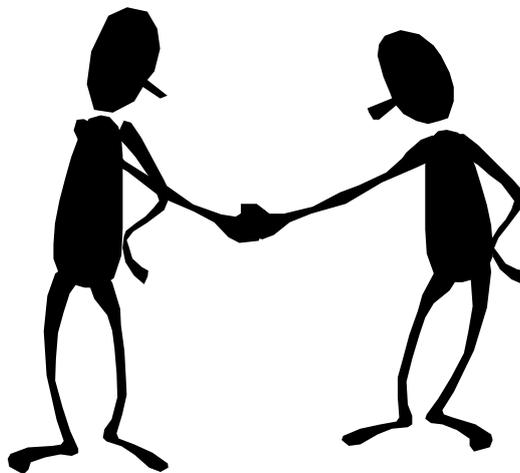# Drumahoe Primary School

Policy for Anti Bullying

Drumahoe Primary School Policy for Anti-Bullying

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

At Drumahoe Primary School we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment.

<u>**Definition**</u>

Addressing Bullying Schools Act (NI)2016 defines bullying as….

"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 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.
        For the purposes subsection (b) "act" includes omission.

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.'*

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:
        severity and significance of the incident
        evidence of pre-meditation
        impact of the incidence on individuals (physical/emotional)
        impact of the incident on the wider school community
        previous relationship between those involved
        any previous incidents involving the individuals
Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Positive Behaviour Policy.

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 at school and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. 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.

Consultation and Participation.
This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils through our 'Kids Forum' and class based activities and also with parents and school staff who are given an opportunity to comment on the draft policy prior to it being ratified by governors.

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.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered 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 (eg. Photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone.

This list is by no means exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition of bullying will be considered as bullying.

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.

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, we will not refer to a child as 'a bully' nor refer to a child as 'a victim'.

Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

> A child displaying bullying behaviours;
> A child experiencing bullying behaviours.

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

We define 'harm' as:

> ➢ 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.

Consequently, the Governors have approved this policy.

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

Strategy for dealing with bullying

Anti bullying strategies take two tracks. First **prevention** through ongoing and sustained education of children in PDMU lessons and assemblies providing a consistent ethos and framework; and secondly through **responsive** work in dealing with bullying behaviour once bullying has been identified.

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 can also be experiencing bullying behaviour in another setting.

The aim of any intervention is to ***respond → resolve → restore.***

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall:

- Clarify facts and perceptions;

- Check records;

- 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 listed in the 'Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour' resource;

- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions;

- Review outcome of interventions;

- Select and implement further interventions if necessary.

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

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 Seven;

- " Let Us Know/Worry " 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.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 requires schools and their Board of Governors by law to have:

- A definition of "bullying:"
- Secure measures to prevent bullying;
- A duty to keep a record of incidents of bullying.

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- How the bullying behaviour was displayed;
- The motivation for the behaviour;
- How each incident was addressed by the school;
- The outcome of the interventions employed.

Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents 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 of Governors 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.

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with pupils and parents/carers 4 years from the date at the foot of the page.

This Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed and implemented with the following related policies in mind:

- ➢ Positive Behaviour;
- ➢ Pastoral Care;
- ➢ Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- ➢ Special Educational Needs;
- ➢ Health and Safety;
- ➢ Relationships and Sexuality Education;
- ➢ Mobile Phone;
- ➢ Educational Visits;
- ➢ Staff Code of Conduct.

Useful Websites:

NI Anti Bully Forum   www.endbullying.org.uk

Dealing with bullying: Top Tips www.parentingni.org.uk