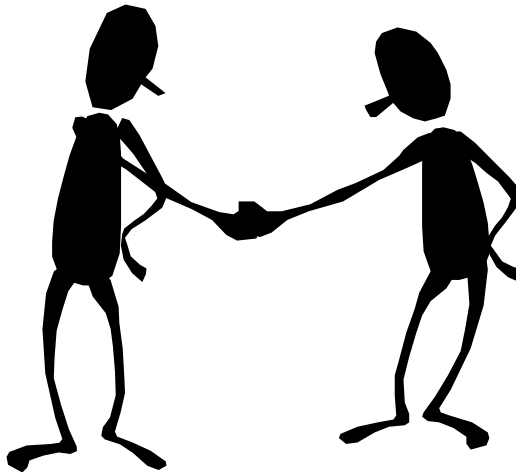


Drumahoe Primary School



Policy for Anti Bullying

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following 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.

NI Anti Bullying Forum define 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.'***

At Drumahoe Primary School staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Children who experience bullying behaviour at school will not always be prepared to tell those in authority. However, when a disclosure is made, it will always be treated seriously.

For those pupils who are unable to inform staff about their problem, observations about specific behaviour patterns are often noticed. Signs of bullying might include:

- Unwillingness to come to school
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- Complaining about missing possessions
- Refusal to talk about the problem
- Being easily distracted
- Damaged or incomplete work.

Staff will be able to use their knowledge of the pupils to identify these changes of behaviour and the policy outlined below will be pursued. Pupils will be

encouraged at all times to be open with their parents who can then pass on concerns to the school.

Consequently, the governors have approved this policy.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the target of bullying, their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as children displaying bullying behaviour are often victims too – that is why they bully!

The aim of any intervention is to **respond** – **resolve** – and **restore**

- Discussions at length with the target of bullying. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, Believe, Act.
- Identify the child/children displaying the bullying behaviour. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Principal.
- A written record of the incident, investigation and outcome will be kept.
- Discussions with the child displaying bullying behaviour. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Drumahoe Primary School and the child will be encouraged to empathise with the child who has been the target of the bullying behaviour.
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Discipline Policy
- Once it has been established that the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as outlined in this policy records will be kept 'open' until the incident has been resolved.
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts
- Separate discussions with parents of the child displaying bullying behaviour and parents of the child who is the target of the bullying behaviour will take place (if appropriate).
- Sanctions for the child displaying bullying behaviour may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s) –see W.E.L.B. guidance on Suspension & Expulsion (Principal's Office) For full list of sanctions – see Positive Behaviour Policy.

- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition
- As the behaviour of the child displaying bullying behaviour (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying
- The target of the bullying behaviour will also be closely monitored as their self-esteem will be badly damaged and self-confidence needs to be re-established.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of children displaying bullying behaviour, we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
- All staff listen, believe, act
- Prefects and playground buddies are there as a child's first contact point, if they feel they cannot tell an adult. There are approx. five every half-term. These are children in Primary 7 .
- " Let Us Know " box in school where children can put written notes if they feel they cannot speak about their problem
- Posters in school advertising these measures and dissuading children from bullying
- The Childline telephone number to be displayed clearly in school

Parental Involvement

At the Induction Meeting, parents will receive a copy of the booklet "Bullying – A Toolkit for Parents" which has been produced by the Parents Advice Centre."

A useful website also for parents can be found at the NI Anti Bully Forum

www.niabf.org.uk

WHAT IS BULLYING?



BULLYING CAN AFFECT
A CHILD'S CONFIDENCE
AND SELF-ESTEEM.

This booklet has been produced by the Parents Advice Centre, after consulting with parents. We hope it will give you the help you need to understand bullying better and to tackle the problem successfully and with confidence.

Bullying itself can take many forms, including:

- Hitting or kicking
- Calling a child names or making hurtful comments
- Being threatening or taking another child's belongings
- Leaving a child out, spreading stories about them or making rude signs at them.

Whatever form it takes, bullying is frightening and demoralising and can affect a child's confidence and self-esteem.

Bullying is never the bullied child's fault. Sometimes, children can be 'picked on' and bullied because they look different, their skin is a different colour, they are a different religion or even because they are small or tall.

As a parent, you may feel:

- **ANGRY** at the bully or at the school where the bullying is taking place
- **FRUSTRATED** and **HELPLESS** about the problem
- **ISOLATED** with no-one to turn to
- **VICTIMISED** why my child and my family ?

IS MY CHILD BEING BULLIED?

Sometimes children who are being bullied are afraid to tell anyone what is happening. They may fear that 'telling' will only make the bullying worse.

Your child may be being bullied if they:

- Refuse or do not want to go to school (their schoolwork may also get worse)
- Cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares or wet the bed
- Have possessions that go missing
- Have unexplained cuts and bruises
- Become withdrawn or aggressive, or change their behaviour in any other way
- Ask for money or steal money

- Bully you or their brothers or sisters
- Are afraid to travel on the school bus or beg you to drive them to school
- Have mood swings and want to be close to you.

