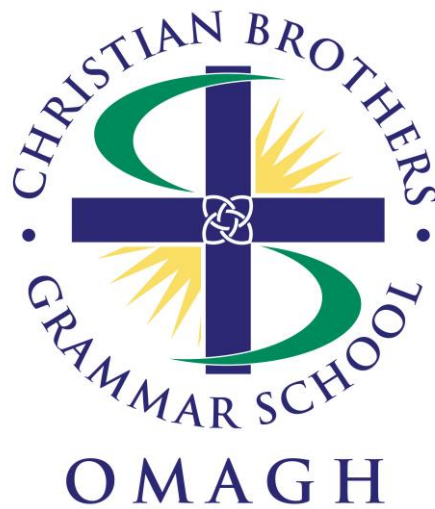


Christian Brothers Grammar School, Omagh



Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2017

Introduction

This school is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for pupils to learn in a caring atmosphere and will not tolerate bullying behaviour.

The procedures set out in this policy are designed to deal with instances of bullying in a rigorous, measured and sensitive manner. Any student or parent who is aware of bullying behaviour is actively encouraged to report the matter immediately.

Aims of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy:

1. To develop a secure environment in which all members of the school community respect and support each other.
2. To ensure that students, staff and parents share a common definition of what constitutes bullying behaviour.
3. To develop an ethos which makes it clear to everyone that bullying behaviour is unacceptable in any form.
4. To develop a preventative and proactive approach to dealing with bullying.
5. To create an atmosphere where students feel that they will be listened to if they do report bullying.
6. To ensure that swift action will be taken to address bullying behaviour that will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved.
7. To raise awareness and understanding of bullying through the curriculum

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a complex issue and takes many forms. In some cases it can be overt and easily identified. In other cases it can be subtle, insidious or hidden and thus more difficult to identify and deal with. It encompasses a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological and will usually include the following four features:

- It is repetitive and persistent;
- It is intentionally harmful;
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it;
- It causes distress.

This school defines bullying as follows.

“Bullying can be defined as deliberate psychological or physical hurt caused to an individual by the behaviour of another that is unprovoked and repeated over a period of time.”

Isolated or “one-off” incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, through the school’s Positive Behaviour Policy.

Forms of Bullying include:

Bullying may include the following behaviours. This is not an exhaustive list.

Physical:

This will include hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money.

Verbal

This will include name calling, teasing, threatening, insulting, writing unkind notes.

Emotional

This will include:

- being unfriendly, excluding or tormenting another pupil;
- spreading rumours about another pupil or his family ;
- belittling or humiliating another pupil, mocking their appearance, personal idiosyncrasies, abilities or achievements.

Cyber

This will include:

- misuse of mobile telephones to send malicious or threatening texts
- misuse of internet resources such as email or internet chat rooms or social networking sites to post/send malicious or offensive messages or comments about another pupil;
- misuse of internet resources to post offensive, embarrassing or humiliating photographs of another pupil on the internet

Sexual / Homophobic

This is any bullying behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, that targets a person's sexuality or gender.

Racist

This is bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture or group who are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their ethnic grouping or by their religious or cultural practices.

Developing an Anti-Bullying Ethos

This school is fully committed to taking positive measures to create a climate that is opposed to the concept and practice of bullying, adopting a range of proactive strategies to promote an anti-bullying ethos in an attempt to reduce the number of bullying incidents that occur. These include:

- Participation in NIABF's Anti-Bullying Week;
- Anti-bullying workshops as part of the induction programme for Year 8 pupils to:
 - Make students aware of the school's bullying policy and its contents;
 - Make pupils aware of the school's definition of bullying and the different behaviours that could constitute bullying;
 - Make students aware of the steps they can take if they are being bullied or if they become aware of any bullying incident;

- Encourage students to tell a member of staff if they are being bullied or if they become aware of any bullying incident;
- Create a culture within the year group that actively disapproves of bullying behaviour.
- **Anti-bullying poster campaign**
A selection of posters are framed and posted on corridor walls and noticeboards to reinforce anti-bullying messages. These include posters that are designed by pupils and those that are professionally produced.
- **Lunch time extra-curricular activities**
A range of super league events and games clubs are scheduled during lunch time to occupy pupils' time in a positive way. A supervised indoor lunchtime games club is open to pupils every day in the school's Assembly Hall;
- Attendance at local events which are designed to promote anti-bullying messages.

Role of Staff

- To be familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures;
- To be vigilant at all times, taking immediate action when they witness or become aware of incidents that create a concern that bullying may be taking place;
- Using teaching methods will encourage co-operative work and variety in groupings so that students can extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.;
- To promote within each of their classes a spirit of mutual respect and support among the pupils;
- To use Year Group Assemblies and Morning Registration class to provide opportunities to raise students' awareness of bullying and promote anti-bullying attitudes

Responding to Bullying Incidents

While it is our aim to eliminate bullying, we realise that incidents will occur. All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated as speedily and thoroughly as possible.

The following procedures will be implemented when an incident occurs:

Role of Staff

Investigation

- If a member of staff becomes aware of or suspects potential bullying he/she will record the details as a matter of urgency and pass them immediately to the Head of School for the child who has been or is possibly being bullied.
- The Head of School will coordinate the response to the incident, either investigating the incident themselves or, depending on the severity of the incident or the availability of staff, referring it to the relevant Head of Year or Form Teacher for investigation.

