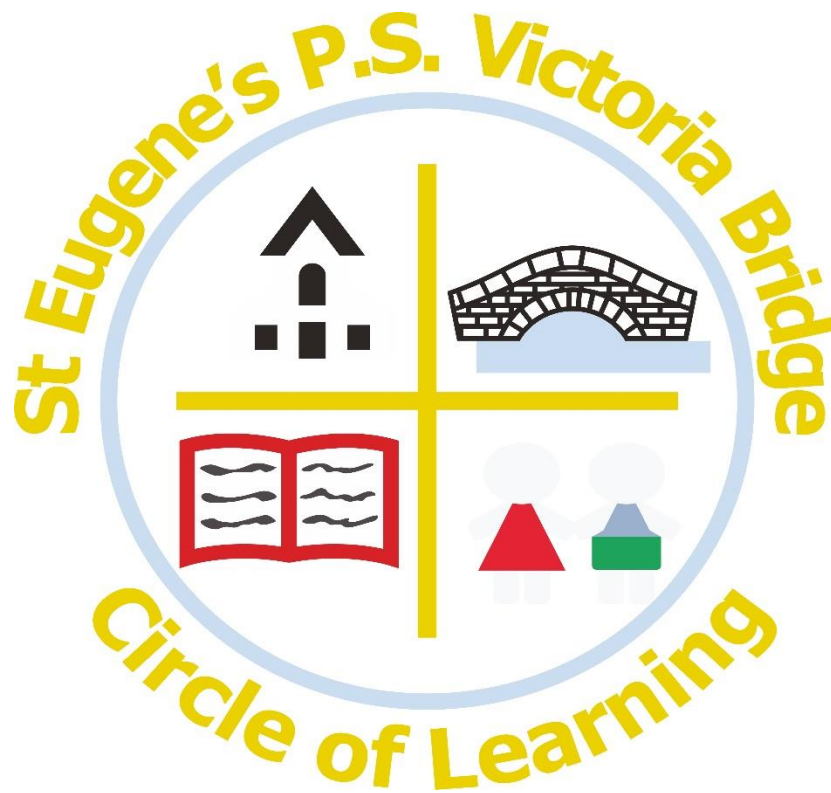# St Eugene's Primary School

Addressing Bullying Policy

Date issued:

Date for review:

St Eugene's Primary School
Addressing Bullying Policy

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

The staff at St Eugene's Primary School aim to provide the highest possible standard of education for all of our pupils. To achieve this goal, it is essential that we provide a stable, secure learning environment. It is the view of our pupils, parents, staff and Governors that all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable.

Section 2 – Context

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with our pupils, parents/carers, staff and Governors during Anti-Bullying Week, using the preventative curriculum as a starting point with our boys and girls in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016. The contexts listed below have been used as reference points throughout consultation with all stakeholders.

The Legislative Context:

 ✳ [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016](#)

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, has provided us with a legal definition of bullying. It also places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents. This Act requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents and sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely in school, during the school day, while travelling to and from school and when under control of school staff, but away from school.

 ✳ [The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003](#) (A17-19)

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to 'Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils' (A.17)

 ✳ [The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010](#)
 ✳ [The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995](#)
 ✳ [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 ✳ [The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978](#)

The Policy & Guidance Context

 ✳ [Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)](#)
 ✳ [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)](#)
    ○ [Co-operating 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)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child's right to:

- ◯ Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)
- ◯ Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)
- ◯ Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)
- ◯ Education. (A.28)

Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

At St Eugene's Primary School our entire school community share the following principles, which we live by, model and promote throughout each school day:

- ✳ We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
- ✳ We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safes from bullying.
- ✳ We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity.
- ✳ We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
- ✳ We value the views and contributions of children and young people, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account.
- ✳ We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Section 4 - Consultation and Participation

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with our pupils, parents, staff and Governors during Anti-Bullying Week, using the preventative curriculum as a starting point with our boys and girls in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016. The contexts listed below have been used as reference points throughout consultation with all stakeholders.

Our Pupil consultation involved:

- ✳ Consultative workshops with pupils
- ✳ Class-based activities
- ✳ Whole School Project
- ✳ Our Pupil Leadership Team including our Pupil Council

Our School Community consultation involved:

- ✳ Sharing relevant information via our digital platforms, with hard copies available on request.
- ✳ Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers via our digital platforms and text messaging service, with hard copies available on request.
- ✳ Education for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- ✳ Staff survey for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- ✳ Engagement activity for all staff, teaching and non-teaching

Section 5 - What is Bullying?

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of "bullying" is as follows:

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.

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. At St Eugene's PS, we are acutely aware that while bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that we will consider as bullying. When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, St Eugene's Primary 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

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may also 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

Please be aware that the lists that are included in this policy are not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may also be considered bullying behaviour.

