



Anti- Bullying Guidance for Parents and Carers

This guidance was created by the East Belfast Area Learning Community pastoral development group in line with Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 and DENI guidance.

Park School Mission Statement

At Park School we prepare our pupils for life by providing a supportive learning environment in which their:

Talents will be discovered

Potential will be developed and

Achievements will be celebrated

Defining Bullying

“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.

Bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour, but not all unacceptable behaviour can be considered bullying. Bullying usually has three key elements:

- It is usually repeated behaviour that happens over a period of time
- It usually involves an imbalance of power
- It is intentionally hurtful behaviour

Bullying is not:

- a disagreement or ‘falling-out’
- a one-off argument
- someone being ‘nasty’ through an ill thought through word or action
- a ‘relationship’ issue where pupils just need to be helped to learn how to get along better

Socially unacceptable behaviours only become bullying behaviours when the behaviour meets the legal definition.

All unacceptable behaviour must be challenged, whether it is bullying or not and will be dealt with in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Encouraging Young People to Report Bullying

Bullying is a secret, insidious form of behaviour and targets of bullying often fear that reporting it will make the situation worse. If a young person feels he/she is being bullied it must be taken seriously by staff and parents.

Within the school diary, advice is offered to young people who are anxious or worried. The advice is to talk to a trusted adult. Young people are reminded to report bullying to Base Teachers, Class Teachers, Classroom Assistants, Deputy/Designated Teachers and Principal.

Anti-bullying posters are on display around school. Counselling is also offered as well as useful websites such as Childline and the Samaritans. We mark Anti Bullying Week every year and throughout the year, assemblies which address the different types of discrimination. The message is always clear, that bullying is not tolerated and must be reported. Young people are advised not to delete cyber bullying remarks but to keep them as evidence. It is recommended that you as a parent monitor your child's social media use in order to safeguard your child from potential harm or risk.

It is strongly advised that parents make early contact with the school to discuss any matters which might have a bearing on the student's education.

Responding to a Bullying Concern

Staff, students and parents have a shared responsibility to have a proactive attitude to bullying. Prevention is as important as the action taken to address reports of bullying. Through assemblies, base classes and within the curriculum the issue of bullying and what to do about it should be continually emphasised.

The preventative curriculum for each year group includes work to help students improve their self-esteem and social skills and to encourage them to have the self-confidence to reject bullying behaviour from other people.

We expect the parents of young people who have been displaying bullying type behaviours to support school in their application of our policy. Parents should reinforce the message at home that bullying is morally wrong and potentially damaging.

It is important to understand that sometimes a parent's perception of a situation can be one sided and dependent on the young person's subjective perspective. In cases of alleged bullying it is important to be open minded as often there is a complicated build-up of events and 'tit for tat' behaviour. Young people who display bullying behaviour will often dismiss this as 'banter or messing about'.

All adults in school play a vital part as role models as reflected in their dealings with each other and their treatment of the young people. Staff who come in contact with young people are trained to watch for signs of bullying and report them to appropriate staff.

Helping your child with regard to bullying

Parents are essential in building up their child's self-esteem resilience, as confident young people are rarely bullied. Teach your child to say no to bullies and to walk away from potentially threatening situations.

Parents or carers should never ignore a report of bullying:

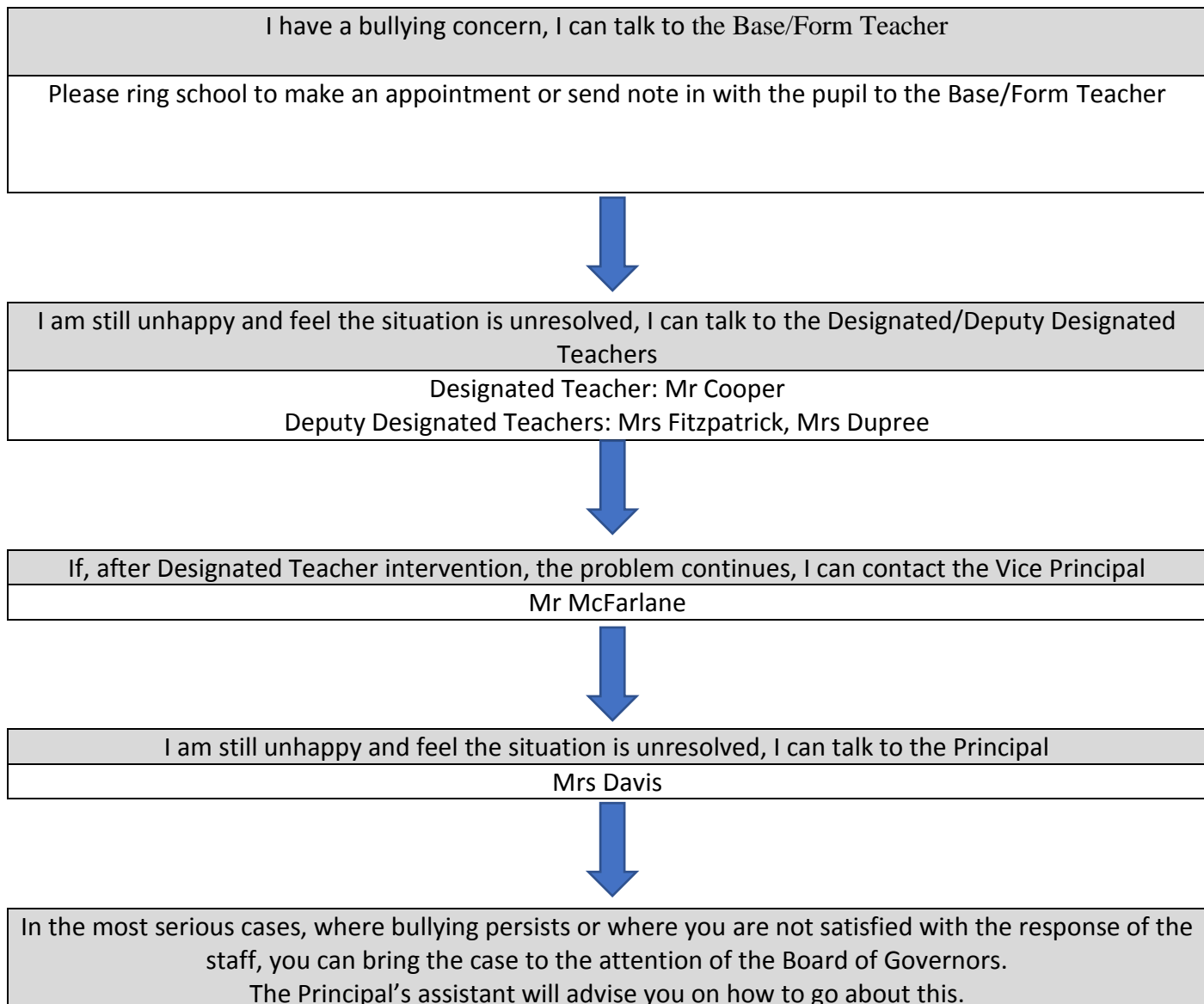
- Encourage your child to communicate his/her feelings
- Try not to overreact and do not display anger as it may silence your child
- Inform and co-operate with school in relation to a bullying concern
- Remain calm and try to get all the facts
- Take any threats of suicide and pleas of desperation very seriously
- Access help for your child through his/her GP

Useful links

Child Support Contacts	
Child Care (NI): 028 9065 2713 Kidscape: 020 7730 3300 NSPCC - Tel: 028 9035 1135 - CP Helpline: 0808 800 5000 - www.nspcc.org.uk	Childline 0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk Children's Law Centre: 028 9024 5704 Barnardos Childcare Office: 02890672366 Save the Children: 028 9043 1123 Youthnet: 028 9033 1880
www.thinkuknow.co.uk www.ceop.police.uk www.safenetwork.org.uk	www.endbullyingnow.org.uk
Aware Defeat Depression: 028 90321734 Aware Helpline: 0845 120 2961	Parents Advice Centre: 028 9031 0891 Gingerbread NI: 028 90231 417
CRUSE Bereavement Care: 028 9043 4600 CRUSE Helpline: 0870 167 1677 Young Peoples Helpline: 0808 800 1677	Samaritans: 028 9066 4422 Samaritans Helpline: 0845 7909 090
Eating Disorders Association: 028 9023 5959	NI Association of Mental Health: 028 90328474
Relate: 0870 242 6091 Cara Friend – Gay Helpline: 028 9032 2023 Cara Friend – Lesbian Helpline: 028 9023 8668 The Rainbow Project: 028 9031 9030 FPA: 028 9032 5488	AA Central: 028 9043 4848 Al-Anon and Alateen: 028 9068 2368 National Drugs Helpline: 0800 776600 ASCERT: 028 9260 4422

How a Parent or Carer can contact the School

If the bullying is occurring at school, contact your child's Base Teacher. If you are seriously concerned, make an appointment. Give the Base Teacher time to investigate and follow up, and he/she will inform you of what action has taken place.



Full Anti-Bullying Policy is available on request from the School office and the School Website

Park School & Outreach Service
145 Ravenhill Road
Belfast BT6 8GH
Tel: 02890 450513