- The purpose of the investigation will be:
 - to try, as far as is possible in the circumstances, to elicit all the facts;
 - to decide whether the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as defined by this policy – this may include checking whether there have been any previous incidents involving the pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour;
 - to establish the nature, severity and extent of the bullying behaviour – this will involve taking account of the frequency and duration of the bullying behaviour as well as the perceptions and feeling of the child who has been bullied;
- If the pupil(s) displaying the bullying behaviour is/are from another year group, a report will be passed to the Head of School who will coordinate the response in line with the guidance above;

Response to a Bullying Concern

Once a bullying concern has been investigated and it has been established that bullying has occurred, it is essential that an appropriate intervention is put in place to address the behaviour.

It is important that every bullying incident is individually assessed and an intervention chosen which best meets the individual needs of the pupils involved.

A range of strategies should be considered for bringing closure to a bullying incident, resolving conflict between the parties and restoring the well-being of those involved.

In each case the Head of School may choose to enlist the support of the Vice Principal for Pastoral Care to facilitate this process. The views of the child who has been bullied should be sought and considered when deciding an appropriate course of action.

In choosing an appropriate intervention the Head of School, Head of Year or Form Teacher should consider the guidance set out in this section of the school policy and may consult with the Vice Principal with responsibility for Wellbeing.

Level 1 – Low Level Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour may be classified as Level 1 if:

- It is perceived to be a first time occurrence;
- It is deemed to be of a minor nature – this will be determined by:
 - consideration of the **nature** of the behaviour that has taken place
 - the **frequency** and **duration** of the bullying behaviour;
 - the **perceptions** and **feelings** of the child being bullied. The seriousness of bullying can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target of the bullying behaviour. **“It can be defined as bullying only by measuring the effects the acts have on the vulnerable child.” (V Besag “Bullies and Victims in Schools” OUP 1989)**

Level 1 – Interventions

Interventions at this level may be carried out by the Head of Year or the Form Teacher. The following interventions will be considered;

- One to one interviews with the pupil who has been exhibiting bullying behaviour which help the pupil to recognise and reflect on their unacceptable behaviour;

- Where deemed appropriate, the pupil who has exhibited the bullying behaviour should be encouraged and supported to make reparation to the pupil who has been bullied. With the consent of the pupil who has been bullied this could include a formal apology and an undertaking as to future behaviour supervised by the form teacher or Head of Year.
- The Form Teacher or Head of Year will work with the pupil who has been bullied to reassure him, deal with hurt feelings, develop self-esteem and coping strategies.
- Careful monitoring of the situation after it has been dealt with;
- Consideration should be given to involving the pupil's parent(s).

Level 2 – Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour may be classified as Level 2 if:

- the pupil displaying the bullying behaviour has previously exhibited similar behaviour and, in spite of level 1 interventions, is proving resistant to changing their behaviour;
- the bullying behaviour is considered to be more serious or is having a more severe impact on the pupil who is the target of the bullying behaviour.

Level 2 – Interventions

Interventions at Level 2 will be led by the Head of School and may involve a continuation or extension of the strategies used above as well as:

- Regular meetings with the pupil who has been exhibiting bullying behaviour;
- Parents/Carers should be informed of the issues and invited to attend a meeting with the Head of School to discuss and agree their role in providing support to the pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour;

Level 3 – Complex Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour will be classified as Level 3 if:

- the pupil displaying the bullying behaviour presents with additional needs and risk factors;
- the bullying behaviour is proving more complex and more resistant to change.

Level 3 – Intervention Strategies

Interventions at this level will be coordinated by the Vice Principal with responsibility for pupil wellbeing. Depending on the needs of the pupil, the following interventions will be considered:

- Social and emotional mentoring provided by an identified member of staff;
- Placement at Stage 2 on the school's Special Educational Needs Register under the category of "Emotional and Behavioural";
- The creation of an agreed *Individual Behaviour Plan* incorporating targets with incentives and consequences;
- The active involvement of the parent(s), working in partnership with school and/or external agencies to effect change;
- The involvement of external agencies such as;
 - The Independent Counselling Services for Schools;
 - SEBD Team

Level 4 – High Risk Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour will be classified as Level 4 if:

- The behaviour is considered severe and involves 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.

- The pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour is presenting with significant concerns such as mental health, criminal or child protection concerns.

Level 4 – Interventions

Interventions at this level will be coordinated by the Vice Principal with responsibility for pupil wellbeing. The following interventions will be considered:

- Referral to relevant agencies such as Gateway Team, PSNI or Health and Social Care Trust;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion;
- Continuation of the Level 3 Intervention strategies in addition to the above.

Maintenance of the Policy

1. Parents of incoming Year 8 students will receive a copy of our policy synopsis booklet and their sons will be familiarised with the policy through annual Anti-Bullying Workshop led by the Vice Principal for Pastoral Care.
2. A synopsis of this detailed policy document will be included in our “Information to Parents and Students” booklet which is circulated to all parents before the start of each school year.
3. Posters referring to our school’s commitment to an anti-bullying environment will be displayed to maintain interest.