



**Glenabbey Safeguarding
Anti-bullying Policy**

Reviewed June 2023

Due to be reviewed Sept 24

RATIONALE

Glenabbey Church is completely opposed to all kinds of bullying. Bullying is wrong and should not be tolerated within the ministries of Glenabbey Church. Our ministries should be a safe and welcoming place for all children and young people. An anti-bullying environment will be created through openness and consultation where the views of all members of the Glenabbey kids' and youth community are encouraged and considered.

PRINCIPLES

- Children/young people have a right to be in a safe and supportive environment
- The welfare and well-being and needs of all children are paramount – whether a child who engages in bullying behaviour or a targeted child – needs to be separated from their behaviour
- When bullying concerns are identified we will work to bring about behavioural change in the child engaging in bullying behaviour, supporting them to accept the consequences of their behaviour and agreeing on a way forward to repair relationships
- Staff/volunteers will be supported and provided with strategies to support the children in their care as well as their own well-being when dealing with incidences of bullying
- Parents will be consulted and informed regarding our behavioural expectations and the importance of the home/church relationship reinforced

AIMS

The policy aims to:

- Maintain a secure, safe and happy environment for all church programmes where children feel confident to speak out if they feel they are being bullied by others or witness bullying behaviour
- Prevent, as far as humanly possible, bullying in any form
- Deal consistently and promptly with any incidents of bullying that may arise
- Ensure all staff/volunteers of the church programmes are aware of the nature of bullying and the action to be taken (as detailed in the policy)
- Ensure that the child who is being targeted is treated in a supportive manner
- Encourage a change in the behaviour of the child who is displaying bullying behaviour towards others
- Ensure that all children, young people, parents, staff/volunteers and elders are aware of this policy and their roles and responsibilities in contributing to its success.

What is bullying?

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological. The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) defines bullying as 'the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.' All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- It is repetitive and persistent
- It is intentionally harmful
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it
- It causes distress

What forms does Bullying take?

PHYSICAL BULLYING

- hitting; pushing; kicking; tripping; spitting; hair pulling; throwing things; interfering with another's property by stealing/hiding/damaging/intruding upon it;
- extortion / threatening demands for money or other items
- writing or drawing offensive notes/graffiti about another

EMOTIONAL BULLYING

- excluding/shunning others from group activity/social setting or play; belittling another's abilities or achievements;
- Menacing looks/stares;
- Rude signs or gestures

VERBAL BULLYING

- name calling; insulting or offensive remarks; accusing; taunting; put downs
- ridiculing another's appearance/way of speaking/disability/personal mannerisms/race/colour/religion;
- humiliating another publicly
- spreading malicious or nasty rumours; threatening; intimidation; mocking; sarcasm

CYBER BULLYING

- misuse of e-mails, images, text, blogs, tweets, forums and chat rooms to hurt /embarrass /demean /harass /provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- misuse of mobile phones by text messaging /calls or images – again to hurt /embarrass /demean /harass /provoke or humiliate another using perceived anonymity
- unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information; impersonation

RACIST / SECTARIAN BULLYING

- name calling relating to race, colour or religion / political opinion

HOMOPHOBIC

- name calling related to gender or sexual orientation

Cyber Bullying

At Glenabbey we highlight the dangers and consequences of cyberbullying to all children through various programmes.

Incidences outside of church lie with the responsibility of the parents and therefore parents should be mindful of the appropriate age for the use of social media platforms.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

The signs and symptoms of bullying may vary with each individual and therefore this is not an exhaustive list of behaviours. These behaviours may be symptomatic of other problems, however, some of the common signs might be that the individual:

- Does not want to come to a programme and attendance may suffer
- Appears frightened to go to the programme
- Avoidance, hanging back from activities
- Reluctance to sit beside or near certain children/young people
- May change their behaviour / act out of character i.e. withdrawn, aggressive, nail-biting, flinching, flare up or restlessness etc.
- Frequent complaining of non-specific pains, headaches, tummy upsets, withdrawn, loss of appetite
- May stop communicating in school and at the church programme
- Asking for or beginning to steal money
- Stress manifested at home e.g. nightmares, trouble sleeping, crying, irritability or begin bed wetting
- Unexplained bruising or cuts / damaged clothing
- Refusal to say what is wrong
- Bullying younger siblings
- Is self-harming / threatening suicide

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Safeguarding team will:

- Ensure that the church's Anti-Bullying policy is pursued at church
- Determine the measures to be taken by the church with a view to preventing bullying
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy regularly, at least every 4 years.
- Follow up on any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken
- Keep a record of all incidences of bullying or alleged bullying involving a pupil:
 - On the premises of the church during the programmes attended
 - Travelling to or from a church-organised event/outing/trip on church-provided transport.
 - While the pupil is in the care of a church volunteer/staff member

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEER LEADERS/KIDS & YOUTH STAFF

They will:

- Foster in the children/young people self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our children/young people
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to children who have been targeted, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Safeguarding Representative/Deputy Safeguarding Representative
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

We expect our children/young people to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being targeted, unless it is unsafe to do so
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying

Anyone who becomes the target should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets

Children need to understand:

- That they have the right not to be bullied
- That they are not to blame if they are bullied

- That they need to speak out, be honest and should trust the leaders to take their concerns seriously and to help them
- That they are not alone

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

We ask our parents to:

- Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children/young people, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advise their children to report any bullying to the programme leader, or the Church Staff member in charge of the programme, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other children/young people.
- Advise their children/young people not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying
- Be sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassure them that appropriate action will be taken
- Inform appropriate church leaders of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- Co-operate with the church, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children/young people who are targeted and for the children/young people displaying bullying behaviour

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, eradicate bullying

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES TO CREATE AN ANTI-BULLYING CULTURE

In Glenabbey Kids' and Youth ministry, we work together to create an anti-bullying environment through all our kids and youth programmes. We use a range of strategies to promote this culture.

- Biblical teaching on how we should treat one another
- Vigilant supervision
- Risk assessments
- Leader training

- Leaders should encourage children to befriend others who are alone within the group.
- Bullying should be discussed openly within the group, perhaps through activities such as group discussion time.
- Young people should regularly be encouraged to talk to leaders about anything that is bothering them.

REACTIVE STRATEGIES

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the programme leader and attempts will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible, ensuring the well-being of all parties involved
- Reports will be taken seriously
- Steps will be taken to ensure the targeted child feels safe and secure
- Significant incidents i.e. those investigated and confirmed as bullying will involve further investigation and recording
- A clear account will be reported to the appropriate members of staff (see steps detailed below)
- Significant or repeated incidents will require parents to be informed
- Disciplinary measures/sanctions in line with the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, will be explained and used

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

When an incident of bullying is reported, the programme leader will investigate the alleged incident. They will talk to the child who is believed to be the target of bullying, the child suspected of the bullying behaviour and any witnesses. Details will be kept using the church's proforma. (Appendix A).

A parent may also contact the Kids' Workers or the Youth workers if they have any concerns and these will be investigated in the same manner.

If any degree of bullying is identified (i.e. not a series of isolated incidences) the Designated Safeguarding Representative will complete the Church's proforma for bullying (Appendix B).

- Contact will be made with the parents of the children involved and inform them of the situation. Notes will be made during these meetings.

Strategies appropriate to the age and situation will be put in place. Sanctions will be applied according to the church's Promoting Positive Behaviour policy and the following steps taken:

- The Elder for Kids/Youth will be informed alongside the Kids' Workers and Youth workers where appropriate:
- The occurrence will be fully investigated - notes of meetings will be made using the church proforma (Appendix B)
- All parties will be made aware of the effect of bullying and will be reminded of the church's policy on bullying.
- The targeted child will be reassured that the matter is being dealt with by appropriate church staff.
- Parents of both the child displaying the bullying behaviour and the targeted child will be informed once an incident has been fully investigated and identified.
- An interview with the parents will be arranged. The child displaying the bullying behaviour will be present at some point during the meeting with their parents. Sanctions in line with the church's Promoting Positive Behaviour policy will be administered.
- Help and support will be given to both the targeted child and the child displaying the bullying behaviour in order to repair relationships and to see the consequences of their actions. This will be monitored by the Kids/Youth Workers and a meeting will take place with both sets of parents after a 2 week period and then to an agreed timescale where appropriate

Useful websites

- www.parentingni.org/parents/helpline
- childline.org.uk (0800 1111)
- familylives.org.uk
- kidscapre.org.uk
- www.endbullying.org.uk
- <http://www.niabf.org.uk>
- www.thinkuknow.org

REPORT ON INCIDENT OF ALLEGED BULLYING

Name of Child:		Programme:	
Age:		Date:	

Person reporting the incident

Where did the alleged incident occur?

Signs of Bullying Reported

Bullying:

Being Bullied:

Physical Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Emotional Bullying
Hitting, punching	Teasing/name calling	Leaving people out
punching, scratching	Making offensive remarks	Spreading rumours
kicking, pushing, tripping	Insulting someone	Excluding someone
Spitting	Threatening someone	Making fun of someone
Damaging, stealing property	Repeated teasing	Stopping people befriending someone
Throwing objects at someone	Intimidation	Other
Other	Other	

Evidence of Bullying. Yes/No
If yesm complete Record of Bullying

Background/Additional Information

REPORT OF BULLYING

Name of Child:		Programme:	
Age:		Date:	

Bullying Confirmed

Physical Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Emotional Bullying
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Parent's Informed Yes/No

Details of Bullying - Time line of events

Action to be taken

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Shared with:

A light blue rectangular area for recording the individuals or groups the policy has been shared with.

Review Date:

A light blue rectangular area for recording the date when the policy will be reviewed.