

Anti-Bullying Policy



Rationale

This policy sits firmly within the core values of Enniskillen Royal Grammar School, which aims to provide a caring, supportive environment, where each member of the school community is recognised as unique and of value. Enniskillen Royal Grammar School aims to foster a right sense of self-worth in each individual and to treat everyone as of equal worth: the school seeks to promote a culture where each member of the school community respects and tolerates the opinions of others who have different beliefs, values and customs.

Enniskillen Royal Grammar School is opposed to bullying in any form and this policy wishes to make it clear that bullying is totally unacceptable and will be treated with the utmost seriousness. It also seeks to encourage everyone to speak out if they know bullying is taking place and to provide guidance and an agreed set of procedures to ensure that bullying incidents are dealt with in a firm, consistent and fair manner.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the conscious desire of an individual or group which causes the victim(s) to feel distressed, frightened or hurt. Such feelings can be caused by both pupils and adults. Bullying is systematic and is the result of a conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone and put them under pressure. It is important to distinguish between bullying and those actions which are the result of random/isolated acts of inappropriate behaviour and which can cause pupils temporary unhappiness. When the target pupil is hurt or distressed by the actions and the person(s) responsible know this and carries on or does not care about the effects of his/her actions, a line between inappropriate behaviour and bullying has been crossed.

Bullying can take a variety of forms, whether physical, by spoken or written word, or psychological. Whilst not an exhaustive list, the following are some examples of these types of bullying.

Physical – all forms of assault, such as tripping, pushing, kicking, slapping or punching;

Verbal – such as taunting, disparaging a pupil, his or her abilities or achievements, his/her physical appearance or his/her family, homophobic, religious or racial name calling, sarcasm, labelling;

Psychological – such as exclusion from a group of friends, 'sending to Coventry', spreading of malicious rumours or gossip, extortion of money, removal of belongings or sending unpleasant messages.

Cyber bullying may arise from the misuse and exploitation of digital media including mobile phones, social networking sites and electronic forms of contact (see ICT contract).

What are the responsibilities of the members of our school community?

It is the responsibility of everyone in the school community to maintain and promote a caring and supportive environment and to take all possible steps to prevent bullying from happening.

Staff and volunteers will:-

- foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- listen to pupils who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures;
- report suspected cases of bullying to the pupils' form tutor in the first instance who will follow-up according to the agreed procedures, including liaison with the Year Head, Head of Key Stage and the Senior Pastoral Staff and Principal;
- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;

Pupils will be provided with opportunities to discuss bullying behaviour at various times during their years at school, through the Personal Development and Learning for Life and Work provision, through assemblies, through the school council, through activities in Anti-Bullying week and through other areas of the curriculum where appropriate. Internet safety is discussed as part of the ICT provision in Key Stage 3. Pupils will be encouraged to see it as their responsibility as members of a caring school community, which does not tolerate bullying, to stand up against bullying behaviour, to report it when it happens and to build their resilience individually and collectively in learning the mediation and resolution strategies which equip them to play a pro-active role in preventing bullying happening.

We expect our pupils to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

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 form tutor or another member of staff whom they trust and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- being sympathetic and supportive



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towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;

- keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- co-operating with the school and its policies and procedures if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth, and pointing out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

What steps will be taken if bullying occurs?

The Victim(s): A recommended course of action

1. Inform your parents
2. Inform a teacher or adult in the school whom you can trust
3. Be fully honest in describing what has happened to you
4. Keep a diary of incidents, including the names of those who were involved and those who were witnesses.

Staff: A recommended course of action

1. The victim's complaints must be treated sympathetically and seriously and he/she should be encouraged to talk frankly about their experiences. A written record should be made of the interview including the names of the alleged perpetrators and witnesses. Pupils may be asked to write a statement. In the case of cyber bullying, a record of the relevant communications, including their time and date, should be kept. A copy of the relevant information should be printed and saved.
2. The situation will be investigated as appropriate by a senior or middle pastoral leader (Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Teacher, Head of Key Stage or Head of Year). This may involve the interviewing of witnesses. A written record of the interview(s) should be kept.

3. Anyone accused of bullying behaviour will be interviewed by a senior or middle pastoral leader. During the interview those accused of bullying will be given the opportunity to put across their view of the situation. A written record of the interview should be kept.

4. Where bullying behaviour is identified sanctions will be applied and the nature of these will depend on the seriousness of the case. The parents/guardians and those involved in the bullying will be informed. The parents/guardians of the victim(s) will be informed of the conclusions of the investigation.

5. Support will be provided for both the victim(s) and the bully/bullies. Their parents/guardians will be informed of this support.

6. Careful monitoring will be put in place to ensure that the bullying behaviour has stopped and/or to provide a mechanism for reporting any reoccurrence of bullying.

7. If necessary, all relevant staff will be informed of the situation.