HAZELWOOD
INTEGRATED COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING
Child Protection in Education

Information for Parents

September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Bullying is among the top concerns that parents and children have about their children's safety and well-being in school and on the way to and from school. Bullying can make the lives of young people a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on a young person's attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives.

You may be aware that the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools' legislation passed in 2016, came into effect across all schools in Northern Ireland from 1st September 2021. What this means is that all schools should now use the same definition of bullying and have a legal duty and responsibility to investigate and address instances bullying behaviour that are reported to them. We welcome the implementation of the legislation as it means that all schools can work together to address bullying in similar ways. There will hopefully now be a consistency in the methods and messages all schools use to address this type of behaviour and the ways that we support all young people to understand the impact of bullying behaviour on others.

In summary the legislation states that all schools must:
- Use the same legal definition of bullying
- Carry out investigations and collect evidence
- Use specific criteria to assess if repeated or one-off behaviour is bullying or not
- Offer supports to both the target and the person/s displaying bullying behaviour
- Record concerns, evidence and supports offered in the same way
- Ensure that preventative measures are in place to minimise incidents and educate young people

At Hazelwood Integrated College we take all concerns around bullying behaviour seriously and we will continue to investigate, address, manage and support pupils when incidents occur and issues arise. Our Anti-Bullying Policy can be found on our school website

(*https://www.hazelwoodcollege.co.uk/school-policies/#content*) and has been reviewed and amended to reflect this legislation.

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 other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Preventative Measures
- At Hazelwood Integrated College these actions will be taken forward, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment.
- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum

- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through Personal Development
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing e.g. personal development, pastoral time, tutor time, assemblies, restorative practice, peer support groups through our Youth Work Department.
- Participation in the Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Framework (NIABF) annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Development of peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- Development of effective strategies for playground management – designated areas for year groups, split lunches, staff duty etc.
- Year Group assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying
- Promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks

Hazelwood Integrated College will put in place the following preventative measures to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school.

- 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.
- 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 such as Translink 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. e.g. early morning SLT duties, staff break and lunch duty, bus duty including Whitwell Road and Grays Lane.

Hazelwood Integrated College will take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. School will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way.

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through Person Development, 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 (C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.

REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN

Pupils Reporting a Concern

If a pupil has a bully concern they can:
- Verbally- talk to Head of Year or form tutor
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
- **ANY** pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern
- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Form Tutor
- 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 or Vice-Principal.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Year/Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.
- Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

Cyber Bullying - Best practice for parents and carers

1) **HAVE AN OPEN CONVERSATION**

   Listen, and offer support and encouragement. If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, remind them that this is not their fault and that no one deserves to be treated in this way. Some young people think that if they are the target of online bullying, they must have done something wrong. It is also important to encourage your child to save the evidence. They can do this by taking a screenshot of what has happened or by keeping the messages they have received.