

NEWTOWNABBEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

REVISED JUNE 2010

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## Creating an Anti-Bullying Culture

One of the aims of Newtownabbey Community High School is,

To promote a positive supportive learning environment based on good relationships among pupils, teachers and parents.

In striving to create such a learning environment we strongly feel that our pupils have the right to feel safe and secure. We do however accept that bullying occurs in all schools but it is our aim to develop an anti-bullying culture, consistent with our schools positive ethos. This policy is written to strengthen the emotional and personal development of all pupils.

The Department of Education (2001) states,  
“Bullying must have no place in schools.”

It advises schools to act and be seen to act promptly and firmly to combat bullying behaviour whenever and wherever it occurs.

## AIMS

The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour.
- To highlight strategies and procedure which will help put a stop to bullying behaviour.
- To ensure that all relevant personnel are aware of the schools anti-bullying policy
- To create an environment where pupils feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they can report incidents of bullying
- To ensure a suitable and consistent response to all reported incidents of bullying.

This policy is written with reference to the following legislation and guidance.

- Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (1992)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Children's 10year Strategy "Our Children, Our Pledge"

## Guidance from DENI

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection(1999)
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001)
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 D.E Circular 2003/13
- D.E Circular 2007/01 'Acceptable Use'
- D.E Guidance on Cyber Bullying

This policy is linked to the Schools Pastoral policies ie

- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Use of Reasonable Force
- Health & Safety
- ICT

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, either physical or emotional, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself. (Pastoral Care in Schools, Child Protection )

“A person is bullied when he or she is exposed regularly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons” (OLWEUS 1987)

“The repeated use of power by one or more intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others” (NI Anti Bullying Forum 2005)

“An attitude rather than an act. It can be defined as bullying, only by measuring the effects of the acts have on a vulnerable child”

## FORMS OF BULLYING

- EMOTIONAL - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, bags etc. threatening gestures)
- PHYSICAL - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- RACIST - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- SEXUAL - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- HOMOPHOBIC - focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- VERBAL – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, belittling of others’ abilities and achievements.
- SOCIAL - making offensive comments about background social class, where someone lives.
- CYBER - all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

## RESPONDING TO BULLYING

- Listen to all children and act upon statements or complaints they make.
- Investigate thoroughly any reported or suspected instances of bullying
- If a concern about bullying is reported by a parent, respond to as quickly as possible.
- Communicate to parents of the bully and the bullied re – incidents and if serious invite to the school to discussions.
- Consider the needs of the victim as paramount and offer support as necessary. This may include the use of peers to befriend and designated staff support.
- Provide support to the bullied and the bully through counselling and sharing of coping strategies.
- Issue an appropriate sanction to the bully as outlined in the schools Pupil Behaviour Agreement.
- Keep records of serious bullying incidents and action taken.

## FOLLOW UP

- Use appropriate strategies to reconcile the pupils.
- Diffuse potential bullying situations as quickly as possible so that ‘other’ pupils do not become involved.
- Monitor each case carefully for a period of time to secure safety for pupils.
- Make use of the schools independent counselling scheme (New Life Counselling) to support victims.

## REVIEW PROCESS

This policy will be shared with Governors, Teaching Staff and other staff working in the school. It will also be distributed to parents. A consultation process will take place this year with pupils, parents and staff.

It is hoped that the Student Council will play a lead role in this process.

V.Lewis