Brownlow Integrated College

Anti-Bullying Policy

.

***At Brownlow Integrated College we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a caring, safe, supported and secure environment in an atmosphere of respect and trust.***

Brownlow Integrated college is open to pupils of all abilities regardless of race, class or creed. We seek to bring together our diverse communities in an atmosphere of respect and trust. The college strives to be a centre of academic excellence, whilst providing opportunities for personal, social, moral and spiritual development in preparation for a meaningful adult and working life

We aim to promote a caring and positive environment in the college, where pupils are cared for as individuals and where they can be happy and fulfilled. We utterly condemn bullying in any form and will listen to the concerns of pupils and act accordingly. We wish our pupils to learn in an atmosphere free from intimidation and fear.

This policy has been developed according to the legislative and policy/guidance below

**The Legislative Context:**

* [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/25/contents)
* [The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2003/424/contents/made) (A17-19)
* [The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/annex-a-school-development-plans-regulations-2010.pdf)
* [The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)
* [The Human Rights Act 1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents)
* [The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1039)

**The Policy & Guidance Context**

* The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
* [Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf)
* [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-in-Schools-A-Guide-for-Schools.pdf)
  + [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland)
  + [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)](https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/)

**The International Context**

* [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.109765637.1827233515.1552648186-274690600.1552648186) (UNCRC)

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

* + Provides a legal definition of bullying.
  + Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
  + Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
  + Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:
    - In school, during the school day
    - While travelling to and from school
    - When under control of school staff, but away from school (eg. school trip)
    - When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the ALC)
  + Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.
* The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:
  + ‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)

At Brownlow Integrated College

* We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
* We believe bullying is unacceptable and every child and young person should be safe and feel safe from bullying.
* We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity in the spirit of Integration and we value the views and contributions of children and young people and we will actively seek these views, respecting and taking them into account.
* We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
* We believe that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a culture of kindness and understanding of each other

**Consultation and Participation**

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

A range of methods consultation are used when planning, including

**Pupils**

* Consultative workshops with pupils both internal and through external agencies
* Class-based activities
* Whole school questionnaires distributed to all pupils (online/paper?)
* Creation of a consultative group of pupils-the Student Council or a focus group
* A culture where pupil voice is encouraged at any time as a key value of the college.
* Views of pupils are taken into account and included in the Pastoral Care action plan
* Awareness raising through form time, curriculum and assemblies
* Involvement in NIABF Anti-Bullying Week

**Consultation with parents/carers**

* Discussion with parents/carers at mentoring meetings
* Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers (online/paper?)
* Engagement with Brownlow Family and Friends (School PTA)
* Parents/carers are given an opportunity to comment on the draft policy online

**Consultation with staff**

* Representative members of staff involved in writing anti-bullying policy
* All staff have the opportunity to comment on the draft policy
* Engagement with those connected to the school, such as external agencies that regularly provide input

**What is Bullying?**

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which must be used.

**Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:**

**1.—(1) In this Act “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.**

**(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.**

***In other words, 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.***

Bullying is usually repeated behaviour. These will normally be dealt with through the college’s Positive Behaviour Policy, however, there are instances of one-off incidents that the college may, using discretion, consider as bullying.

***When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school 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 wider school community*
* *previous relationships between those involved*
* *any previous incidents involving the individuals*

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a 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 spread false rumours about others*
  + *try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s*
* ***Physical acts***
  + *Hitting*
  + *kicking*
  + *pushing*
  + *shoving*
  + *material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions*
* ***Omission (Exclusion)***
  + *Leaving someone out of a game*
  + *Refusing to include someone in group 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 (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

***This list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.***

**Motivation**

There are various motivations behind bullying. These include, but are not limited to:

* Age
* Appearance
* Breakdown in peer relationships
* Community background
* Political affiliation
* Gender identity
* Sexual orientation
* Pregnancy
* Marital status
* Race
* Religion
* Disability / SEN
* Ability
* Looked After Child status
* Young Carer status

**Terminology**

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussion these matters. For that reason we will not refer to a child as ‘a bully’, nor will we refer to a child as ‘a victim’. Instead, we will refer to the child b describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

* *A child displaying bullying behaviours*
* *A child experiencing bullying behaviours*

We encourage **all** members of the school community to use this language when discussion bullying incidents.