In extreme cases, a bullied child might also attempt suicide.

HOW DOES A BULLIED CHILD FEEL?

ANGRY - venting this anger against family or pets

ANXIOUS - worried about going out or to school

DEPRESSED - feeling that no-one cares

SICK - headaches, pains and aches

ISOLATED - why is this happening to me ?

SHY - lacking confidence in himself or herself

UPSET SLEEP - disturbed or crying out

VULNERABLE - constantly expecting an attack.



MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED; WHAT DO I DO?



- 1 Find out the facts**
- 2 Reassure your child** that you will do everything you can to sort out the problem
- 3** Make sure your child knows what bullying is, that it is wrong, and that **no-one deserves to be bullied**
- 4** Stress that he or she needs to **tell the truth**
- 5** **Accept what your child is saying** and allow him or her plenty of time to explain what is happening. You may need to encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings

REMEMBER, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS HOW A BULLIED CHILD **FEELS**.

- 6 Write down:**
What happened and when
Who else saw it
How it affected your child at the time and later on.

Taking positive action about bullying makes many parents feel so much better. It will help you and it will also help your child.

Remember, the most important thing is how a bullied child feels.

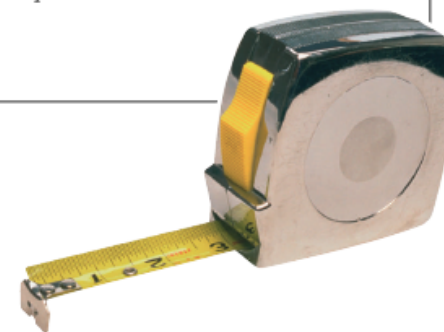
IF YOUR CHILD SAYS, "PLEASE DON'T GO TO MY SCHOOL"

When bullying happens, parents, children and the school need to work together to solve the problem. You may feel torn between your child's fears and wondering whether you should approach the school.

- **Talk the situation over** with someone you know or call the Parents Advice Centre
- **Explain to your child** what would happen when you talk to the teacher and so promote the benefits of involving the school
- If everyone is very emotional then have a **'cooling off' period** before talking it through again.

IF YOUR CHILD SAYS, "OK, PLEASE TALK TO MY SCHOOL"

- **Make an appointment** to speak to someone at the school as soon as possible
- **See the right person.** In primary schools, the class or head teacher. For post-primary, the year teacher or pastoral care teacher
- **Ask the school** to give you information on how they deal with bullying issues.



HOW DO I APPROACH A MEETING AT THE SCHOOL?

When you're there:

- Be respectful and assertive
- Describe the facts about the bullying
- Explain how your child has been affected, what he or she is afraid of and what he or she feels might help
- Ask what the school is going to do
- Ask for an assurance from the school that the matter will be dealt with and that you will be kept informed
- Listen carefully and if you wish, make a note of what is being said.

YOU MAY FIND IT HELPFUL TO
BRING ALONG YOUR PARTNER
OR A FRIEND.



- If there is something you are not sure about - ask for a clearer explanation
- Ask exactly what your child should do if he or she is bullied again
- Agree how you will keep in touch with the school to monitor progress.

You should feel that you've been listened to and that you understand the school's position. You should also have agreed what the next steps will be.

Continue to be aware of your child's feelings and make a note of any more bullying incidents.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THE BULLYING DOESN'T STOP?

If the bullying continues, then there are further steps that can be taken. You can:

- Make **another appointment** with the school
- Write to the chair of the **board of governors** at the school
- Contact your local **Education & Library Board** or the **Council for Catholic Maintained Schools** for advice and information.

WHAT ABOUT THE BULLY?

The bully needs help too. Don't expect the school to expel the bully because this might not be the best thing to do. You might consider talking to someone at the school about getting help for him or her.



ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN HELP

Parents Advice Centre - helplines

Belfast	028 9023 8800
Derry	028 7126 6663
Dungannon	028 8775 2900
Ballymena	028 2565 0099

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
028 9023 8645

Chinese Welfare Association
028 9028 8277

Save the Children
028 9043 1123

You can contact any of the four organisations above for a copy of **Bullying at School : Advice for Parents**, which deals with the issue of racist bullying. The booklet is published in English and Cantonese.

Education and Library Boards

Contact the appropriate board:

Belfast	028 9056 4000
North Eastern	028 2565 3333
South Eastern	028 9056 6200
Southern	028 3751 2200
Western	028 8241 1411


Chalky Line
(Children's Law Centre)
0808 8085678

ChildLine
0800 1111

Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS)

Contact the appropriate diocese:

Armagh	028 8775 2116
Clogher	028 6632 2709
Derry	028 7126 1931
Down & Connor	028 9032 7875
Dromore	028 3026 2423



parents advice centre
www.pachelp.org

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