In consultation with pupils, parents/carers and staff the various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act have been agreed 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

Staff and Governors recognise that *Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters at St Eugene's Primary School. 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:*

- ✳ ***A child displaying bullying behaviours***
- ✳ ***A child experiencing bullying behaviours***

We encourage <u>all members of the school community</u> to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

In addressing Bullying at St Eugene's Primary School we are aware of the definitions of emotional and physical harm which are set out in the DE Guidance. *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.***

Section 6 - Preventative Measures

The measures which will be taken by St Eugene's Primary School to prevent bullying behaviour are defined in the section above. Beyond this, the measures set out here aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within our school and the wider school community.

In line with legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work at our school is on **prevention**. In order to do everything within our power to prevent bullying and to create a safe learning environment. We work together to:

- ✳ Raise awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in our Positive Behaviour Policy
- ✳ Promote anti-bullying messages through the curriculum
- ✳ Address issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU, circle time and activities aimed at promoting mental and physical wellness
- ✳ Engage in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting our pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity through the preventative curriculum were we actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing which includes but is not limited to Neuronimo, mindfulness, school counselling and various other initiatives that we develop and promote throughout the school year
- ✳ Participate in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- ✳ Engage in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc.
- ✳ Develop our peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- ✳ Hold focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- ✳ Develop effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources and provision of a variety of play option to meet the needs of all pupils.
- ✳ Develop effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch)
- ✳ Provide and promote extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks.

Section 6 - Preventative Measures Continued…

To prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of our anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways that we at St Eugene's PS aim to continually develop which are specific to the journey to and from school:

 * Development of a culture where our pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community through regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
 * Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school by using our Pupil Leadership Team as a point of contact whilst on transport.
 * A member of staff always on duty at the school gates to greet children on arrival and say good morning to the EA bus drivers, this promotes active and on-going communication between all those involved in supporting our children as they use EA transport.

Our preventative measures also aim to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support our pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. The development and implementation of our robust policies in related areas are vital in supporting us address online bullying these policies include our Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy.

Opportunities will be provided to:

 * Address key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU including helping our children to know how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
 * Participate in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
 * Engage with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies such as C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency and the Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum to support the promotion of key messages.
 * Use our own digital learning platforms to model and celebrate appropriate use of online apps and forums.
 * Participate in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
 * Raise parental awareness through provision of appropriate information.

Section 7 - Responsibility

At St Eugene's PS, everyone in our school community has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Our pupils, parents/carers and our staff are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone in our school community 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

Section 8 - Reporting a Bullying Concern

It is important for us at St Eugene's PS that pupils, parents and anyone else with concerns can make these known to the school. To do this it is vital that everyone is aware of the steps to follow when reporting a bullying concern.

Pupils Reporting a Concern:

Children and young people have told NIABF that when they have a concern about a potential bullying situation, they would like the opportunity to discuss this with a member of staff that they trust. While our pupils know that Miss Gormley is our designated teacher and Mrs Connolly is our deputy designated teacher, our pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of our staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. They can do this:

- ✳ Verbally- by talking to a member of staff
- ✳ By posting a comment in a 'worry box/thought box'
- ✳ By writing a note to a member of staff

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Through the preventative work taken forward under Section 6, our focus is on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils should be 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 a responsibility to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with our school at the earliest opportunity. It is important that parents/carers encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'. Parents/carers can report a concern by following the processes outlined in the points below:

* 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 Miss Gormley our 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 involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mrs Carmel Corry.

Please be aware that all reports of bullying concerns received from our 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 another pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

Here we provide our framework for how all reports of alleged bullying behaviour, or any concerns identified, will be responded to by our school. This includes the process that will be employed, as well as the approach our school will take in its response.

The focus of any intervention will be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. 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*

In line with NIABF our school advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour. Interventions focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. The document can be accessed at: http://www.endbullying.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2014/07/Effective_Responses_to_Bullying_Behaviour.pdf

No information about action taken in relation to another pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 10 – Recording

There is a legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, for us at St Eugene's PS to maintain a written record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour. These records will be kept in a locked drawer in our office in line with the Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy, where Miss Gormley and Mrs Connolly have the responsibility for their maintenance and purpose. These records will include:

 ✳ how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
 ✳ the motivation for the behaviour
 ✳ how each incident has been addressed
 ✳ 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.

*Our records will be used to help inform our future anti-bullying policy and practice within our school.

Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

The Board of Governors and Principal at St Eugene's Primary School recognise the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff and are committed to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions. The training given will continue to help form the policy and its procedures. Opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching and CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

Section 12 – 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

There is a legal requirement that this Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed in consultation with our pupils, parents/carers and staff at intervals of no more than four years. It must be noted that our policy will also be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review. A review will also take place when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

Section 12 – 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