**DETERMINING HARM**

In determining ‘harm’ we define:

* ***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.*

**Preventative Measures**

Within Brownlow Integrated College, we take forward a number of key actions with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment. As a college community we are consistent in raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

In addition to this we carry out a number of other actions

* Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
* Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU/PD/LLW including for example sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist
* Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing
* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
* Engagement in key national and regional campaigns which connect to bullying.
* Development of peer-led systems (eg. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
* We are seeking to further develop playground management, zoning of playground space where appropriate, inclusion of specific resources for pupils and provision mental health ambassadors to help pupils who may be experiencing difficulties
* Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
* Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, afterschool tuition and other activities. We welcome suggestions from pupils in this area and try to meet needs where circumstances allow.

As bullying behaviours may occur on the way to and from school. We endeavour to promote the development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school. We also implement

* Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring systems on buses and for those walking.
* Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. Translink, EA Transport, etc.) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
* Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community, including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
* Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home through staff duty at school gate/bus stops where appropriate

Online bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils can take place at any time during term. Brownlow Integrated College raises awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and supports pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way by

* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/PD/LLW, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
* Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
* Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI to support the promotion of key messages.
* Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
* Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy and Mobile Phone Policy,

**It is important to remember that the Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. As such, it is essential that these policies align and provide consistent message. For example, the measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, should also be included in the school’s e-Safety Policy and/or Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.**

As technology is constantly changing and developing, Brownlow Integrated College endeavours to monitor this and amend policy and message when necessary.

**What if bullying occurs outside school hours?**

If bullying occurs outside school during term-time e.g. on the way to and from school and/or

electronically, and it is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil’s education in school,

Brownlow Integrated College reserves the right to deal with it in line with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Responsibility**

The college recognises that ***everyone*** has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

Everyone in our school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school 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 school 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 themselves 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

**Reporting a Bullying Concern**

At Brownlow Integrated College we value trust and respect in our caring relationships with pupils, we regularly remind pupils that they can report bullying concerns in a range of ways (however they feel most comfortable) :

* Verbally- talking to a member of staff
* By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
* By sending an email to a member of staff through c2k
* By posting a comment in the pastoral care concern box

**ANY** pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour- Pupils should appreciate that this is ‘getting help’ rather than ‘telling’. All pupils are encouraged to ‘get help’ if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

**Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern**

Parents and carers have the responsibility to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. We remind parents of the need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to ‘hit back’.

* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
* Where the parent 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.
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Year to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Pastoral Care Director
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Pastoral Care Director to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school’s complaints procedure should be followed. This usually involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors. It is important that this information is included within the Anti-Bullying Policy and that information on how to make this complaint is accessible to all parents.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school must be open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be made to the person who made the report. No information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

**Responding to a Bullying Concern.**

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how Brownlow Integrated College will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall…

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

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

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

**Recording**

There is a legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

*The school 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 was addressed by the school*
* *the outcome of the interventions employed.*

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school 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 school’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 school.

**Professional Development of Staff**

Brownlow Integrated College is committed to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school’s ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions

* The impact of the training may result in policy and procedural updates –
* opportunities for safeguarding training will be afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
* CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

**Monitoring and Review of Policy**

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

* *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 behaviour*
* *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, on or before June 2024.***

From time to time amendments will be made:

 as a result of surveys;

 when changes to legislation occur;

 in response to issues arising from a current situation; and

 when data generated to identify existing behavioural patterns and trends indicate that

changes are required.

**Links to Other Policies**

In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:

* *Positive Behaviour Policy*
* *Pastoral Care Policy*
* *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
* *Special Educational Needs Policy*
* *Health and Safety Policy*
* *Relationships and Sexuality Education*
* *E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy*
* *Mobile Phone Policy*
* *Educational Visits*
* *Staff Code of Conduct*